

PREGNANCY PLANNING

AND HEALTH

by
Mrs. Gloria Riggsbee



Dear Mrs. Riggsbee:

I have been married for almost a year now and I have been hoping for a child. So far I am not pregnant and I thought I would have been by now. My husband says not to worry yet, that it takes time, but I am afraid I can't have children.

I want to go see a doctor, but my husband says to wait a little while longer. He said that some women take longer to have children than others. He told me just to be patient. What do you think? My husband has been married once before so I know he can have children, so I believe it's me.

What should I do? I am 18 years old.

Mrs. M.

Dear Mrs. M.:

I am sending you the booklet "Fertility Tests and Treatments." This booklet (available free to anyone who requests it) describes some of the tests and treatments used by doctors to help women get pregnant.

I think, however, that you and your husband should agree on the matter of your seeing a doctor. You will read in the booklet that the doctor usually wants to talk to the couple, not just the wife. Even

if your husband had children by a former marriage, a doctor might want to examine him to be sure he is still producing enough sperm cells to enable you to get pregnant.

At the age of 18, you still have many years ahead in which you could get pregnant. It could be that your husband is just not ready for a baby yet. You haven't been married quite a year yet. Perhaps your husband enjoys your company so much that he wants to keep you all to himself for a little longer. If he could agree that you can do something in six months or a year, it might be well worth the wait for both of you.

A pregnancy that is wanted

by the wife, but not by the husband, can cause real trouble in the marriage. It might help if you and your husband could have some serious (but not angry) discussions about your desire for a baby. You could try to explain to him why you want a baby now and why you don't want to wait before seeing a doctor. He should try to tell you why he does not want you to see a doctor yet.

As you probably know from reading this column, it is my strong belief that every baby should be a wanted baby - wanted by both parents. This means that a couple should consider their emotional reactions, their financial situation and their mutual de-

sire for a child.

If you and your husband can try to see one another's point of view and come to an agreement on having a baby, then, by all means, see a doctor for a fertility work-up.

Dear Gloria:

I have three children, ages 3, 4 and 5. My best friend has two children three years apart, and another friend has one child about 4 years old. Both of these girls tell me I make too big a deal about birth control. One says she douches to keep from getting pregnant, and the other says her husband uses "withdrawal." Why does this work for them when

it didn't work for me?
Mrs. S.

Dear Mrs. S.:

The fact is that some women get pregnant much more easily than others. There are a few women who would only have one or two children even if they never used birth control. There are others who would have 15 or 20 babies if they did not use something.

Your two friends may well be in the low fertility range. Their methods of birth control are certainly very poor and either one may find herself pregnant when she least expects it. On the other hand, you are apparently in a high fertility range and would pro-

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baby still be having babies each year if you weren't using a good method of birth control.

If you and your husband feel that your family is complete with the three children you have, why don't you consider a method of permanent birth control (sterilization), such as a vasectomy for him or a tubal ligation or laparoscopy for you? Then you would never have to worry about an unwanted pregnancy again.

If you have any questions about sex or family planning, write: Mrs. Gloria Riggsbee,

214 Cameron Ave.,
Chapel Hill, N. C. 27514.

AGED POOR INCREASING

The Senate Special Committee on Aging has reported the number of aged poor Americans continues to increase. They also told of a "new group of poor" which may be created by forcing older men out of work before retirement age.

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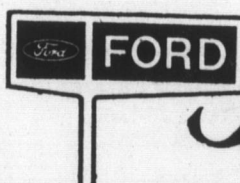
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