Natural Family Planning Holds Great Hope

There is something new, a natural method of birth control that has been developed by an Australian couple, both doctors, that is gathering the attention of physicians across the world.

Drs. John and Evelyn Billings were interviewed recently on their "ovulation method" for the natural control of fertility.

The method involves self-observation of cervical mucus changes during various phases of the menstrual cycle. A woman trained to observe these changes is able to determine her fertile and infertile periods.

The couple was first asked: "Natural methods of controlling fertility are gaining the increasing interest of medical researchers, married people, and the public at large. What do you think is the reason for this?"

Dr. John Billings replied: "Artificial methods depend either upon distortion of the sexual act or upon distortion of the human biology. The biological distortion is seen in the fact that such methods often cause physical harm.

"On the other hand, natural methods are completely safe because they leave the body undisturbed. They have the same measure of realiability as the artificial methods and their application assists the harmony of the marriage and helps the husband and wife to live happily together and to love one another better.

"That's why natural methods of birth control are becoming the subject of so much more interest nowadays."

The interviewer then posed a series of "objections" to the "ovulation method" of control, which have been voiced by its critics:

"The method takes a long time to learn. There is no guarantee of success because the cervical mucus (secretions of the mucous membrane of the cervix of the uterus) can change so rapidly. A long period of abstinence from sexual intercourse is required, namely during the woman's fertile period."

Dr. Evelyn Billings was asked to comment. "Women," she said, "have taken this method very much into their own hands and have found that it is very easy to teach and learn. Some women take a little longer to learn the technique but, in general, we have found that it can be learned very quickly.

"As to the objection that changing vaginal discharges will prevent women from mastering the method, that is only a temporary problem and an easily curable one at that. But, even in the case of vaginal discharge, woman can detect their fertility quite easily."

"As to the objection about "a long period of abstinence," she went on, "well, abstinence is a part of every loving, faithful marriage and people do not find it at all a disadvantage. It's confusion that upsets people and there is no confusion when they learn the ovulation method. They don't mind the abstinence. They accept it lovingly as part of their marriage."

Couples interested in more information should contact:

Father RObert Collins
Office of Family Life
50 Chestnut St.
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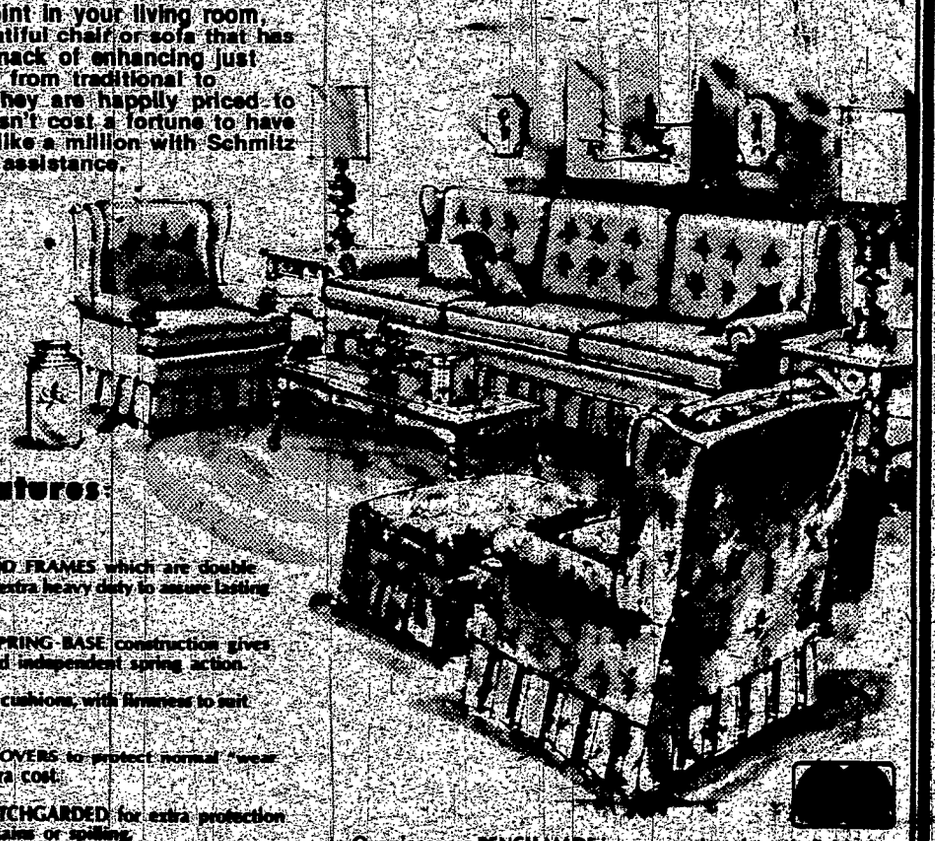

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