

# Periods and the Menstrual Cycle

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge, Skills  
& Actions



To understand the  
menstrual cycle, and it's  
role in human reproduction

To identify various types of  
feminine hygiene products  
and their uses

To evaluate the possible  
risks involved with common  
menstrual issues

## NEW VOCABULARY

Oestrogen, Luteal, Cervix,  
Uterus, Follicular, Ovulation,  
Menstruation, Tampon, TSS



## STARTER ACTIVITY

Identify three items that can help a girl with  
her menstrual cycle  
Describe the 28 day menstrual cycle



3 Minutes

# GROUND RULES



Be open and honest  
**No Personal Comments**  
Discussions must be about  
'general situations'



You don't have to say  
things about yourself if  
you don't want to

**It's OK to be embarrassed**  
by a topic but don't show  
that you are embarrassed  
through silliness



## Be Respectful

Listen & don't interrupt others  
Only 1 person talking at a time  
Use the agreed appropriate  
Language (Avoid slang terms)



**Don't Make Assumptions**  
about people's values,  
attitudes, behaviours, life  
experiences or feelings

## **PSHE CLASSROOM RULES**

### **DEALING WITH SENSITIVE TOPICS**

### **SAFEGUARDING YOUR WELFARE & HAVING YOUR INTERESTS AT HEART**

There are **no stupid questions**  
It's OK to get things wrong

## Be Non-Judgemental

No put-downs. Challenge  
the opinion, not the  
person



Conversations on sensitive  
topics stay in the  
classroom unless it is a  
**safeguarding issue**

**Enjoy the lesson, challenge your perceptions and understand how to seek further advice and support**



# Periods and the Menstrual Cycle

ASSESSMENT  
FOR LEARNING

## BASELINE CONFIDENCE CHECKER

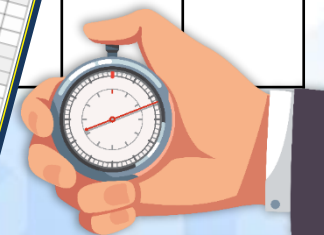


BEFORE THE LESSON	NOT CONFIDENT				CONFIDENT				VERY CONFIDENT	
Knowledge, Skills & Actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I understand the menstrual cycle, and it's role in human reproduction										
I am aware of a range of feminine hygiene products and their different advantages										
I can explain common menstrual issues for women, and how it may affect them										



Complete a baseline assessment of where you think you are at for this lesson

(Discuss or complete sheet)



2 Minutes

I'm not confident at all on this topic

A little confident

Confident

Very confident

I am super confident on this topic



# What are Periods?



## Simple Understanding Of Menstrual Cycle | Stages Of Periods

**Task:** Pick one or two coloured hats and answer all the related questions



4 Minutes



What facts do I know? What else do I need to know? What do I want to know?

**INFORMATION**



How do I feel about this? What don't I like about this? What do I like about this?

**FEELINGS**



Can something be done? New ideas? What are the solutions/suggestions?

**CREATIVITY**



What thinking is needed? Next steps? Where are we now?

**THINKING**



What is wrong? Is it safe? Can it be done?

**JUDGEMENT**



Click to reveal  
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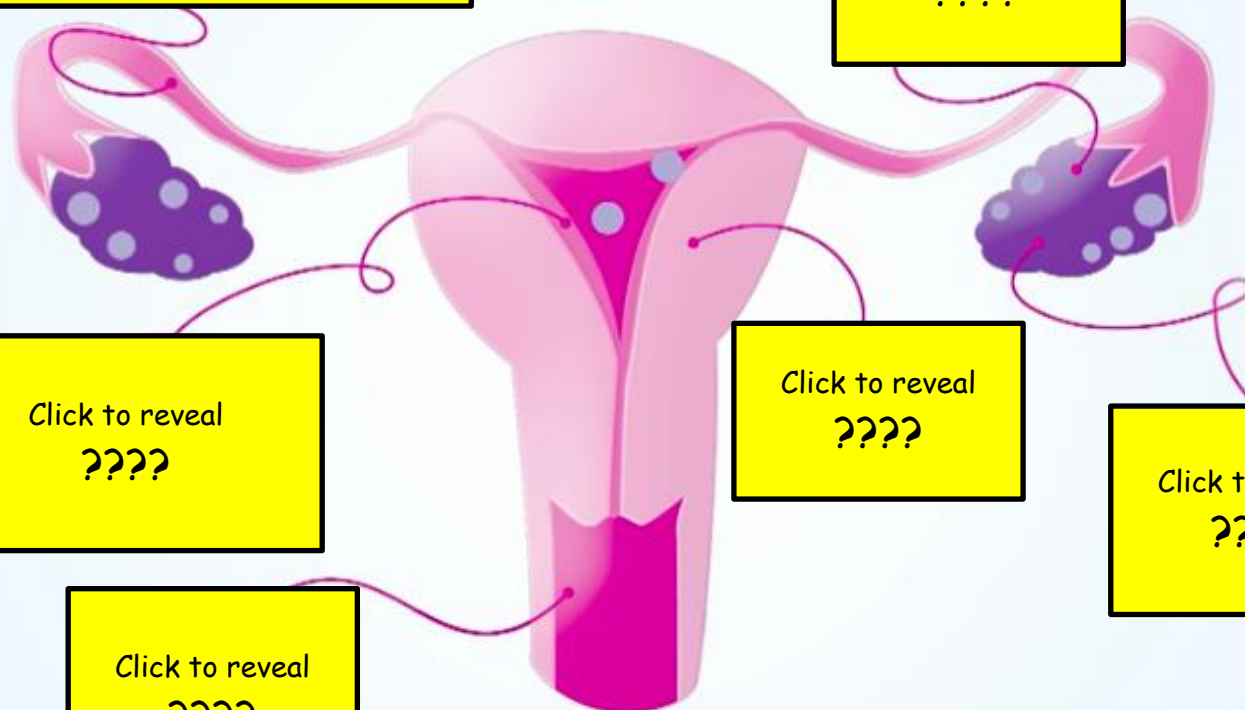
Click to reveal  
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Click to reveal  
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Endometrium

Eggs (Ova)

Ovary

Fallopian Tube

Uterus

Vagina

# Menstrual Cycle Phases

This occurs each month when your reproductive system repeats a regular pattern of events, all controlled by hormones. There are four parts, or phases, that repeat.

## Luteal Phase

- The empty ovarian follicle produces oestrogen and progesterone which stimulates the uterus to prepare for a fertilised egg
- Pregnant - Egg will attach on to the lining of the uterus
- Not Pregnant - New period starts (New menstrual cycle starts)

## Menstrual Cycle Phase

- Official start of the cycle
- Referred to as 'Period'
- Lining of the uterus is shed through the vaginal opening
- Lasts between 3-7 days, average is 5

*Ovarian Follicles each contain an egg, that grows when stimulated by the follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH)*

## Follicular Phase

- Body is preparing for pregnancy and loss of blood stops (Day 5 – 14)
- Lining of uterus begins to thicken and 1 egg gets ready for fertilisation
- Oestrogen levels rise dramatically

## Ovulation Phase

- Usually happens on day 14 of the cycle
- The ovaries releases a mature egg, and it travels down the fallopian tube over several days (3-4) down into the uterus.
- Will sit in the uterus for around 24 hours in the hope of being fertilised before it starts to degenerate

# A Bit More Information

- Reproductive organs are on the inside of your body (ovaries, uterus and vagina are on the inside).
- At birth, a woman has one million eggs. However by the time they reach puberty, this number is 300,000 and only 300-400 of those will be ovulated during a woman's lifetime
- If pregnant, a fertilised egg will settle and begin to grow a baby
- If the egg is not fertilised (no pregnancy), the egg and the lining breaks down and they leave the body through the vagina
- During a period, 4-12 teaspoons of fluid is dispersed (50% is blood); 90% of this is lost in the first three days and then periods become a lot lighter
- Periods can take up to two years to become regular (they can disappear for some months until your body settles into a regular cycle).

- Keeping a menstrual calendar with dates, and how you feel, is a very useful tool for a woman of any age
- Remember, every girl goes through this - it is perfectly normal and not something to be embarrassed about



## Task

Why is it important that both girls and boys understand the menstrual cycle?

# Menstrual Calendar



## Task

What information should be included on a menstrual calendar?

Why is it important to keep a menstrual calendar?

How might a girl be more prepared if she keeps a menstrual calendar?

## Did you know?

*Thanks to the wonders of technology, there are lots of great apps that can help track your menstrual cycle and symptoms. A couple of the main ones are:*

*Flo - Free to track you cycle and has Flo Premium (paid) which gives you a daily well-being plan, and unlimited access to Flo Health Assistant, and video courses.*

*Clue - Free, but has Clue Plus (paid) for enhanced period predictions and more detailed analysis about your cycle.*



# MENSTRUAL PAIN

## ACTIVITY

Use the information on this infographic to create a leaflet about the symptoms of menstrual pain and how it can be eased.

### SYMPTOM



ABDOMINAL PAIN



MUSCLE PAIN



BACKACHE



HEADACHE

### TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF



SLEEP



HOT WATER BOTTLE

### AVOID



### HEALTHY FOOD



HOT WATER BOTTLE



DRINK WARM WATER & HONEY AND LEMON TEA



WATER DRINK  
DRINK OFTEN



PAIN RELIEVERS

# Feminine Hygiene Products

**PADS**

**PANTY LINERS**

**TAMPONS**

**Outside Your Body**

**Inside Your Body**

**Anytime**

**During Your Period**

**Outside Your Body**

**During Your Period**

## **SORTING ACTIVITY**

Each feminine protection product has two matching features. Match them up!

### **Did you know?**

*Menstrual cups and period pants are other feminine protection products for those that are looking at being environmentally friendly when they are older*

# TOXIC SHOCK SYNDROME (TSS)

*Tampons are associated with the extremely rare, but serious illness called TSS. Rare but dangerous and life threatening!*

*TSS is caused by toxins produced by bacteria in your body.*

*It can occur in men, women, or children (50% are in women who are menstruating, and is associated with the use of tampons)*

**Menstrual**  
**TSS can**  
**reoccur**

## Symptoms to look out for (similar to flu)

- Fever / Feeling unwell
- Fainting
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- A sunburn like rash
- Muscle aches
- Feeling dizzy

## WHAT TO DO

- Remove any tampon you are using immediately
- Consult a doctor

## **HOW TO REDUCE THE RISK OF TSS**

- Use a pad instead of a tampon at least once during your period
- Always use a tampon with the lowest absorbance for your needs
- Change your tampons regularly, don't use them for longer than recommended

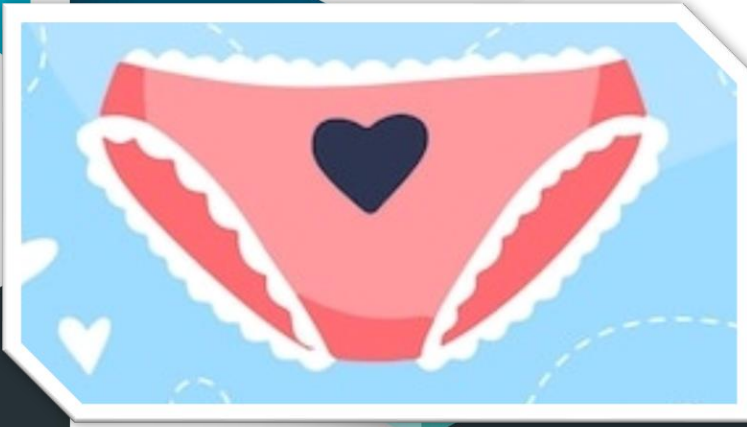
# Period Pants & Menstrual Cups

## Period Pants

- Period pants are absorbent underwear that you can wash and reuse for up to two years.
- Period pants come in a range of styles and absorbencies.
- Some have inserts that you can remove and change as you would with a pad.
- Essentially leakproof knickers, so you won't need to wear a pad, a tampon, or menstrual cup if you wear them during your period.

## Menstrual Cups

- Soft, flexible cups made of silicone or latex rubber, that you fold and insert just like a tampon.
- Instead of absorbing your blood like a tampon or pad, the cup catches it, and you can empty it down the toilet.
- Menstrual cups hold more blood than your average tampon so you shouldn't need to empty it as regularly as you would change a tampon.
- A menstrual cup should last about 5 years and is perfect for travelling.





# Help and Advice

I think I'm starting my period

I'm feeling down about things

I'm having cramps

Everyone else is developing breast tissue and I'm not

I'm getting spots and excessive oil in my hair and skin

I don't know how to use sanitary towels and tampons

## Task

Who could you speak to for advice on each of these issues?

What advice would you give to a young girl who is worrying about some of these things?



# Common Menstrual Issues for Women

- **Hormones will be in overdrive** – This can impact your emotions (emotions may change at different times during your menstrual cycle - called PMS)
- **Pre-Menstrual Syndrome (PMS)** – Can make you feel irritable, sad, or feel generally down and can happen up to two weeks before a period
- **Menstrual Cramps** - Not everyone gets them. They are caused by the uterus contracting to discard the menstrual flow. This can be in the form of aches, cramps, and sometimes backache.

Ways to deal with cramps include:

- Gentle exercise
- A nice warm bath or hot water bottle
- Using a hot pad
- Seeking advice from other female adults

- **Vaginal Thrush** – A yeast infection caused by a natural fungus in the vagina. Symptoms can include itching, soreness, and vaginal discharge different from normal discharge (thicker or more watery) (See doctor)
- **Cystitis** – Inflammation of the bladder. It makes you feel like you need to pass urine constantly, cause pain in the bladder, and feels uncomfortable to go to the toilet. It is very common and lots of women experience it (See doctor)

**IMPORTANT  
INFORMATION**

# RECAP - The Female Reproductive System

## Did you know?

*On average, you only lose between 4 and 12 teaspoons of menstrual fluid during your period*

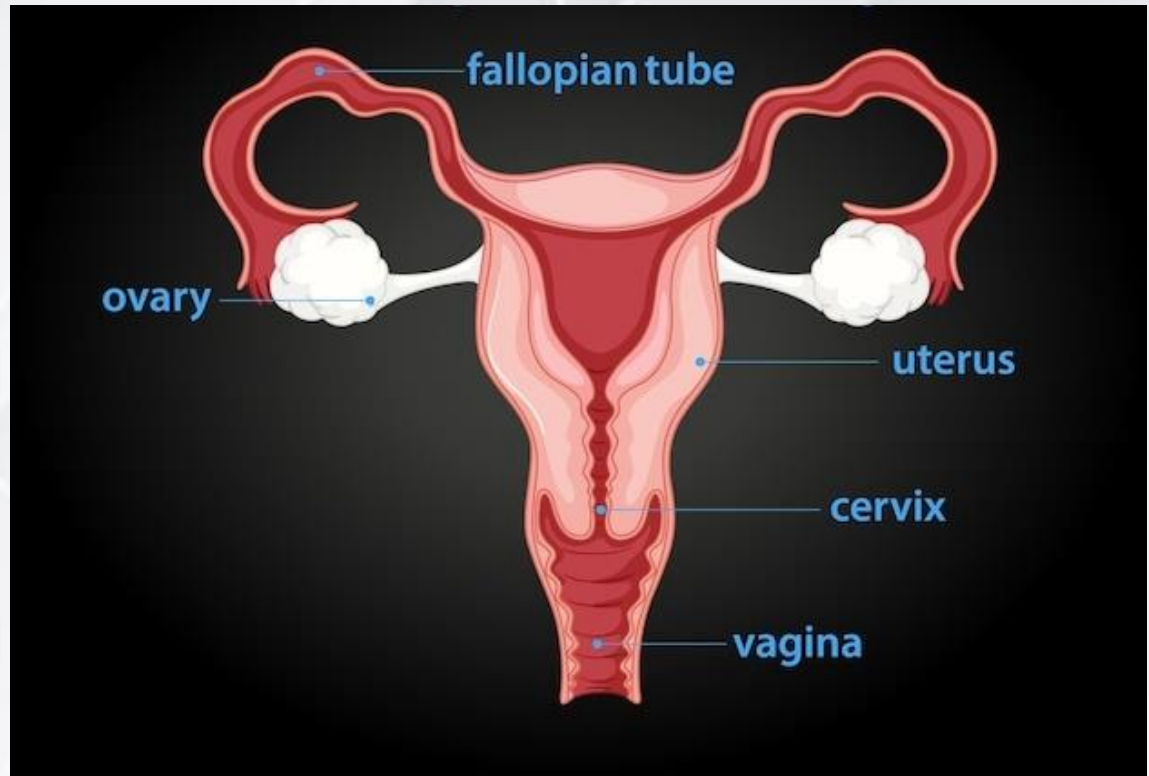
*Girls usually start their periods between the ages of 11 and 13*

*Periods usually last between 3 – 7 days*

*A period is made up of blood and body tissue*

*Signs that your body maybe getting ready to start periods include:*

- *Breast tissue beginning to growing*
- *Pubic hair may start to grow*
- *Produce a discharge from the vagina*



## Task

- 1) Did anything surprise you about the cycle and how long each stage is?
- 2) Why do you think women have a menstrual cycle and men do not?
- 3) Why is the word 'cycle' used to describe the process?

## What Do You Think?

### Talking Points

I think that ...

I don't think... is right  
because...

My opinion is...

I would argue the same  
because...

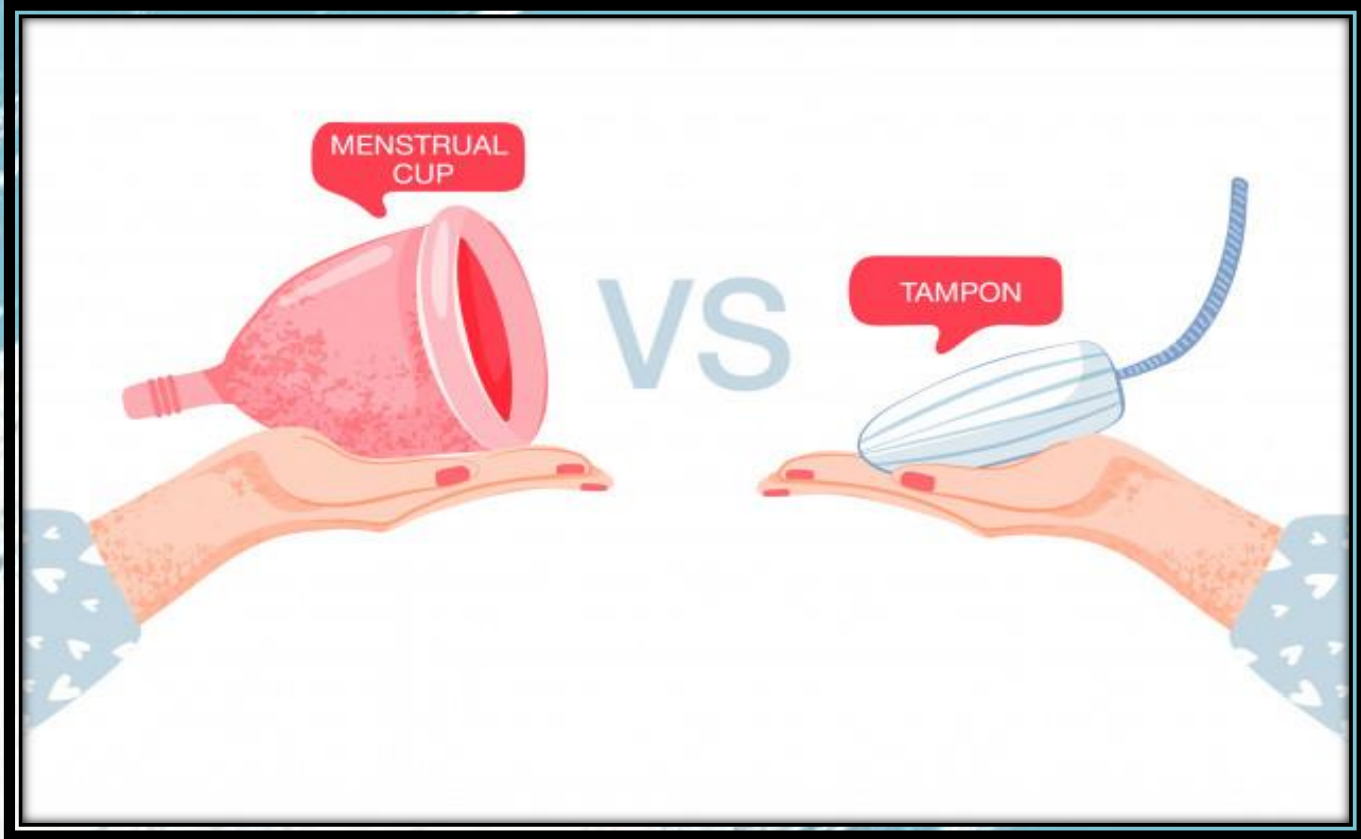
I disagree with...  
because...

Building on what... said. I  
think...

An alternate way of  
looking at this is...

I sort of agree,  
however....

I would challenge what..  
said because ...



**Do you agree or disagree with others? Why?**

Can you add to their opinions?

**Do you have a question about their opinions?**

Would you like to challenge what is being said?

**Do you have an alternative idea?**





1. The class will be split in two – nominate a player
2. Teacher will read out a definition, or ask a question
3. The first nominated player to fly-swat / 'splat' the correct answer on the board gets the point. (hold your hand over word to splat)
4. Teams may help their players

# SPLAT - TEAM CHALLENGE

Bloating

Cramps

Ovary

Fallopian tube

Discharge

Pantyliner

Menstrual Cycle

Tampon

Ovulation 28 days

PMS (Pre-Menstrual Syndrome)



# REVIEW YOUR LEARNING OUTCOMES

ASSESSMENT  
FOR LEARNING

## CONFIDENCE CHECKER



AFTER THE LESSON	NOT CONFIDENT				CONFIDENT				VERY CONFIDENT	
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I understand the menstrual cycle, and it's role in human reproduction										
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I can explain common menstrual issues for women, and how it may affect them										



Complete the confidence checker of where you think you are at for this lesson

(Discussion or complete sheet)



3 Minutes

I'm not  
confident at all  
on this topic

A little  
confident

Confident

Very  
confident

I am super  
confident on  
this topic

# HOMEWORK SUGGESTION

## Homework Explained

Write a reflection (around 150 words) on what you have learned about periods and the menstrual cycle, including any questions or curiosities that you still have on this topic.



### DUE DATE

It must be submitted by..

Hand / Google  
Classroom







# IMPORTANT INFORMATION



2 Minutes



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOPICS COVERED IN THIS UNIT  
WE WOULD ADVISE ONE OF THE BELOW:

SPEAK TO YOUR PARENTS/GUARDIANS, HEAD OF YEAR,  
A TRUSTED ADULT OR FRIEND.

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT YOURSELF OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW.  
IT IS IMPORTANT TO SPEAK UP AND TELL SOMEONE!

SPECIFIC FURTHER INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC CAN BE FOUND HERE:

- ☐ <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/stages-of-puberty-what-happens-to-boys-and-girls/> NHS
- ☐ <https://www.childline.org.uk> Has support for Puberty - Boys & Girls
- ☐ <https://kidshealth.org/#cattake-care> Information on a variety of topics
- ☐ <https://www.brook.org.uk/your-life/puberty/> Brook Health lives for young people

RELATIONSHIPS  
& SEX EDUCATION



## SEEKING SUPPORT



# REFLECTION PLENARY



A problem I overcame today was...

Before I only knew...  
now I also know...

The key words for this lesson  
were...

I'm really proud of the way I have...

Today I have tried to...

The most important thing I have  
learnt today is...

I used to feel ... but I now feel ...

Before I would have done...  
Now I will ...

Next lesson I would like to...

A question I would like to ask  
is...

I would like to learn more  
about...

I know if I need further support  
or help I could speak to.... or  
contact...

I now know I can supported  
others by...

One thing I didn't realise was...  
this will help me to...

2 Minutes





# REFER TO MINDFULNESS POWERPOINT

