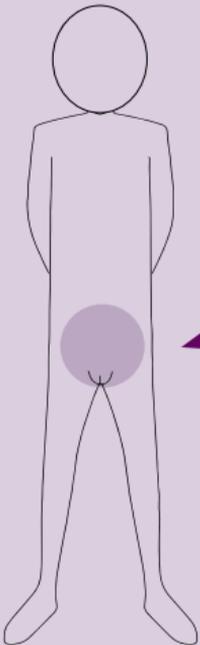
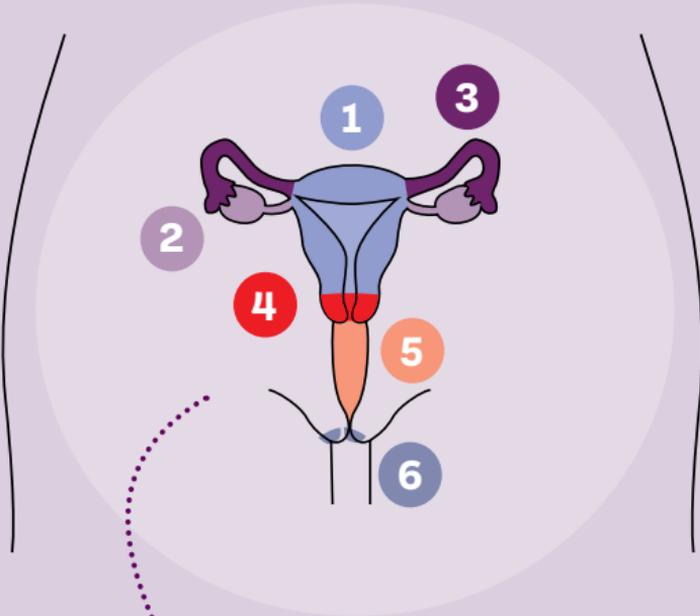


Body parts in a period

- 1 Uterus:** Where the lining (period blood) grows and a pregnancy could grow
- 2 Ovaries:** Where egg cells and hormones are made
- 3 Fallopian tubes:** What the egg travels through to the uterus
- 4 Cervix:** The opening to the uterus at the top of the vagina
- 5 Vagina:** A muscular tube inside the body. This is where period blood comes out
- 6 Vulva:** The folds of skin on the outside of the body. Between these folds are the clitoris, and the openings to the vagina and urethra (where urine comes out)



Together, these body parts are known as a reproductive system. Knowing your body can help you feel more confident!

What is a period?

A period is when the lining of the uterus (period blood) leaves the body through the vagina. It's an expected part of growing up for people with a vagina and uterus, and one of the changes that happens during puberty. It shows that the body is able to become pregnant. Periods start at different ages for different people, usually between 8 – 15 years old. For most people, it is around 12 or 13.

'Menstruation' is used as another word for a period

Menstrual cycle overview

A period is one part of the menstrual cycle. A menstrual cycle can last between 21 – 30 days (for most people, around 28 days). It might not be regular for the first year or two after getting a first period.

During the menstrual cycle, the lining called the endometrium builds up inside the uterus, made of blood and other tissues. It grows in case a pregnancy starts.

An egg is released from one of the ovaries. This is called ovulation. For the next 24 hours, the egg moves along the fallopian tube. If it joins with a sperm at this time, a pregnancy could start.

The lining is not needed if no pregnancy starts, so the uterus squeezes and pushes the endometrium out of the body through the vagina – this is called a period.

It takes 3 – 7 days and nights for the period blood to finish coming out. For most people, it is around 5.

Period blood might be pink, red, brown, thick, or mucus-like. On average, around 2 – 3 tablespoons of blood comes out in a period, and different amounts might come out on different days.

Symptoms

A symptom is something someone might feel in the body. Symptoms of a period will be different for everyone.

Some common symptoms include:

- Breast soreness
- Tiredness
- More or less energy
- Pimples
- Changes in mood
- Bloating
- Some cramping or discomfort in the belly, back, bottom, vulva or thighs

Most of the time, people can keep doing all their usual activities.

Getting help

A person should see a doctor if they have period symptoms that stop them from doing their usual activities – like going to school or playing sport.



There are lots of ways to get help and information. A young person experiencing any of the below symptoms should ask for help from a trusted adult, to get more information or see a doctor.

Some symptoms to look out for include:

- Strong pain that stops someone from doing their usual activities
- Heavy bleeding – needing to change a pad or tampon more than every 2 hours
- Strong emotions
- Unexpected changes to a period or menstrual cycle

Period products

There are many different options people may use to manage their period. These include:

Pads

- Single use
- Stick inside underwear
- Absorbs the period blood as it comes out of the vagina
- **Wear up to 6 hours**



Period underwear

- Can be washed and reused
- Wears like regular underwear
- Includes layers of absorbent material between the legs
- Absorbs the period blood as it comes out of the vagina
- **Wear up to 12 hours**



Tampons

- Single use
- Small, soft tubes of cotton
- Placed inside the vagina
- Absorbs the period blood before it leaves the body
- **Wear up to 4 hours**



Period cups or discs

- Can be emptied, washed and reused
- Typically made of silicone
- Placed inside the vagina
- Catches the period blood like a cup before it leaves the body
- **Wear up to 12 hours**



You can try different products to find what feels most comfortable and works best for you.

Common questions

1. What if a tampon gets stuck or the string breaks?

Tampon strings are sewn firmly into the tampon, and it is unlikely they will break. A tampon cannot get lost inside the body, as the cervix at the top of the vagina is too small for a tampon to fit through. If you are having trouble removing a tampon, try to relax. Wash your hands and use fingers inside the vagina to gently remove it.

2. Can someone tell if I have my period?

Period products are not visible through most clothing, and there is no smell if they are changed regularly. Some people choose to share with their friends that they have their period, some people keep it private. It's up to you!

3. What if I get my period at school?

It happens! If you do not have a period product on you, you can use a small amount of toilet paper in your underwear like a pad. All schools have period products. They might be in bathrooms, the nurses' office, first aid kit or you could ask a classroom teacher or friend.

4. What if I bleed through a pad/tampon?

This is called leaking. You could tie a jumper around your waist and go to the bathroom to change. Keeping extra period products, underwear, or clothing in your bag can be helpful.

5. Can you pee with a tampon/cup/disc in?

Yes, you can. Urine (pee) comes out of the urethra, and these period products sit inside the vagina.

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