

# All Things Menstrual Cycle

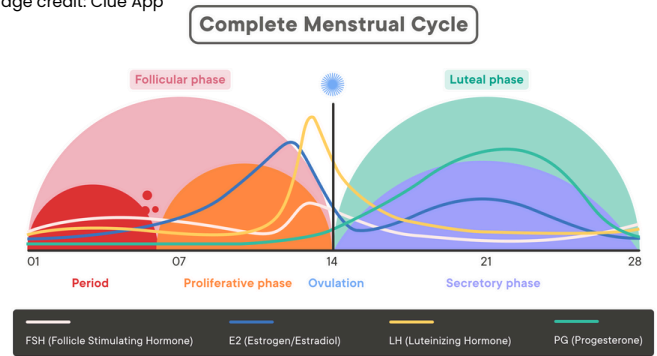
## What is a menstrual cycle?



The number of days from the first day of one period to the first day of the next period

First 5 years of menarche: Cycle is 21-45 days  
After first 5 years: Cycle is 21-35 days

Image credit: Clue App



## What is a period (i.e. menstruation)?

When period blood (a combination of liquefied uterine lining tissue, mucous, blood, cells and enzymes) shed and flow out of the body, from the uterus, through the vagina and out of the body

- ✿ Marks beginning of menstrual cycle
- ✿ A non-medicated period should include cyclic uterine bleeding

## What is a normal period?

- 2-7 days of bleeding
- 3-6 non-saturated tampons or pads/day
- May be slightly uncomfortable or require small adjustments but **should not disrupt normal quality of life**

## What is an abnormal period?

### Irregular

- Bleeding > 7 days
- Cycle is > or < normal cycle length
- Bleeding in between periods

### Painful

- Severe or debilitating cramps
- Pain in abdomen, back, or thighs

### Heavy Flow

- > 6-8 products/ day
- Flooding through period products onto clothes or bedding
- Passing large clots (> quarter in size)

### Absent

- > 3 months since last period

## Tracking your periods

### How to track?

- Menstrual cycle tracking apps
- Calendar/notebook

### What to track?

- First day of bleeding <
- Any clots present/size <
- Which period products, how many each day, and how saturated they are <
- Associated symptoms <

### Why to track?

- Improve predictability, planning, quality of life, and detect deviations
- Communicate abnormalities with clinicians