Letter to the Editor

Why pit Couple Beads against the Billings Ovulation Method?

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Editor,

I was disappointed to read in *The Linacre Quarterly* an inaccurate and dismissive description of the Billings Ovulation Method as a rationale to justify the addition of the “Couple Beads: An integrated method of natural family planning.” While [Mulcaire-Jones et al. \(2016\)](#) are welcome to try an additional natural family planning (NFP) method, downgrading extant methods by using inadequately researched statistics is hardly a recommendation.

Their citations of the Billings Ovulation Method’s effectiveness omit work cited by one of their own authorities: a letter about family practice physicians’ knowledge of modern NFP methods by Drs. [Duane, Motley, and Manhart](#) in the *American Family Physician* ([Mulcaire-Jones et al. 2016](#), 71). Duane et al. refer to their extensive review of NFP in [Manhart et al. \(2013\)](#), which cited far lower unplanned pregnancies with the Billings Ovulation Method (1.1 correct use, 10.5% total, Indian Council of Medical Research) than the rate [Mulcaire-Jones et al.](#) cite from the secondary analysis of a data set from

the ’70s by [Trussell and Grummer-Strawn \(1991\)](#) ([Mulcaire-Jones et al. 2016](#), 72).

I am glad that the authors plan to do effectiveness studies as they cite only anecdotal evidence to support their current effort.

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