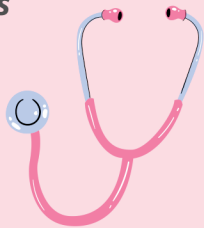


Period Talk

QUICK FACTS &
QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Be mindful of the following - if any of these occur, contact a healthcare provider:

- If you are 15 and haven't started your period
- If you have had your period for more than 2 years and it still doesn't come regularly (about every 4-5 weeks)
- If you have bleeding between periods
- If you have severe cramps that don't get better with ibuprofen or naproxen
- If you have very heavy bleeding (bleeding that goes through a pad or tampon faster than every 1 hour)
- If you have periods that last more than about a week
- If you have severe PMS that gets in the way of your everyday activities



For more information/resources
please visit the link below:

<https://tinyurl.com/resources-period-talk>



CALIFORNIA
SCHOOL-BASED
HEALTH ALLIANCE

Putting Health Care Where Kids Are

www.schoolhealthcenters.org

Understanding PMS

- **PMS (premenstrual syndrome):** Emotional and physical symptoms that occur before or during a period. Moodiness, sadness, anxiety, bloating, tiredness, food cravings, backaches, constipation, diarrhea, and acne are symptoms associated with PMS.
- **What are period cramps?** Pain in the lower belly during a girl's period. Many girls have cramps during the first few days of their periods. These cramps are caused by a chemical in the body that makes the muscle in the uterus contract.
- **Ways to help relieve PMS symptoms at home:** Get enough sleep, exercise lightly, take over-the-counter pain relievers, de-stress and take time for yourself.
- **Bloating** can be eased by lowering the amount of salt in your diet.
- **Reach out to a healthcare provider if:** You don't feel better after trying home treatments, feel very sad or hopeless, think about hurting or taking your own life, or have PMS symptoms that don't go away after the first few days of your period.



How to handle back pain, cramps, and breast soreness

- Most PMS symptoms, including breast soreness, should disappear as your period begins.
- Over-the-counter pain relievers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, might be helpful for breast soreness.
- Wearing a supportive bra may feel more comfortable.
- For cramps and back pain: a warm heating pad on your belly/back and taking ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or naproxen could reduce the pain you're feeling.

Most girls need to change their pad, tampon, or menstrual cup about 3–6 times a day.

~**Pads:** when a girl first gets her period a pad might be the most comfortable. Pads are made of cotton and come in lots of different sizes and shapes.

~**Tampons:** might be more convenient, especially when playing sports or swimming. It is a cotton plug that a girl puts into her vagina. Most come with an applicator that guides the tampon into place. It absorbs the blood. Don't leave a tampon in for more than 8 hours as this can cause a risk of a serious infection called toxic shock syndrome.

~**Menstrual cup:** often made of silicone. It is inserted into the vagina and holds the blood until removed and emptied. It can be worn for 6- 12 hours.



What to know

1. Periods usually last about 5 days but can be more or less than that.
2. For the first few years after a girl starts her period, it may not come regularly.
3. After a while a girl's period starts to regulate itself and should come around once every 4-5 weeks.
4. A girl can get pregnant as soon as her period starts and right before her very first period because a girl's hormones might already be active.
5. If a girl has sex, she can get pregnant, even though she has never had a period.
6. It may look and feel like a lot of blood, but a girl usually only loses a few tablespoons of blood during the whole period.

