

**Menarche to Menopause – Active Learning Module – 30 Category 1
(women’s Health) RACGP QA&CPD points.**

During a woman’s reproductive life she can be taught to identify cervical responses to ovarian hormones through recognition of the changing sensation at her vulva. The Billings Ovulation Method, the clinical work of Drs John and Evelyn Billings, enables a woman to identify the infertile and fertile phases of her cycle and the optimum time of fertility through recording and understanding these signs. Studies of cervical mucus, the work of Professor Erik Odeblad, have confirmed that the mucus must have special characteristics if sperm are to reach and fertilise an ovum.

Ovulation is the significant event of the fertile ovarian cycle, however women do not experience complete regularity in their menstrual cycles from Menarche to Menopause. The “Continuum”, the work of Professor James B Brown, acknowledges that cycle variants are not separate entities. One merges into the next so that there is a continuous gradation from no follicular activity through follicular activity without an LH surge, through increasing maturation of the LH mechanism to the fully fertile ovulatory cycle. This Seminar will examine this “Continuum” of ovarian activity from Menarche to Menopause.

The General Practitioner will gain the skill to identify the hormonal and cervical changes observed by the woman and reflected in her written record. With the skills and knowledge gained from this activity, doctors will be able not only to assist the couple wishing to achieve or to avoid a pregnancy but also to monitor the woman’s reproductive health.