

## Finding Your Basal Body Temperature

**About Body Temperature:** Most people know that the average, normal oral temperature of the human body is 98.6° F (37.0° C). However, this can vary from person to person. Body temperature also varies throughout the day, generally lowest in the early morning and rising about 1° F (0.6° C) in the early evening. A woman's body temperature typically varies by 1° F (0.6° C) or more through her menstrual cycle, peaking around the time of ovulation, so it is best to measure it early in the menstrual cycle. Other things that can affect body temperature are talking, smoking, eating, drinking hot or cold liquids, participating in vigorous exercise and taking hot baths.

**Purchasing a Basal Thermometer:** It is important to use a *digital basal thermometer* which is accurate to 0.1 degree, vs. 0.2 degrees for standard thermometers. Obtain a new thermometer (to ensure that the batteries are fresh), choosing one that gives a series of short beeps when the reading is complete.

You can find basal thermometers for less than \$10.00 at Target, Wal-Mart, your local pharmacy, or similar stores. For convenience, you can also order basal thermometers online at Amazon.com:

Basal Thermometer by Fairhaven Health (shown at right, \$10.00):  
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B0000X6GBO/>

BD Digital Basal Thermometer (\$16.00):  
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B000TQ4AVK>



**Instructions for Determining Basal Body Temperature:** Taking your temperature by mouth is only mildly uncomfortable since you must keep your mouth closed and breathe through your nose while the thermometer is in place. Before recording your temperature for the first time, measure your temperature 3 or 4 times consecutively to be sure you get consistent measurements with your thermometer. **Note:** It is important to measure your temperature in the morning **before you get out of bed** for the day for the most accurate results.

Take your temperature each morning for 5 days (include a weekend day). For women who are menstruating, start on the second day of menstruation. Men and postmenopausal women can choose any day to start.

1. Place the thermometer on your nightstand for immediate access when you wake up in the morning.
2. Upon awakening, breathe through the nose with your mouth closed for 5 minutes before taking your temperature.
3. Place the thermometer under the tongue, just to one side of the center, and close the lips tightly around it.
4. Remain as still as possible and breathe through your nose until the thermometer has taken your temperature.
5. Make sure you give the thermometer plenty of time to accurately measure your temperature (sometimes up to ten minutes is needed). Refer to the instructions that came with your thermometer.
6. When your thermometer beeps, remove it, read it, and write down the result in Table 1 below.
7. Record the level of stress you experienced and rate your symptoms based on the previous 24 hours. (You may use the suggestions in Table 2 below.)
8. Please e-mail the results to me at [Buffington.1@osu.edu](mailto:Buffington.1@osu.edu) (be sure to put TEMPERATURE in the subject line). I will tabulate the results and post them on our website <http://www.iccolumbus.org/>

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender (F or M) \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code you live in \_\_\_\_\_ your Urologist's name \_\_\_\_\_

**Table 1. Temperature Record**

	Example	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Date	Nov. 1, 2007					
Temperature	99.1					
Stress	7					
Symptoms	6					

**Table 2. Stress and Symptom Scale**

Rating	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Stress	Long vacation	Weekend			Average work day			Hectic, deadline approaching		Major personal crisis	
Symptoms	Best I have ever felt	Better than usual for me			Average severity for me			Worse than usual for me		Worst imaginable for me	