

GET THE FACTS ABOUT

# *MENSTRUATION*

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# WHAT IS A "NORMAL" PERIOD

No two people have the same period or cycle. As long as you aren't having any problems, you are most likely okay. Below several examples of how periods can be different and still be normal.

## *men-strual-cy-cle:*

The first time from the first day of one period to the first day of the next period.

- CYCLE LENGTHS can be from 21 to 45 days. Cycles can vary by a few days or be the same number of days every time.
- CYCLE REGULARITY fluctuates throughout your development. If you've just started menstruating, it's normal to have irregular cycles for the first year or so.
- DAYS OF BLEEDING can range from three to seven or anything in between.
- SYMPTOMS include cramps, back pain, or discomfort. More bowel movements than usual or constipation for the first day or so. There are also other symptoms (see PMS).

## HOW MUCH BLOOD IS TOO MUCH BLOOD?

Sometimes there is worry about how much blood comes out. However, most days it only amounts to a teaspoon or two of blood. If you have any of the following problems, speak to your healthcare provider:

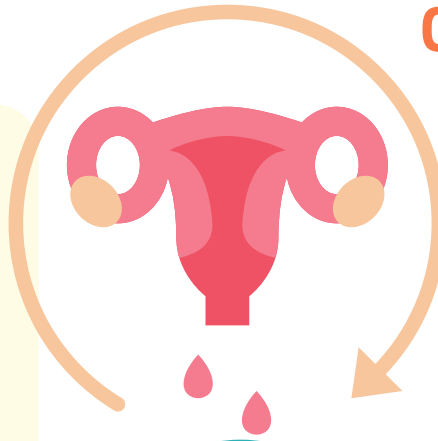
- blood that soaks through one or more pads or tampons every hour for several hours in a row.
- need to use pads and tampons at the same time to control the blood flow for several hours at a time.
- if you bleed or have your period more often than every 21 days



# TRACKING YOUR PERIOD

## BENEFITS OF TRACKING YOUR PERIOD

- You learn to understand your unique patterns
- You increase your awareness of your overall health
- You may develop a better understanding and management of moods



## CYCLE BEGINS

Pituitary gland signals ovaries

egg goes down fallopian tubes to uterus

uterus thickens with blood

blood sheds vaginantly

pregnancy does not occur

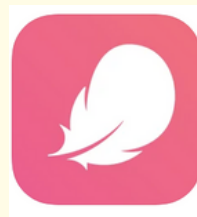
OR

pregnancy occurs

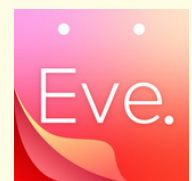
## Did you know?

Your period is an indicator of your health, so knowing your pattern can help you know that everything is running fine. Tracking your period will help you remember details when speaking with your doctor.

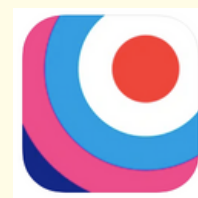
## TRACKING APPS



Flo



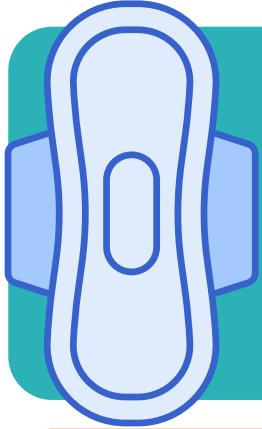
Eve



Spot On

# KEEPIN' YOU COVERED

What you choose to use to keep you covered during your period depends on what you are most comfortable using.

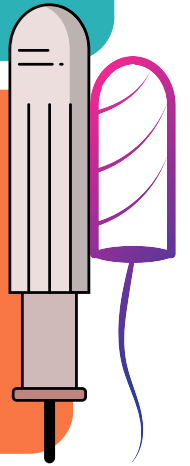


## PADS

- Most commonly used
- Attaches to the inside of underwear the absorbent layer of cotton catches blood

## TAMPONS

- Absorbs blood from inside vagina
- It is inserted into the vagina with an applicator or finger



## MENSTRUAL CUPS

- Small, reusable, flexible cup that is inserted into the vagina and collects blood
- It may take a couple of tries before getting used to inserting it and removing it



## MENSTRUAL PANTIES

- These are not regular panties. Menstrual panties are made with special fibers that absorb blood
- They are worn just like regular panties



# PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME- PMS

**It is a term that refers to the physical and emotional symptoms one feels before or during their period**

## Typical symptoms include:

- Cramps
- Headaches
- Backaches
- Bloating or water retention
- Breast tenderness
- Pimples
- Mood swings including depression

Most symptoms are caused by hormonal changes with estrogen and progesterone levels. They tend to last a few days and are mild in nature. Most symptoms can be relieved by over-the-counter pain medication like acetaminophen (aka Tylenol).

## FOR CRAMPS, TRY THIS:

- Light exercise
- A heating pad on the lowest setting
- Over-the-counter medications like acetaminophen or ibuprofen



**MOST PMS SYMPTOMS ARE MILD  
AND LAST ONLY A FEW DAYS**

# RESOURCES

**[www.iknowmine.org](http://www.iknowmine.org)**

**[www.wernative.org](http://www.wernative.org)**

**[www.cdc.gov/hygiene/about/menstrual-hygiene](http://www.cdc.gov/hygiene/about/menstrual-hygiene)**

