




# Why are we learning about this?

- 50-51% of the population are biologically female and will menstruate once they hit puberty.
  - Most of you, male or female, currently live with or has an important relationship with someone who menstruates. If you don't now, you may in the future.
  - Some of you will go on to become parents and might have children who will have menstrual cycles.
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# Task 1: What do you already know?

*2 mins!*

1. What is the **typical** length of a menstrual 'cycle'?
  - a) 5-7 days
  - b) 31 days
  - c) 28 days
  - d) 14 days
2. Experiencing pain/discomfort during periods is 'normal'?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  - C) Other – state:
3. At what age should someone visit the GP if they haven't started their period?
  - a) 14 years old
  - b) 16 years old
  - c) 18 years old

# Task 1: What do you already know?

*mark your answers!*

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c) Other – state:

**Pain is normal but significant pain is not – more information on next slides!**

3. At what age should someone visit the GP if they haven't started their period?

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# The Menstrual Cycle: A.k.a Periods

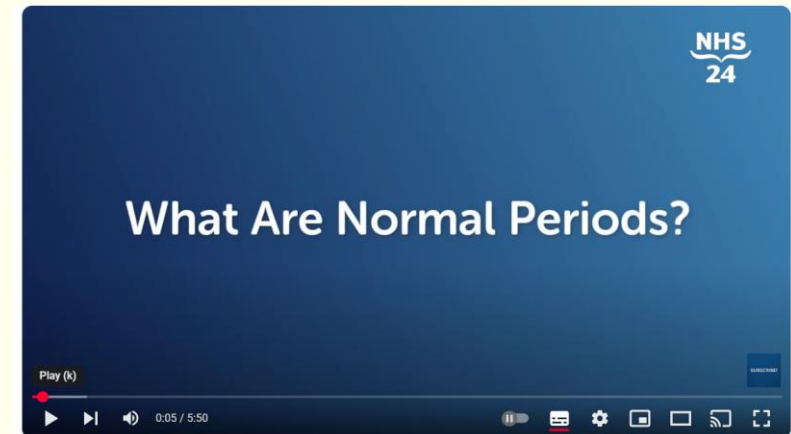
Sometimes it can feel embarrassing talking about periods – but remember, periods are normal. Understanding menstrual health and wellbeing is important.

A period is the part of the menstrual cycle when women, girls and people who menstruate bleed from their vagina.

For most people this happens every **28 days** or so, but it's common for periods to start sooner or later than this. It can range from day **24 to day 38** of your cycle. Periods last from around 4 to 8 days.

## Task 2: Watch the video (5 mins) and answer the questions

1. Why might some people experience pain during periods?
2. What could you do to help ease symptoms?
3. What are some of the effects of **Oestrogen**?
4. What are some of the effects of **Progesterone**?
5. What is the typical length of a period?
6. On average how much blood does someone lose during a cycle?
7. Who should you speak to if you have any symptoms that are concerning?



[Click here to watch – link also in notes](#)

1. Why might some people experience pain during periods?  
**Contractions to remove lining from uterus (cramps). Those just starting might experience more pain.**
2. What could you do to help ease symptoms?  
**Over the counter pain relief, hot baths, exercise.**
3. What are some of the effects of **Oestrogen**?  
**Improved skin/hair and boost mood**
4. What are some of the effects of **Progesterone**?  
**Lower mood, greasy or oily hair, breast tenderness**
5. What is the typical length of a period?  
**5-7 days**
6. On average how much blood does someone lose during a cycle?  
**40ml - wouldn't experience 'flooding' very often**
7. Who should you speak to if you have any symptoms that are concerning? **GP**

# Endometriosis

Endometriosis is where cells like those in the lining of the womb (uterus) grow in other parts of the body.

Endometriosis is often found in areas around the womb, such as the ovaries, fallopian tubes and lining of the pelvis. It also sometimes affects organs, such as the bladder and bowel. Rarely, endometriosis is found in areas outside the pelvis, such as in the chest.

Symptoms happen when patches of endometriosis break down and bleed but cannot leave the body like normal endometrial tissue.

## See a GP if:

- you think you might have endometriosis
- your symptoms are affecting your everyday life, work and relationships
- you've had treatment from a GP but your symptoms do not get better, or get worse



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## Symptoms include:

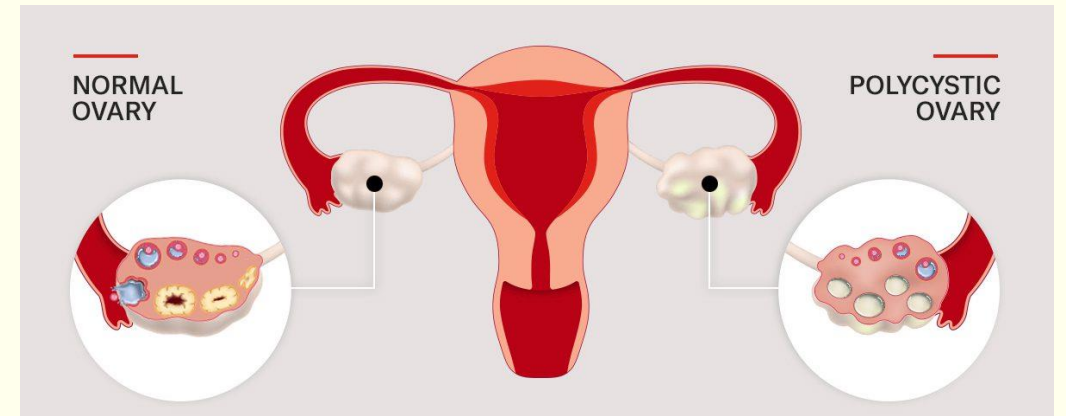
- Severe period, that stops you from doing your normal activities
- Heavy periods, where you need to change your pads or tampons every 1 to 2 hours, or you may bleed through to your clothes.
- It can also cause extreme tiredness and make it difficult to become pregnant

Though endometriosis can have a big impact on life, it is possible to treat (though not cure) it through surgery and medication.

**It is a misconception that endometriosis is a rare condition. It affects 1 in every 10 women.**



# PCOS



**Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a common condition that affects how a woman's ovaries work.**

The 3 main features of PCOS are:

- Irregular periods – which means your ovaries do not regularly release eggs (ovulation)
- excess androgen – high levels of "male" hormones in your body, which may cause physical signs such as excess facial or body hair
- polycystic ovaries – your ovaries become enlarged and contain many fluid-filled sacs (follicles) that surround the eggs (but despite the name, you do not actually have cysts if you have PCOS)

If you have at least 2 of these features, you may be diagnosed with PCOS.

# Symptoms of PCOS

If you have symptoms of PCOS, they'll usually become apparent during your late teens or early 20s.

They can include:

- irregular periods or none at all
- difficulty getting pregnant as a result of irregular ovulation or no ovulation
- Excessive hair growth – usually on the face, chest, back or buttocks
- weight gain
- thinning hair and hair loss from the head
- oily skin or acne



# Treating PCOS

There's no cure for PCOS, but the symptoms can be treated. It is important to see your GP if you have symptoms that concern you.

Eating a healthy, balanced can make some symptoms better. Medicines are also available to treat symptoms such as excessive hair growth, irregular periods and fertility problems.



# Reflection: When to seek support

- If it is preventing someone from completing day-to-day tasks like going to school or leaving their home etc.
- Experiencing a lot of 'flooding' and/or blood clots
- Severe pain that continues after using over-the-counter pain relief or heat treatment.
- Irregular cycles – different lengths every cycle
- Cycles that are shorter than 24 days or over 38
- If someone hasn't started their period by 16



**It is important to seek help as these symptoms could be an indication of other health conditions that could impact fertility, such as: endometriosis, uterine fibroids, adenomyosis, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOs), pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and hormonal imbalances.**

# What support is available?

- Your GP
- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/periods/>
- <https://menstrualhealthproject.org.uk/>
- <https://www.bloodygoodperiod.com/>



**If you ever need periods products whilst in school, please ask pupil reception.**

**You can discuss any concerns with: Miss Smith, Miss Garrett and Mrs Nicholls Steed**