

### FAQs to Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control

The reliability of the procedure depends on the user following the instructions correctly and evaluating the results correctly.

Before using the Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control we recommend that you read the instructions carefully and watch the included DVD or the video „Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control“ on youtube or our website <http://geratherm.de/en/diagnostic/home-care/family-planning/ovu-control/>.

#### **1. How does Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control work?**

Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control detects hormone changes that occur prior to and during ovulation. There is a direct correlation between the increase in LH (luteinising hormone) levels and the time of ovulation.

During a woman's fertile days, the salt content in the saliva rises owing to the increased LH production. The salt crystals that form in dried saliva have a fern-like structure. This 'ferning pattern' can be seen most clearly directly before ovulation.

During the infertile days this 'ferning pattern' disappears owing to the increasing level of progesterone, and a gravel-like pattern is seen instead.

#### **2. Is Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control accurate?**

When instructions are followed, determining fertility through ovulation microscopy has been shown to be 98 % accurate.

#### **3. Does the fern structure look the same for all women?**

No. As the LH increase varies, not only from cycle to cycle, but also from woman to woman, an individual crystallisation pattern is detected for each woman.

#### **4. When do I test with Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control?**

Test on a daily basis, preferably morning right after getting up, before eating, drinking, smoking, brushing teeth, etc.

If you test later in the day, try to wait at least three hours after eating, drinking, brushing teeth or smoking.

Record results on a fertility chart or calendar. Carefully filled in record sheets provide important diagnostic information and you should always take them with you when you visit your doctor.

Start recording on the first day of a menstrual period.

### **5. How many times can I use the fertility tester?**

The Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control is re-usable. There is nothing further to buy or replace, other than the batteries, which may eventually need to be replaced.

### **6. How do I apply a saliva sample?**

A sublingual saliva sample, collected from below the tongue will provide the best results. Place a drop of saliva on the middle of the lens using a clean and dry finger. Dab the saliva onto the lens from above, without smearing the drop.

Ensure that no air bubbles or foam are on the lens. Leave the saliva sample to dry at room temperature for about 10 to 15 minutes.

Note: You can stimulate the production of saliva by biting gently on your tongue.

### **7. Can I dry the saliva sample with tools such as a hairdryer?**

No. The use of any device to dry the saliva sample may damage it. The sample can become distorted from the blowing or contaminated with foreign objects; this could lead to a misinterpretation of the results.

If you are in a hurry in the morning and cannot view the sample, rather let it dry as long as required and then view it at a later point.

### **8. Why does brushing my teeth or eating something before taking the test impact on or change the result?**

Because saliva is liquefied, the salt content decreases and less crystal structures occur. Therefore the fern structure can be formed less.

### **9. Will breast-feeding affect my results?**

Yes, if you are breast-feeding your results could be inaccurate. This is due to hormonal changes in your body.

### **10. What can interfere with results?**

Anything that affects LH levels in the body may affect the results. Changes to the 'ferning pattern' can be caused by the following:

- After discontinuing the use of hormonal contraceptive agents (e.g. 'the pill')
- During use of hormone supplements (e.g. 'the pill') or other specific medications
- After a birth, during and after lactation
- Medical conditions or products which alter the composition of mucus secretions (e.g. expectorant medications)

High LH levels may produce an ongoing 'ferning' pattern while low LH levels may not be picked up by the microscope. In this situation, please contact your doctor.

### **11. How do I clean the Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control?**

Clean the lens after each use, either with the spectacle cleaning cloth provided or with a clean dry (lint-free) cloth.

Do not immerse the Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control in water.

### **12. Can I detect a fern structure even though I am not ovulating?**

In rare cases, fern structures might form in some women, who are not ovulating. This is due to an increase in the oestrogen content just before the end of the cycle or before the start of menstruation. In this case, however, the fern structures are smaller, less branched and only visible for one or two days.

### **13. Why do I never see a fern structure?**

There could be several reasons for this:

- Certain drugs or hormones, as well as smoking, acute inflammation in the oral cavity or in the throat and alcohol can alter the composition of saliva temporarily and thus affect the result.
- Use the Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control **before** eating, drinking, cleaning your teeth or smoking, or at least **3 hours after** eating, drinking, cleaning your teeth or smoking.
- The saliva sample applied to the slide glass must completely dry when you want to observe it.

In rare cases, it may be that your body does not produce enough LH and thus no ovulation takes place (anovulatory cycles). If you suspect that this might be the case, please get in touch with your doctor immediately.

### **14. Why do I always see a fern structure?**

There are a small percentage of women, whose LH level is high throughout the month. This could possibly be due to the fact that the progesterone content in these women is too low. If you suspect that this might be the case, please get in touch with your obstetrician immediately.

**15. What does it mean when I see an incomplete formed fern structure on the one day, and on the next day it has disappeared?**

It means that a slight increase of LH occurred in your body, which could have many different causes. The fact that you saw an incompletely formed fern structure on the one day, which disappeared on the following day, merely means that a slight, temporary hormonal fluctuation occurred, but not an ovulation.

**16. Why do I only see the transitional pattern but no full ferning?**

Women with lower LH levels may not see full ferning if LH (and so salt) levels are not sufficient to produce large crystals (ferns). You can still identify your most fertile phase as this peak in oestrogen levels indicates ovulation.

**17. I only stopped taking the pill last month. Can I use Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control?**

The first cycle after stopping hormonal contraceptives is usually quite irregular. Therefore, we recommend that you wait for two cycles, before you start using ovu control, to allow your body to find its natural rhythm first, which is the condition for a correct implementation of the fertility test.

**18. Can Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control be used as a contraceptive device?**

No, ovulation microscopes should not be used as a contraceptive device.

**19. How long should I use Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control?**

If you are trying to conceive we recommend taking the fertility test on a daily basis until you are pregnant, even if you have a regular cycle as ovulation usually takes place in the middle of a cycle. Even regular cycles may vary due to different factors such as stress, medication etc.

**20. Can I use Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control if my cycle is irregular?**

Yes. Geratherm<sup>®</sup> ovu control helps you to gain full control of your cycle, even if it is irregular. Only through daily testing will any irregularities be detected by observation of the fern structures. If you fill in the daily control strips, you will quickly get to know your cycle accurately.

**21. What can I do to increase my chances to conceive?**

To increase your chances to conceive, we recommend having sexual intercourse as soon as you see the first fern structures, meaning already at the beginning of your fertile days. The biological properties of the egg only allow for fertilisation within approximately 8 - 10 hours following ovulation.