



MENSTRUAL CYCLE 101

A quick reference guide for teachers

THE CYCLE IN BRIEF

- Average length: 21–35 days (counted from Day 1 of bleeding to the day before the next bleed). Teen cycles may be up to 45 days in first 1–2 years.
- The cycle is more than “just a period” — it’s a whole-body process that includes hormones, brain, energy, emotions, and fertility.

PHASES OF THE CYCLE

1. Menstrual (Day 1)

- Bleeding (period).
- Hormones (estrogen & progesterone) are at their lowest.
- Students may feel tired, need warmth, comfort, or extra rest.

2. Follicular

- Estrogen rises → more energy, focus, motivation.
- Students may feel more confident, social, and ready for challenges.

3. Ovulation

- Egg is released.
- Estrogen peaks, energy is often at its highest.
- Students may feel strong, expressive, and outward-focused.

4. Luteal

- Progesterone rises (calming effect) then drops before a period.
- Students may feel more emotional, sensitive, or experience PMS.
- Cravings, mood shifts, or fatigue are common.

Teaching & Support Tips

- Normalize it: talk about periods as a healthy, normal process.
- Be inclusive: some students may not have started their periods yet, others may experience heavy pain or irregular cycles.
- Practical empathy: allow water bottles, bathroom breaks, and heat packs where possible.

Watch for red flags:

- Period pain that stops a student from normal activities.
- Very heavy bleeding (soaking through every 1–2 hrs).
- Periods that haven’t started by age 15
- Encourage families to seek medical support if these occur



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THE CYCLE AND ITS SEASONS



PHASE 4: LUTEAL - INNER AUTUMN

WHEN: Before Period - when Period begins

WHAT: Progesterone rises then falls. The body prepares for menstruation.

FEEL: Moody, tired, sensitive, craving solitude, hungry.

NEEDS: Offer comfort, calm routines, nutritious food, reassurance, increase calories.



PHASE 1: MENSTRUATION - INNER WINTER

WHEN: DAY 1 of Bleed

Lasts 3-7 days

WHAT: Hormones are low. The uterine lining sheds. This is the period.

FEEL: Tired, reflective, sensitive or withdrawn

NEEDS: encouragement, rest, warmth, quiet time.



PHASE 3: OVULATION - INNER SUMMER



WHEN: Midcycle - Ovulation

WHAT: Ovulation occurs (release of egg). Hormones peak.

FEEL: Confident, outgoing, high-energy, verbal

NEED: Encourage socialising, school presentations, physical activity



PHASE 2: FOLICULAR - INNER SPRING

WHEN: After period - Ovulation

WHAT: Estrogen rises. The body prepares for ovulation.

FEEL: More energised, hopeful, social, focused

NEED: Support new ideas, gentle movement, creativity



UNDERSTANDING YOUR INNER SEASONS

- You realise that it's normal to feel different each week
- You can plan your life around your energy (where possible!)
- You start to listen to your body with kindness, not judgment

You don't have to be the same every day or even week to week!. You're not supposed to be - and that's the power of knowing about your cycle.