

Periods are normal - but what is a normal period?



Supporting information

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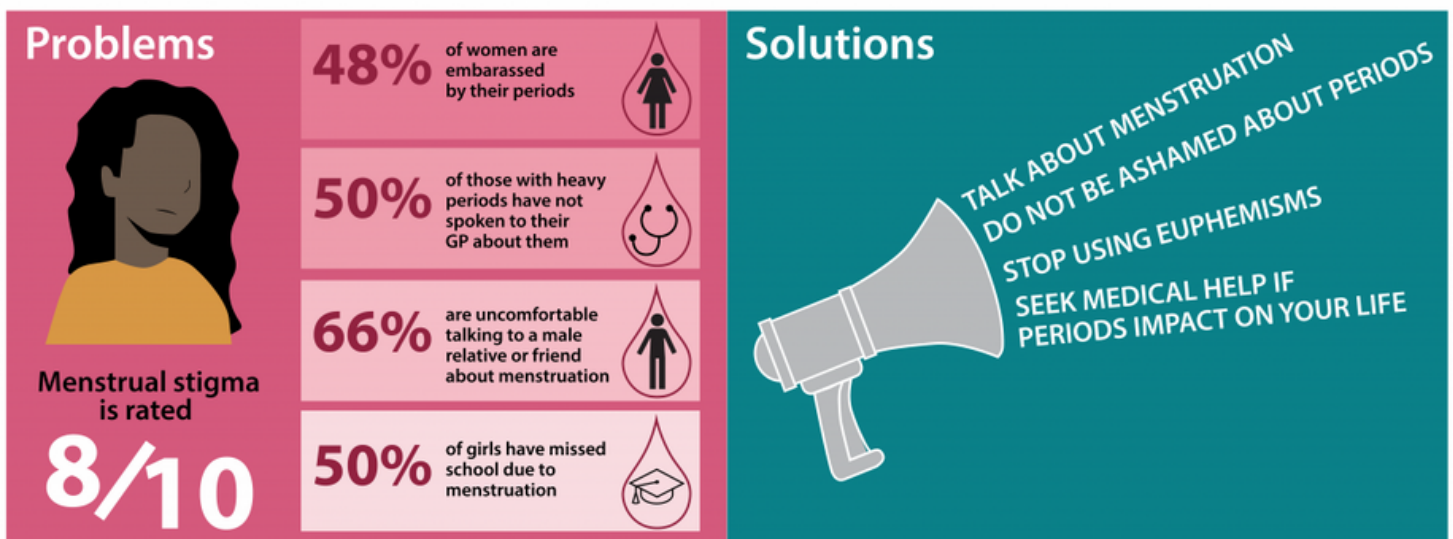
All links here

Watch the ALLIANCE and Scottish Government's webinar here:

<https://youtu.be/KT2vcFRXZUc>

See NHS Inform's Women's Health platform for detailed information on periods.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/womens-health/girls-and-young-women-puberty-to-around-25/periods-and-menstrual-health/periods-menstruation>



What is a normal period?

Everyone experiences periods differently, but it's important to know what isn't 'normal'. **A good way of thinking about this is that your period shouldn't stop you doing the things you would normally.** For example going to school, work, taking part in sports or other activities.

This short video, featuring Dr Jackie Maybin, explores the topic further:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyX5fAkOvJo&t=15s>

Heavy bleeding

Two things associated with having heavier periods than most are flooding through menstrual products and clothes, and passing large clots. Some people are also hesitant to leave the house during their period due to their heavy bleeding. Increased pain may also accompany heavy bleeding.

Should you be concerned about these symptoms then speak to your GP. They will be able to assess for any underlying cause and offer appropriate treatment. **See the end of this document for a checklist of what information to bring to your appointment. You may wish to print this and complete at home.**

For many people, heavy periods have no cause. For others, it's due to a health condition such as fibroids, adenomyosis, PCOS or endometriosis.

Watch these short videos to learn more about endometriosis:

Endometriosis: A hidden condition : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34syY5N5ZQA>

Action for Endometriosis with Endometriosis UK : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68mVthDBhDk>

Watch this short video to learn more about polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS):

PCOS journey and support with PCOS Relief : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoWtpUwlHvk>

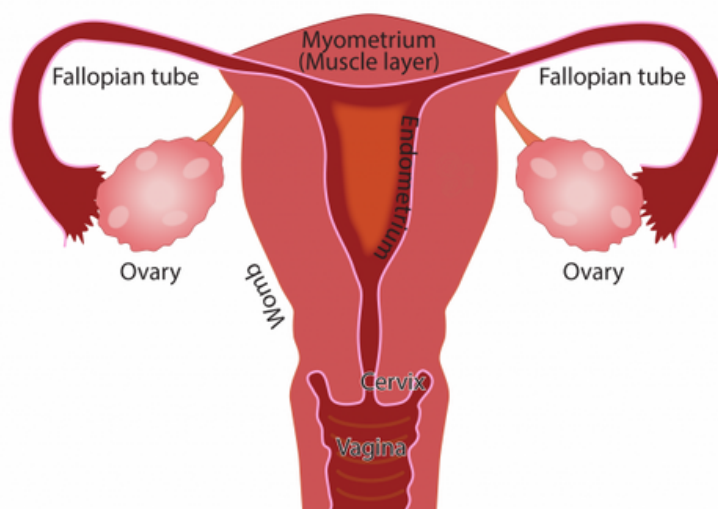
Irregular periods

Periods can range from day 24 to day 38 of your cycle.

If the number of days in between each of your periods is different and keeps changing; the amount of menstrual blood changes from one period to the next; your periods come closer together or your periods come further apart then you are experiencing irregular periods.

Should you experience irregular periods, then visit your GP. Tracking your periods is particularly important so you can explain what has been happening at your appointment. There are a number of free apps you can download to help track your period, or a regular diary or calendar works also. **There is a calendar at the end of this document that can be printed to help you track your period.**

This short video, featuring Consultant Louise Kellison, explores the topic further: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7A_a94ghas



Mood

Changes between high and low levels of estrogen and progesterone during your menstrual cycle can impact mood. This is often known as Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS). A more severe form of PMS is known as Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD).

This short video, with Dr Ellie Golightly and Professor Sharon Cameron, explores the topic further: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_xHUp3mZQyw

For more information on what may be considered 'normal' PMS, and when to speak to your GP, [see NHS Inform](#).

Periods and menstrual health conditions can affect your mental wellbeing. To explore what can be done to support your mental health, see this self-help tool for managing periods and wellbeing: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/self-help-guides/self-help-tool-periods-and-mental-wellbeing/>

You may also find the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists PMS patient self-help leaflet helpful: <https://www.rcog.org.uk/for-the-public/browse-all-patient-information-leaflets/managing-premenstrual-syndrome-pms-patient-information-leaflet/>

Mood changes as a result of your period can affect different aspects of your life, including your relationships. You may wish to consider sharing these resources with those close to you to help them understand your experience.

Education

[NHS Inform's Women's Health platform](#) includes information that covers many aspects of menstrual health, and can be used to educate yourself, friends, family, students or patients about their periods.

If you're aged 26 or under or are looking for information to help a young person, you can find out more about periods on the Young Scot website.: <https://young.scot/campaigns/periods/>

Period Products

Local councils currently provide free period products in a range of locations. You can also use the PickupMyPeriod app to find out where you can access free period products.

Download the PickupMyPeriod app for iOS (Apple) :

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/pickupmyperiod/id1500403938>

Download the PickupMyPeriod app for Android :

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.myperiodapp>

Images are from the University of Edinburgh's 'Healthy Optimal Periods for Everyone' (HOPE) project page. More information on their research into menstruation can be found here: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/hope>

Visiting your GP with menstrual health concerns

When was the first day of my last period? (What date did it start?)

How many days does my period usually last?

What was the shortest time between my period ?(from the first day of one period to the first day of the next)

What was the longest time between my periods? (from the first day of one period to the first day of the next)

How often do I need to change my period products on a heavy day?

When was my last smear test?

Have I ever bled between periods?

Have I ever bled after sex?

Does my period affect my day to day life? In what ways? (This could include mood, relationships, school, work, fitness levels...)

Tracking My Period

What to track

- Start date
- End date
- Pain levels
- Flow levels
- Mood

Month:						
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun