

IS SHE PERIOD READY?

A simple guide to the conversations
and practical preparation every girl
deserves before her first period

Because feeling prepared changes how
we experience what comes next.



A first period shouldn't arrive
as a complete surprise.



Girls deserve enough information
to understand what is happening,
know what to do and feel
comfortable asking for help.



This guide will help you make sure
your daughter has the knowledge,
practical preparation and support
she needs before her first period
arrives.



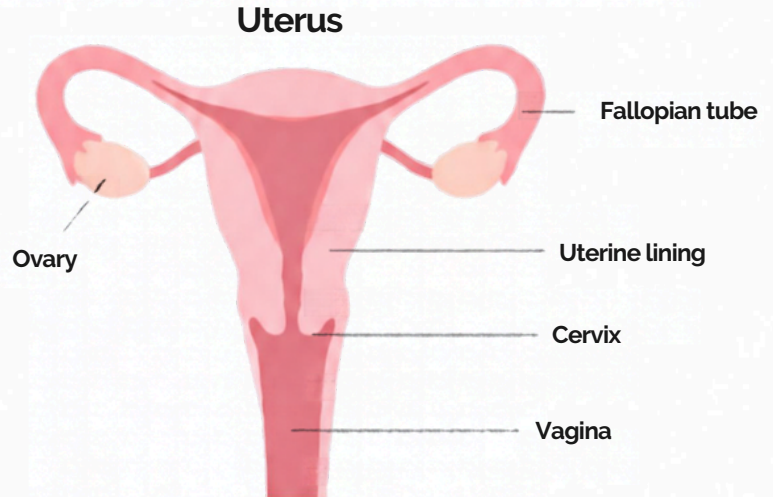
What does she actually need to know?

Before her first period, your daughter doesn't need to know everything about the menstrual cycle but she does deserve enough information to understand what is happening in her body and what to do when her first period arrives.

What a period actually is

As hormones begin to rise and change through puberty, the body starts preparing for possible pregnancy each month. Part of that process involves the lining of the uterus building up. If pregnancy doesn't happen, that lining leaves the body through the vagina as menstrual blood.

She should understand where the blood comes from, why it happens and that it is a normal part of growing up.



Each month, the lining of the uterus builds up. If pregnancy doesn't occur, that lining leaves the body through the vagina as a period.

What her first period might look like

- ☐ red, dark red or brown
- ☐ light spotting or a little heavier
- ☐ very short, or last several days
- ☐ irregular at first

Knowing this beforehand can make the first experience much less confusing.

Early periods don't always follow a 'perfect' cycle

In the first few years after periods begin, cycles are often unpredictable. A young teen's cycle may not follow the same pattern, timing or number of bleeding days as a mature adult cycle.

Periods may not come exactly every month, the number of bleeding days may vary and some cycles may be lighter or heavier than others. It can take time for her body to settle into a rhythm.

Variation is common, although significant pain, very heavy bleeding or anything concerning should be discussed with an appropriate health professional.



What she might feel

Some girls experience cramps, sore breasts, tiredness, mood changes or changes to vaginal discharge, while others notice very little.



How period products work

- ☐ how to unwrap and position a pad
- ☐ how often it may need changing
- ☐ how period underwear works
- ☐ how to wrap and dispose of products
- ☐ where products are kept at home

“The first time she opens a pad shouldn't have to be in a school bathroom while she's already feeling uncertain.”

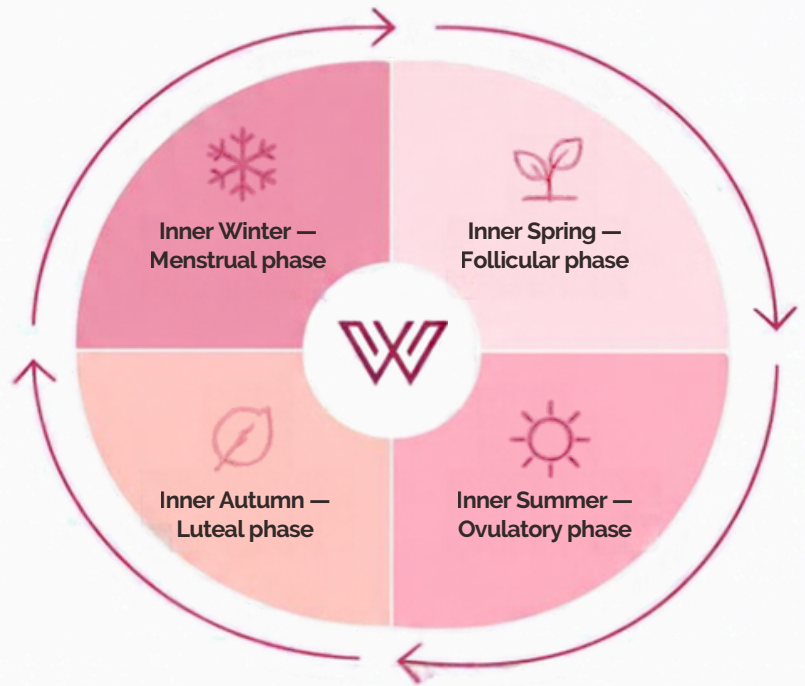
A simple guide to the menstrual cycle

A period is just one part of the menstrual cycle.

Across the month, hormones rise and fall, and the body moves through a series of phases. These phases can influence energy, mood, emotions, physical symptoms and cervical fluid.

Not every girl will notice big changes (especially in the early years, when cycles are often still settling) but it can be helpful to understand that the menstrual cycle is more than just the days of bleeding.

The 'inner seasons' framework is one simple way to explain the four main phases of the cycle.



Inner Winter: Menstrual phase

This is when bleeding happens. This phase begins on Day 1 of the cycle, which is the first day of a period. During inner winter, hormone levels are low and the uterine lining is leaving the body as menstrual blood.

- **Some girls may notice:** lower energy
- cramps
- wanting more rest or quiet
- feeling more inward or emotional

What can help:

Rest, warmth, gentle movement, nourishing food, period products that feel comfortable, and extra self-kindness.



Inner Spring: Follicular phase

This is the phase after a period finishes.

During inner spring, the body begins preparing an egg to mature, and hormone levels start to rise again.

- **Some girls may notice:** energy gradually increasing
- feeling more motivated or optimistic
- clearer thinking
- a sense of things picking up again

What can help:

Trying new things, getting organised, gentle planning, and noticing energy returning.



Inner Summer: Ovulatory phase

This is around the time an egg is released. Ovulation happens roughly in the middle of the cycle in a mature cycle, although timing can vary, especially in the early stages.

- **Some girls may notice:** higher energy
- feeling more social or confident
- more cervical fluid or discharge
- feeling more outward or expressive

What can help:

Making the most of energy, staying hydrated, and understanding that discharge around this time is often a normal part of the cycle.



Inner Autumn: Luteal phase

This is the phase before the next period begins. After ovulation, the body prepares for the possibility of pregnancy. If pregnancy doesn't occur, hormone levels begin to fall and the cycle moves back toward menstruation.

- **Some girls may notice:** lower energy than earlier in the cycle
- mood changes or irritability
- bloating
- sore breasts
- wanting more space or downtime

What can help:

Slowing down a little, planning for extra support, recognizing emotional changes without judging them, and remembering that a period may be approaching.



In the first few years after periods begin, cycles are often irregular and ovulation may not happen every cycle. That means a young teen's cycle may not follow a textbook 28-day pattern, and she may not clearly notice all four phases straight away.



Is she practically prepared?

A little planning makes a big difference.



- ☐ Where will she keep period products at home?



- ☐ What will she carry in her school bag?

Suggested period pouch:

- 2-3 pads or period underwear
- spare underwear
- small resizable bag for soiled underwear if needed



- ☐ What should she do if her period starts at school?

Mention teachers, school office, student services, school nurse or another trusted adult.



- ☐ What if it happens away from home?

Examples: school camp, sleepover, sport, Dad's house, friend's house.



Notice it



Get what you need



Ask for help if needed



Let a trusted adult know



The emotional side of being prepared

Being prepared isn't only about products. It can also help to talk about how she would like her first period to be acknowledged.

- ☐ Would you like to keep it private at first and share when you feel ready?
- ☐ Would you be happy for other family members to know?
- ☐ Would you like a quiet acknowledgement or something more significant?
- ☐ What would help you feel supported if it happened unexpectedly?

Some girls want their first period treated very quietly. Some enjoy a small acknowledgement. Some want to tell people straight away. Others want time first. There isn't one right response. What matters is that her preferences are respected.



The conversation matters too

- ☐ What have you heard about periods already?
- ☐ Is there anything about getting your period that worries you?
- ☐ What would you want with you if your period started at school?
- ☐ Who could you ask for help if I wasn't there?
- ☐ Do you know where we keep period products at home?
- ☐ How would you want us to handle it when your first period comes?



She knows...

- ☐ what a period is and why it happens
- ☐ where period blood comes from
- ☐ first periods can look different
- ☐ early cycles may be irregular
- ☐ how to use period products
- ☐ what to do if her period starts unexpectedly
- ☐ who she can ask for help



We have...

- ☐ period products at home
- ☐ a small period kit ready
- ☐ talked about periods happening away from home
- ☐ identified trusted adults
- ☐ talked about privacy and how she would like
- ☐ her first period acknowledged

“ She doesn't need to know everything. She just needs enough information to feel less surprised, more prepared and supported when the time comes. ”