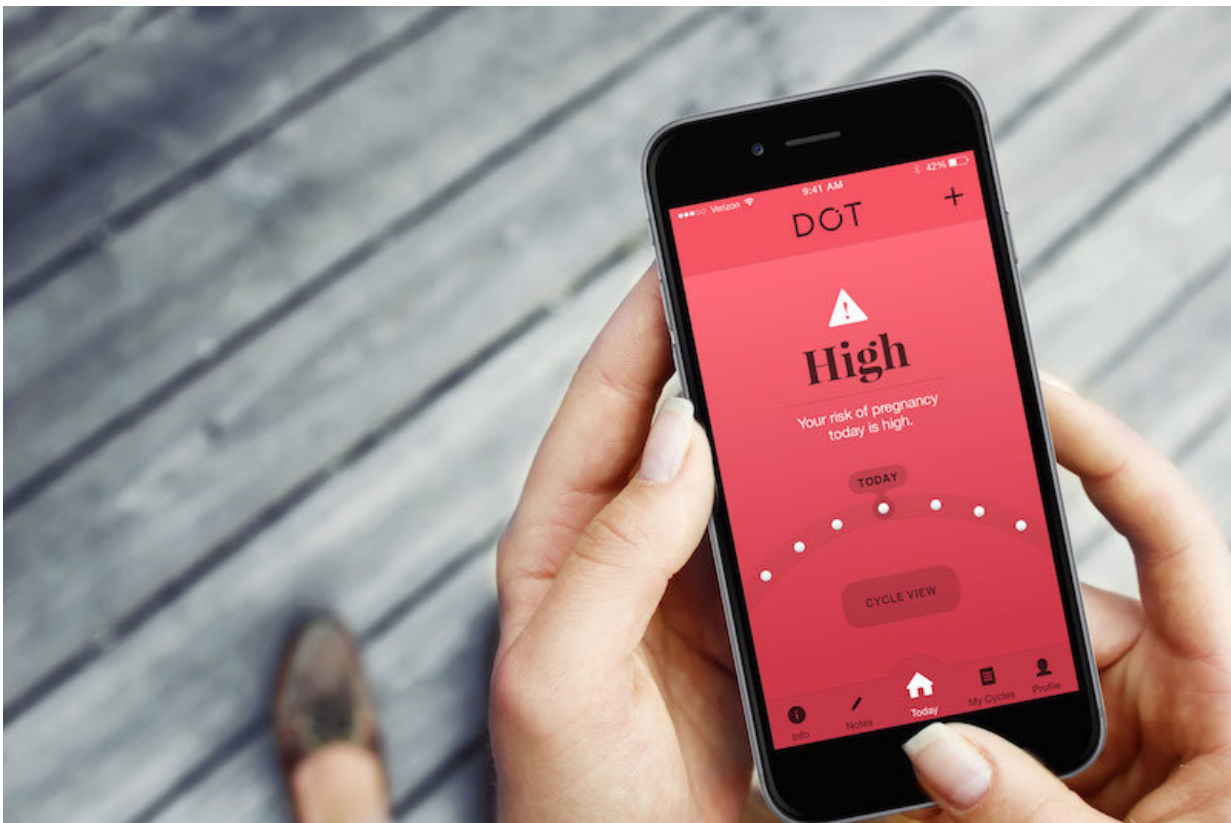


# Early study results suggest fertility app as effective as modern family planning methods

October 15 2018

---



Researchers from the Institute for Reproductive Health at Georgetown University Medical Center published early findings from a study examining the effectiveness of a family planning app called Dot. Credit: Cycle Technologies

Early results from a first-of-its-kind study suggests that typical use of a

family planning app called [Dot](#) is as effective as other modern methods for avoiding an unplanned pregnancy.

Researchers from the Institute for Reproductive Health (IRH) at Georgetown University Medical Center are studying women's use of the app for 13 [menstrual cycles](#), or about one year. The ongoing prospective study design is the first to apply best-practice guidelines for assessing fertility awareness based methods in the testing of an app.

The interim results following Dot's use for six cycles are published in the journal *Contraception* (title: Estimating six-[cycle](#) efficacy of the Dot app for pregnancy prevention.) Dot is owned by Cycle Technologies, which is solely responsible for the app.

Dot provides a woman with information about her [fertility status](#) each day of her menstrual cycle. It uses an algorithm and machine learning to identify the fertile days of her cycle based on her cycle lengths.

After women had been in the study for six cycles, the researchers found that the app had a typical-use failure rate of 3.5 percent, which suggests that Dot's one-year typical efficacy rate will be comparable to other modern family planning methods such as the pill, injections, and vaginal ring.

"Given the growing interest in fertility apps, it was important to provide these early results," says Victoria Jennings, Ph.D., principal investigator of the Dot efficacy study and director of the IRH.

718 participants in the United States enrolled in the study, and 419 participants completed six cycles of use. There were 15 confirmed pregnancies from cycles when participants used the method incorrectly (such as having unprotected sex on days of high fertility). No pregnancies occurred in cycles when participants reported correct use of

the app during high risk days for [pregnancy](#).

"Our purpose is to provide guidance to women who want to use Dot as well as to health providers and policy makers who are interested in this emerging [method](#) of family planning," Jennings says. "We hope this paper contributes to the on-going discussion about the effectiveness of fertility apps and how their efficacy should be assessed."

Final efficacy results are expected in early 2019.

**More information:** Victoria H Jennings et al, Estimating six-cycle efficacy of the dot app for pregnancy prevention, *Contraception* (2018). DOI: [10.1016/j.contraception.2018.10.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.contraception.2018.10.002)

Provided by Georgetown University Medical Center

Citation: Early study results suggest fertility app as effective as modern family planning methods (2018, October 15) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-10-early-results-fertility-app-effective.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--