



Virtuous

A Period

Guide

It's that time of the month



HEY GIRLS...



It's That time of the month!

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hey! VIRTUOUS GIRLS

This booklet has been written especially for you to help you through the questions and experiences that puberty brings.

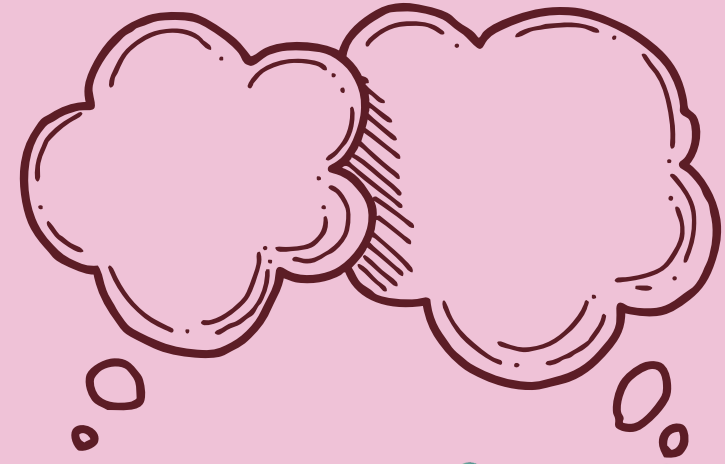
It will arm you with knowledge and offers advice on dealing with the changes happening to your body.

Along with the physical development you will experience emotional changes. It can be an exciting and confusing time. Knowing some of what to expect can help you avoid any unnecessary worries, so we hope you find the information in the following pages helpful.

Whether you've already had a period or not, we're sure that you have loads of questions, so we're here to give you some answers. Don't stress if you still want to know more, we're always here to give advice at.

It will also help you understand your period, why it happens, and how to manage it with confidence.

Along the way, you'll also learn about period underwear and how to use them. We're here to make sure you feel informed, empowered, and ready to navigate this new stage of life. Remember, having your period is a normal part of growing up, and you are not alone!



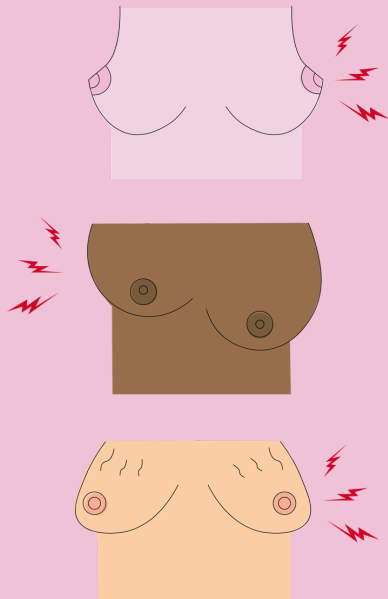
When will I start puberty?

Puberty happens when your body begins to change and grow into an adult body, and it's different for everyone! Most girls start puberty between ages 8 and 13, but it could happen earlier or later. Your body has its own timeline, and that's totally okay.



The first sign is usually that your breasts begin to grow. They may start to feel slightly tender, and one may grow a little quicker than the other, although no one but you is likely to notice! You may also notice hair growing under your arms, pubic hair developing, or an increase in sweating. Additionally, you may experience vaginal discharge, a normal sign that your body is preparing for menstruation.

All of these are normal signs of puberty. You may not notice all of them at once, as we all change at a different rate, but take any of them as a hint that your body is preparing for adulthood and your period could start soon...



Everyone is different

...and for some people, it can take a while after breasts start developing for periods to start.



What is Menstruation?

Menstruation, often called a "period," is the natural process where a girl's body sheds the lining of the uterus (the womb). This happens about once a month as part of the menstrual cycle. Menstruation is a sign that the body is getting ready for the possibility of pregnancy.

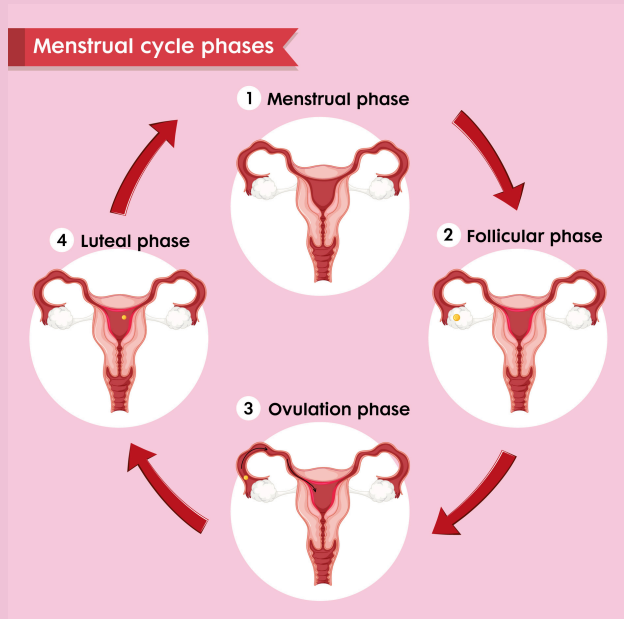
Why Does it happen?

Every girl has special hormones in her body that signal it's time to start menstruating. These hormones help regulate the menstrual cycle, which is like a monthly routine for your body. It's completely normal and healthy, and every girl goes through it at her own pace, usually starting between the ages of 9 and 16.

Funny Period Nicknames

Mashiro...Kunyasha...Aunt Flo.... Time of the month...On the rag... Code Red...Siku za hedhi...Siku za mwezi... Monthly visitor... Lady time...Ps

The Stages of the Menstrual Cycle

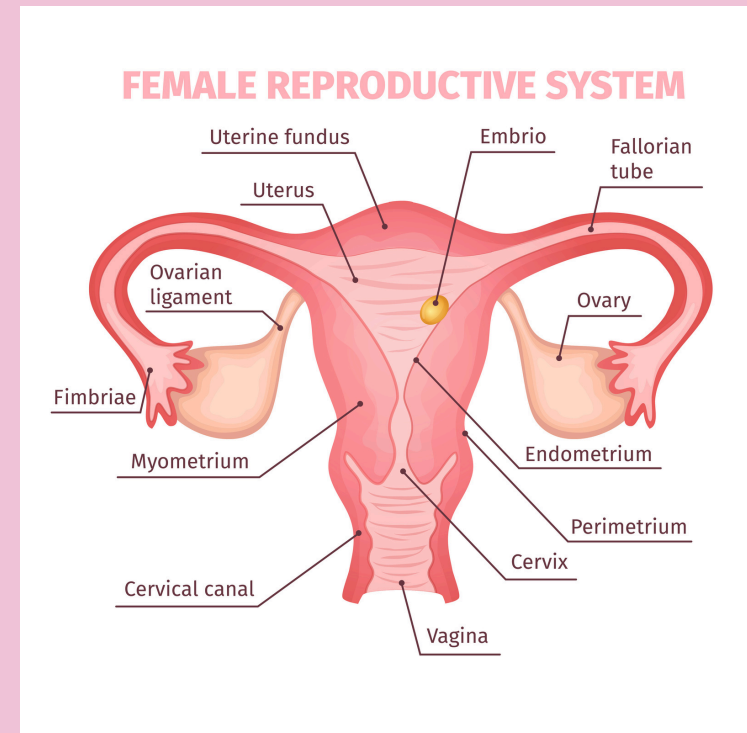


The menstrual cycle is a monthly process your body goes through to prepare for pregnancy.

It has four main phases:

- 1. Menstrual Phase:** This is when you get your period. The uterus sheds its lining if there's no pregnancy, and this lasts about 3 to 7 days.
- 2. Follicular Phase:** After your period, your body starts preparing for the next cycle. The ovaries produce follicles that contain eggs, and one of them will mature. This phase lasts about 14 days.
- 3. Ovulation:** Around the middle of your cycle (usually day 14), an egg is released from the ovary. This is the best time to get pregnant if sperm fertilizes the egg.
- 4. Luteal Phase:** After ovulation, your body prepares for pregnancy. If the egg isn't fertilized, hormone levels drop, and the cycle starts again with your next period.

Understanding your body



The key parts of the female reproductive system include:

- The uterus (where a baby can grow)
- The ovaries (which produce eggs)
- The fallopian tubes (where fertilization occurs)

Fact vs Myth:

Myth:

All girls experience severe pain during their periods.

Fact:

Many girls may experience some discomfort, but not everyone has severe pain.



My Period Started at School - What Should I Do?

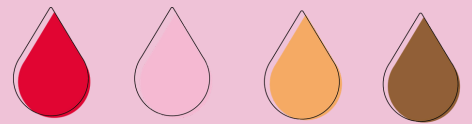
Stay calm—periods are completely natural! If you don't have your period underwear on, ask a teacher, nurse, or friend for help. They may provide a pad, or you can use folded toilet paper as a temporary solution until you can change into your period underwear.

If you notice a stain, tie a sweater around your waist and head to the bathroom to clean up. Remember, period underwear is reusable, leak-proof, and can handle your flow, so once you're wearing it, you're good to go. Many girls have been through the same situation—it's nothing to worry about!

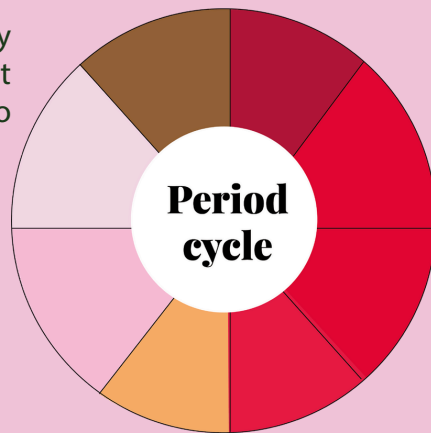
Why does the colour of my period change?

The start and end of your period is usually when your flow is at its lightest which may result in a lighter colour than the middle of your cycle.

Sometimes your period can appear slightly brown which is completely normal – it just means the lining has taken a little longer to leave your body.



FRESH BLOOD & STEADY FLOW PERIOD BLOOD MIXED WITH CERVICAL FLUID END/BEGINNING

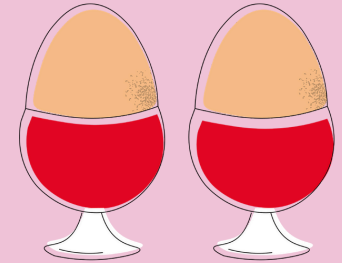


How much blood will I lose?

Most girls lose about 30 to 80 ml (or 1 to 6 tablespoons) of blood over the course of 3 to 7 days. It might seem like a lot, but it's typically much less than you think.

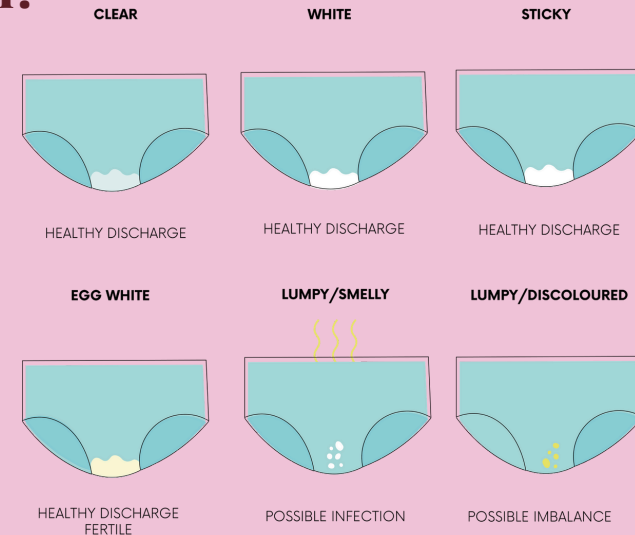
If you're soaking through your period underwear quickly and feel like you're losing a lot of blood, it's always a good idea to talk to a healthcare professional.

TWO EGG CUPS PER CYCLE



= 50 ML

What does the colour of my discharge mean?



“My period began 1-2 years after I started to get discharge.”

A tip from us...

Be prepared and keep a pair of period underwear in your bag, just in case.

Talking About Periods

There can be a lot of stigma around menstrual health but having a trusted circle of friends and family helps. It is important to understand that periods are natural and there should be no shame. Speak about periods just like any other bodily function. The more comfortable and neutral your tone is, the more you'll help normalize the conversation.

Start Simple and Casual

Ease into the topic naturally: You don't need a big "period talk" moment. Mention it casually when it comes up in daily life, like when planning around your period or if you're feeling certain symptoms (e.g., "I'm feeling a bit tired today; my period just started.").

Be Open About Period Products

Normalize sharing or asking for supplies: Whether with friends or family, make it normal to ask for pads, tampons, or other period products. If you need something, don't hesitate to ask, and encourage others to do the same.

Lead by Example

Be confident and normalize the conversation: If you're open about periods, others will feel more comfortable talking about them too. Your openness can inspire others to be more candid, helping to reduce shame and secrecy around the topic.



Break Stigma with Friends

The more openly you discuss periods with friends, the less of a "taboo" it becomes.

Share tips for dealing with symptoms, talk about products you like, or even joke about the quirks of period life. If a friend seems uncomfortable with their period or needs help, offer support.

Period Emergencies

What to do in case of unexpected periods away from home.

Take a deep breath: Period emergencies are common and manageable. Staying calm will help you think clearly about your next steps.

1. Find a Bathroom

- **Head to the nearest restroom:** If you're in a public place, locate a bathroom to assess the situation and clean up if necessary.
- **Use toilet paper as a temporary solution:** If you don't have access to period products, fold a clean wad of toilet paper and place it in your underwear to absorb the blood until you can get a proper pad or tampon.

2. Ask for Help

- **Reach out to friends :** If you're with people you trust, don't hesitate to ask if anyone has a pad or tampon. Many people carry extra products and will be happy to help.
- **Approach a teacher or school nurse:** If an emergency happens in school, you can always go to the school nurse for help. They can always provide period products or solutions in case of emergencies.

3. Layer Your Clothing

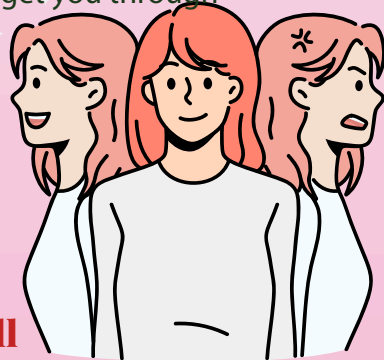
- **Tie a jacket or sweater around your waist:** If you notice any leakage or staining, tying a jacket or sweatshirt around your waist can help cover it up until you're able to change.
- **Wear darker colors:** If you happen to have dark clothing on, it can help disguise any stains until you get to a bathroom.

Emotional Well-being During Periods

Periods can be tough, from painful cramps to skin flare ups, Mood Swings and Irritability are also things to be on the lookout for. Here are a few self-care tips to get you through your time of the month.

Stay Hydrated

Drink plenty of water to help with bloating and overall digestion. Teas such as chamomile, ginger and raspberry leaf help with cramps.



Eat Well

It might be tempting to give into cravings but a healthy diet will help to alleviate period pain. Focus on fruits and iron-rich foods. Excessive salt and sugar can worsen bloating and mood swings.

Remember, pouring into yourself during this time is very important. Take time to rest.



What can I do if I get period cramps (stomach pains)?

Try these tips to relieve pain:

Rest and Relaxation

Sleep!

Listen to your body and get enough sleep. Relaxation techniques such as deep-breathing and meditation can help manage stress and discomfort. Music is also a good way to relax.



A hot shower



Hug a warm pillow or hot water bottle to your stomach

Light Exercise

Gentle exercise, like yoga, stretching, or walking, can reduce cramps, boost mood, and improve energy levels. Connecting with nature can also help with mood swings.

When you first start having periods it's quite common for you to not experience cramps, however after a year or so these can be quite intense.

The pain usually pops up just before or at the beginning of your period. Period pain can feel a bit like stomach cramps and can also cause back pain but it normally goes away after a few days.

What is a **period** underwear?

Period underwear or panties is a type of reusable underwear designed to absorb menstrual blood. It looks and feels like regular underwear but has special layers that wick moisture away, prevent leaks, and keep you comfortable and dry. This makes it a convenient, eco-friendly alternative to disposable products like pads.



Using Period Underwear

How Period Underwear Works. It contains:

- **Absorbent Layers:** The underwear contains multiple layers of absorbent material that trap liquid and prevent leaks.
- **Moisture-Wicking:** The top layer helps wick moisture away from your skin, keeping you feeling fresh.
- **Leak-Proof Barrier:** A waterproof layer ensures that fluid doesn't leak through to your clothing.

Menstrual Hygiene

Good hygiene during your period is essential for comfort and health. It helps prevent infections, reduces odor, and keeps you feeling fresh.

Daily Hygiene Tips:

- **Change Regularly:** Change your period underwear every 6-8 hours, or sooner on heavier flow days.
- **Bathe Daily:** Take a daily shower to wash away sweat and menstrual blood. Avoid using soap while washing down there.
- **Wipe Properly:** Always wipe from front to back after using the bathroom to prevent infections.

Addressing Concerns:

- **Odor:** Regular changes, showering, and staying hydrated help reduce odor.
- **Infections:** Keep your intimate area clean, change products often, and wear breathable fabrics.
- **Safe Practices:** Use unscented products and avoid tight, non-breathable clothing to prevent irritation.

Will everyone know when I've started my period

No one will know that you're on your period unless you tell them - honestly. It's fine to tell other people if you wish, but the truth is you'll look exactly the same as you did the day before, even if your body or your emotions feel different.

Some cultures or individuals may have different views on discussing periods. Be mindful and approach it with respect, while also expressing your own comfort level in talking about it.

Hygiene Tip...

Normal discharge has a slightly sour smell but should not smell bad; likewise period blood can have a sweat smell when it comes into contact with air.

QUICK TIPS

With proper care, our **period** underwear can last you for up to 5 years.

Period Underwear Care

Step by step guide on how to clean our Virtuous Period Underwear:

Step 1: Soak

- After wearing, rinse the underwear with cold water until it clears and soak it for 15- 30 minutes before washing. Avoid using hot water, as it can set blood stains.



Step 2: Wash

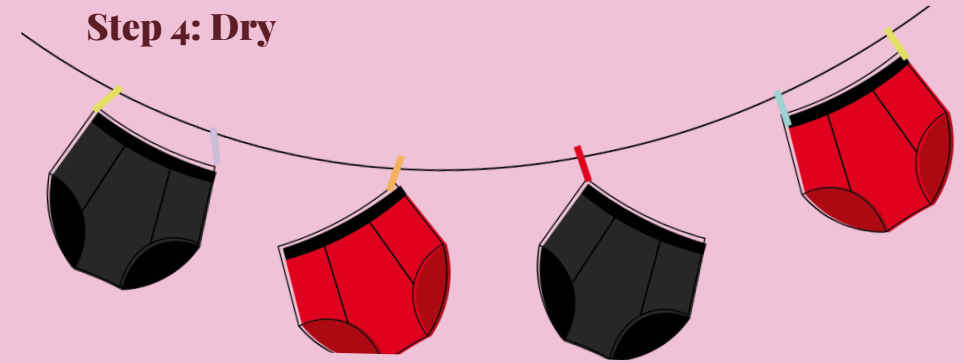
- **Use a Gentle Detergent:** Hand wash with a gentle, fragrance-free detergent. Avoid bleach, fabric softeners, or strong detergents, as they can damage the absorbent layers and reduce effectiveness.



Step 3: Rinse

- Make sure to rinse thoroughly using cold water to get all the detergent out.

Step 4: Dry



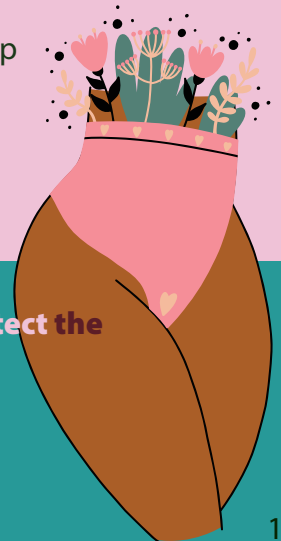
- When drying, it is best to air dry. This ensures that your period underwear lasts you longer.

Step 5: Storage

- Once fully dry, store them in a clean, dry place until the next use. You can also use our wet bags to store your period underwear while on the go during your period.

Step 6: Reuse

- Wear and care for your period underwear to last up to 5 years



Tip...

Wash with Similar Items: When washing your period underwear, don't mix with other clothing items. Instead, wash your delicates together.



- **Wash your period pantie with mild soap to protect the quality of the fabric**
- **No Ironing your period underwear**
- **Don't use bleach like Jik**
- **Don't use Fabric Softeners**

Tips for Packing a Period Kit

Packing a period kit is a smart way to stay prepared for any unexpected period emergencies. A well-stocked kit can help you manage your period comfortably while on the go. Here's a guide on what to include and how to organize your kit:

Compact Bag or Pouch

- **Choose a small, discreet pouch:** Pick a compact, waterproof bag that's easy to slip into your backpack. At virtuous we have a selection of wet bags for your period underwear.

Extra Underwear

Pack at least one pair of spare underwear: Choose comfortable, full-coverage underwear in case of leaks. Consider dark colors or period-proof underwear, which are more absorbent and great for emergencies.

Pain Relief

Keep a small, travel-sized pack of over-the-counter pain relievers like ponstan forte, ibuprofen or panadol to manage cramps or headaches.



Choose a Tracking Method

- **Apps:** Period tracking apps like Clue, Flo, or My Calendar are popular because they're easy to use and provide predictions based on your data.
- **Calendar/Planner:** If you prefer offline methods, mark the first day of your period on a calendar and note how long it lasts. This method is simple and effective if you're just tracking dates.
- **Journaling:** Some people prefer a more detailed log where they can write about symptoms, mood changes, or lifestyle factors that might influence their cycle.

Consistency

- **Record your period start date:** Always mark the first day of your period (Day 1), as this will help determine the length of your cycle.
- **Note the end date:** Track the day your period finishes so you can accurately calculate how long it lasts.
- **Be mindful of regularity:** Tracking a few months in a row will help you identify patterns in your cycle length.





A well-stocked period kit ensures you're always prepared, whether your period arrives unexpectedly or you're planning for travel. Keep it simple, organized. And always remember to carry some water with you!

Tracking your cycle

TRACKING YOUR CYCLE

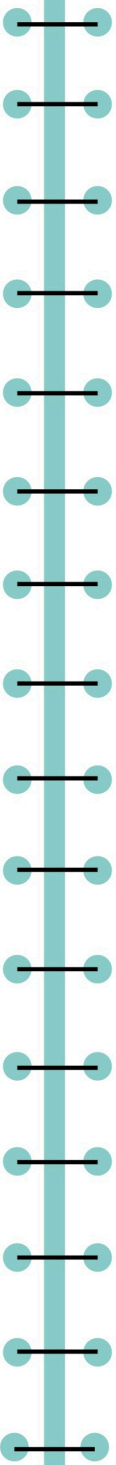
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SPOTTING  **LIGHT** **MODERATE**  **HEAVY**

Most people have periods every 28 days but everyone's cycle is unique. It's common to bleed for up to 7 days and usually your flow will be lighter at the start and end of your cycle.
Period blood can change colour, from bright red, to dark brown, this is nothing to cause concern.

Period tracker...

notes:



Notes section with horizontal teal lines for writing.

Problem periods...

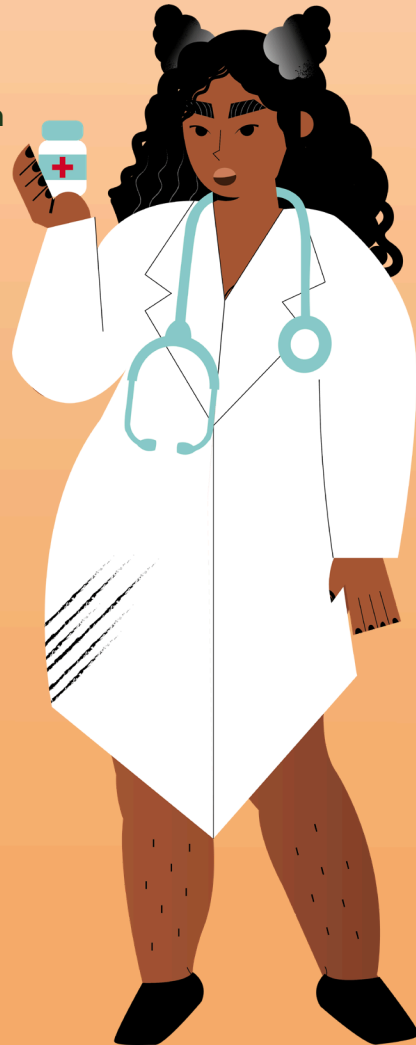
Having a period is a perfectly normal and healthy bodily function and isn't anything to feel shameful of. It doesn't need to be kept a secret, but it's OK if you want to keep it private. There are some medical conditions associated with having your period but these are quite rare. If you notice particular pain, a lot of blood or signs of depression making it difficult to cope with day-to-day life you should speak with someone you trust for support.

There are some people who have problems with their periods, because they have an illness or health condition that is linked to the menstrual cycle.

Most conditions can be managed with different treatment options. It's really important to speak to a medical professional if you have any concerns.

These are some of the most common problems that people with periods may find themselves dealing with, but it's important to remember not to try and diagnose yourself with lists of symptoms, or by going on Google!

Symptoms give an idea of what might be going on but it is better to visit the school nurse for more insight on what might be wrong. They could refer you to see a doctor if needed.



endometriosis:

This is a condition where cells that bleed grow outside the uterus, which can cause pain and can be linked to other symptoms like bloating, tiredness and heavy periods. Endometriosis can only be diagnosed by a doctor, using keyhole surgery to look inside the body.

premenstrual syndrome (PMS) or premenstrual tension (PMT) :

The terms PMS and PMT describe groups of symptoms that happen every time the person has a period but go again once the bleeding stops, including physical symptoms like bloating, sickness, headaches and cramps, and emotional symptoms like low mood, feeling irritable, finding it hard to concentrate or feeling tearful.

polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) :

This is a condition where cysts grow on the ovaries causing pain and problems with hormone balance. Excessive hair growth and weight gain can also be symptoms. PCOS can only be diagnosed by a doctor, by looking at symptoms and doing an ultrasound scan.

bacterial vaginosis:

This is a condition that develops when the levels of good and harmful bacteria in the vagina become unbalanced, or when harmful bacteria enters the vagina. It can be caused by using soaps, deodorants, perfumes or other products that irritate the vagina. Signs can be greyish discharge and an unpleasant smell.

thrush:

This is a fungal infection in the vagina (although it can also be found in the mouth) that causes a thick white discharge, itchiness and discomfort. It happens when the balance of bacteria is affected. Using soaps, perfumes or other products inside the vagina can cause thrush, and it can develop after taking antibiotics. It's usually treated with medication from the pharmacist.

PERIOD EMPOWERMENT

Periods are a natural and important part of growing up, and it's something you should never feel embarrassed or ashamed about. You might feel a mix of emotions about getting your period, and that's totally okay. What's important is to approach it with confidence and remember that it's just one part of the amazing changes your body is going through.

It can help to think of your period as a source of strength rather than something to be anxious about. Getting your period is a sign that you are growing and becoming more in tune with your body. It's a powerful reminder of how capable and resilient you are. Embrace the fact that your body has its own rhythms and cycles, and by learning to track your period and understand it, you gain even more control over your health and well-being.

Don't hesitate to ask for help or share your experiences—you might be surprised at how supportive others can be. And remember, having your period doesn't hold you back from doing the things you love. You can still play sports, hang out with friends, or pursue your hobbies with confidence.

Above all, give yourself kindness and grace during your period. Some days might feel harder than others, but that's just part of the experience. Listen to your body, practice self-care, and know that you're not alone in this journey. **You've got this!** Your period is just one part of who you are, and it doesn't define your strength, intelligence, or what you're capable of achieving.

Remember you are Beautiful ! Proverbs 31:25 – “She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.” This verse highlights resilience, empowerment, and the inherent dignity of every woman, making it a fitting and uplifting message for a guide on periods.



Periods can be overwhelming for all of us which is why we've created a go-to guide that covers everything you need and should know about periods.

We discuss the biology of menstruation, what you can expect to happen and see during your cycle, product tips and guides for using them and even indications of 'problem periods' to look out for. We also teach you about our period underwear, how to wear, wash and care for them.

We believe in a better period for everyone, so enjoy your inclusive guide to periods. An informal learning resource for you, parents, teachers and everyone that wants to get the conversation flowing.



At Virtuous, every stitch tells a story of empowerment and every fabric choice is a testament to sustainability. From period underwear crafted with performance fabrics to waterproof bags designed with thoughtful precision, each product is a reflection of our commitment to excellence and our dedication to the environment.

Visit

www.virtuouslives.com

to learn more about us and purchase our products

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