“As different as night and day” is an expression we’ve all used. But that distinction has become blurred over generations by ever increasing sources and length of light. As a result, many women do not experience a true nighttime anymore. They are in, or surrounded by, light 24 hours a day.

Since the Fall of 1976, we have consistently observed that the presence of light during the woman’s major sleep period can affect one or more phases of her menstrual cycle. This will be seen in the woman’s charted pattern, and also applies in determining breastfeeding and pre-menopausal Basic Infertile Patterns.

Fertility itself can be affected in many couples by excess light intake during sleep. Problems in maintaining a pregnancy can also occur.

Some common sources of light reported by couples are digital clocks, hallway or bathroom lights, nightlights, TV lights, smoke detector light, cell phone lights, computer lights; also light reflecting into the sleeping area from porch lights and street lights. There are several less common sources of artificial light as well. Even natural light can be too bright in some sleeping areas.

Any bedroom will seem dark when you first turn off the lights. The evaluation of light needs to be done after the woman has been in bed for 15 minutes, allowing time for the eyes to adjust. The quickest and easiest way to determine the presence of light is when awakening in the middle of the night. You should not be able to see the bedroom furniture or other objects, or be able to walk out of the bedroom without slowly feeling your way. Bright early morning light should not enter the room before 6:30-7am (unless you usually rise earlier, but also have earlier evening hours of darkened sleep).

Once the sources of light are brought to the woman’s attention, she quickly becomes aware of this light interference. Sufficient elimination of the light source(s) usually resolves the problem areas in the woman’s charted hormonal pattern. She then needs to consistently maintain this level of sufficient darkness for continued hormone stability.

Short periods of light, as during night breast-feeding, will usually not be disruptive. Use as dim a light as possible, and turn it off as soon as possible. In situations where the light cannot be eliminated entirely, for example, smoke detectors, baby monitors, apartment complexes and college dorms, many helpful ideas for darkening are available.

Couples report they also are sleeping much better after darkening their sleeping area. Many also darken their children’s bedrooms for improved sleep patterns.

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