

Menstruation

Periods: what happens and why?

Puberty: What Happens to Girls?



You get taller and heavier.



Your bones grow bigger and heavier.



Hair grows under your armpits and around your genitals (pubic hair).



Your face changes shape.



Your voice gets a little deeper.



Your hips get wider and more curvy.



You start your periods.

Partner Talk – What examples can you think of?

Puberty: What Happens to Girls?



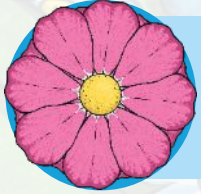
Your body sweats more.



Your breasts and nipples get larger.



Your internal and external organs grow.



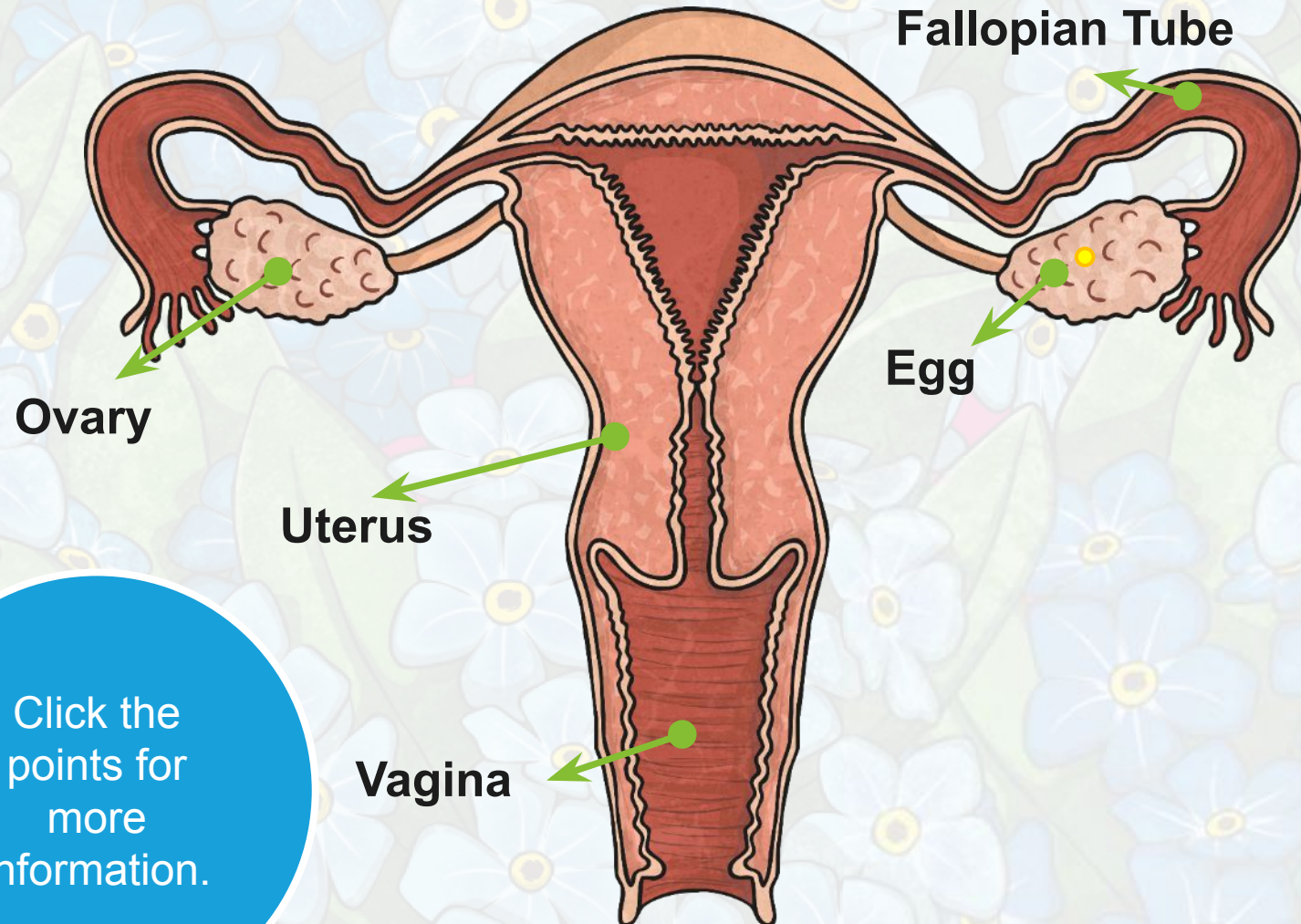
You may have mood swings.



Your hair on your arms and legs grows darker.



The Female Reproductive System



Click the
points for
more
information.

What Are Periods?

Periods (menstruation) happen due to the hormones changing in your body.

When puberty is reached, an egg is released each month from her ovaries.

The egg moves from the ovary and along the fallopian tube and down into the uterus (womb).

Even before birth, a girl has 1-2 million tiny eggs (ovum) in her ovaries.

If the egg is not fertilised, the lining of the uterus and the egg leaves your body through your vagina; this is called a 'period'.

What Do Periods Start

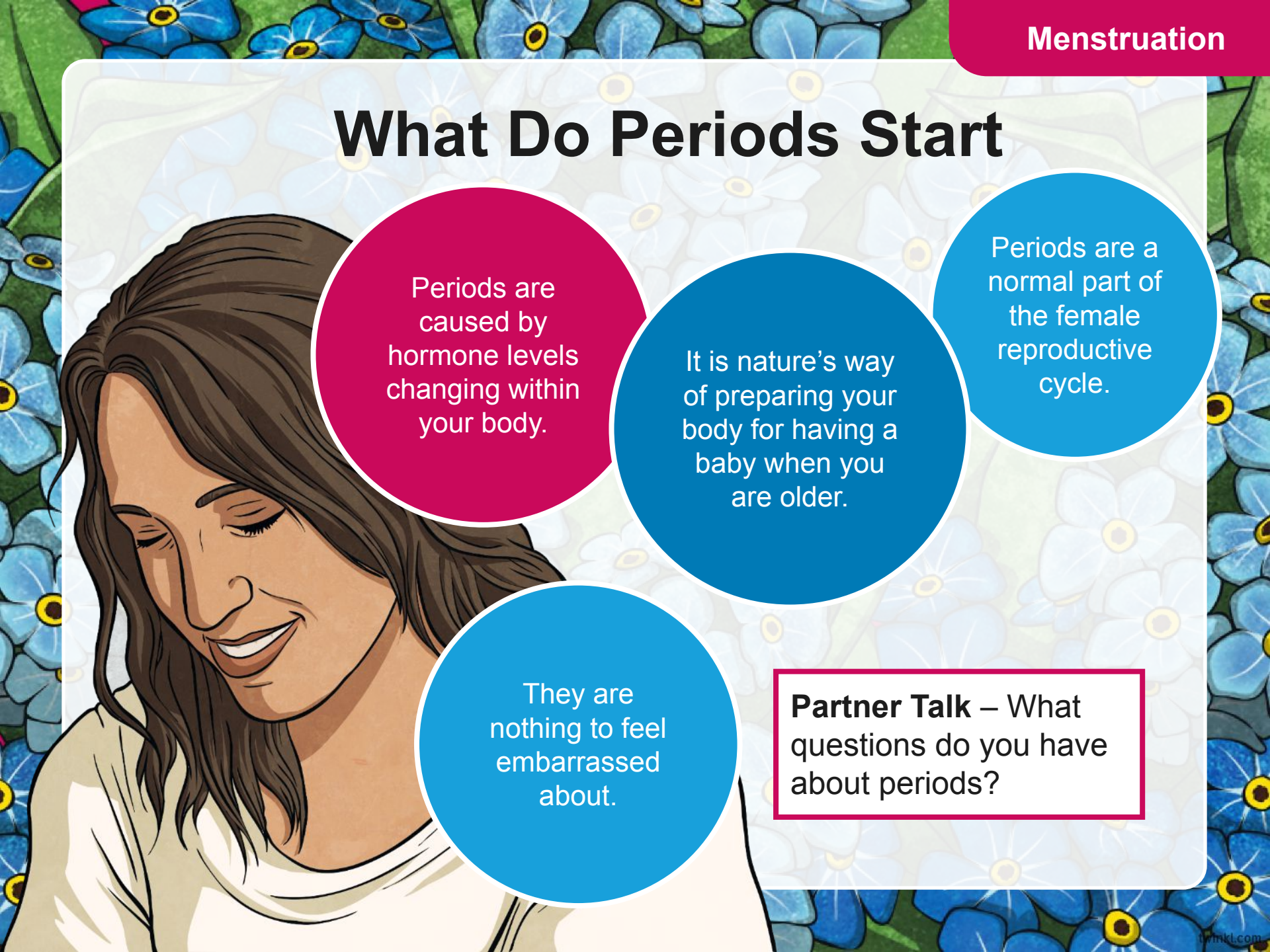
Periods are caused by hormone levels changing within your body.

It is nature's way of preparing your body for having a baby when you are older.

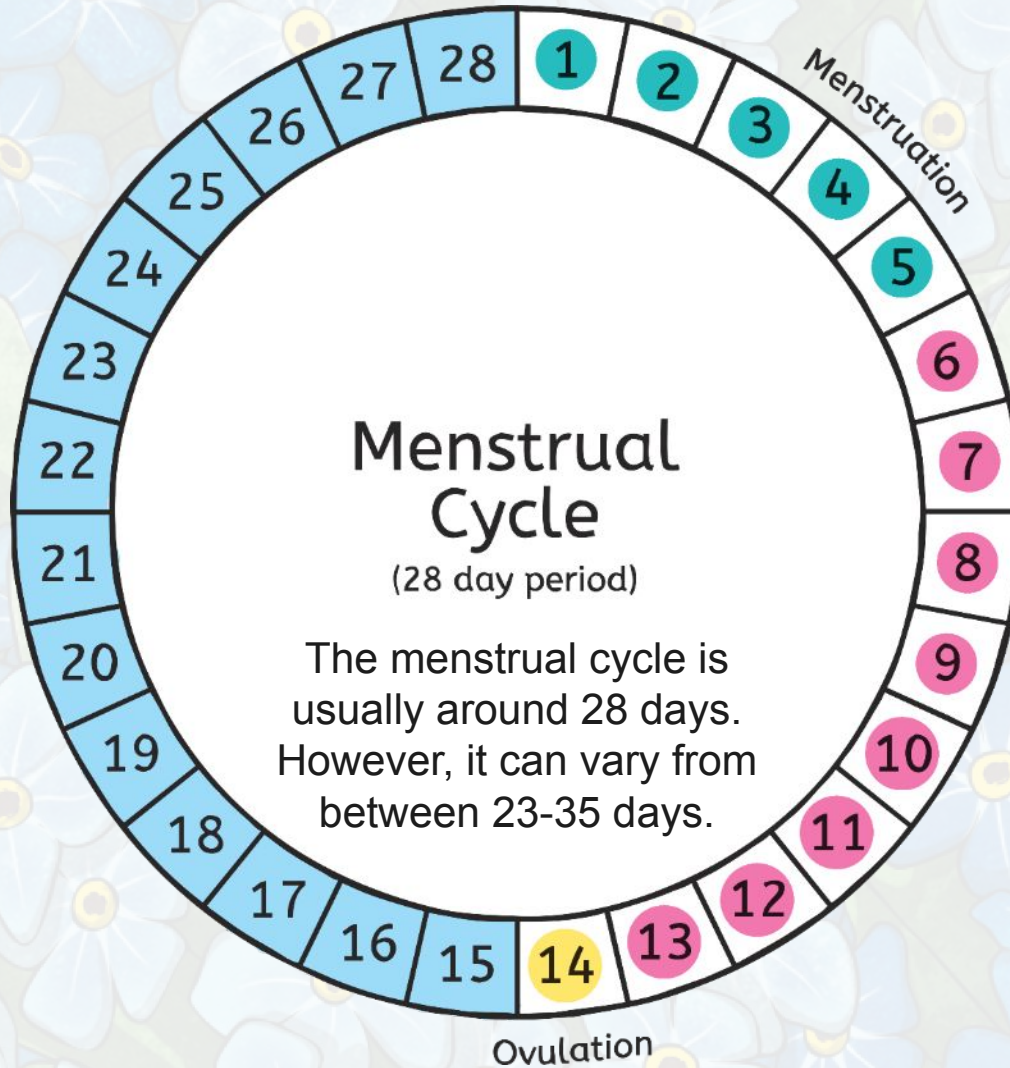
Periods are a normal part of the female reproductive cycle.

They are nothing to feel embarrassed about.

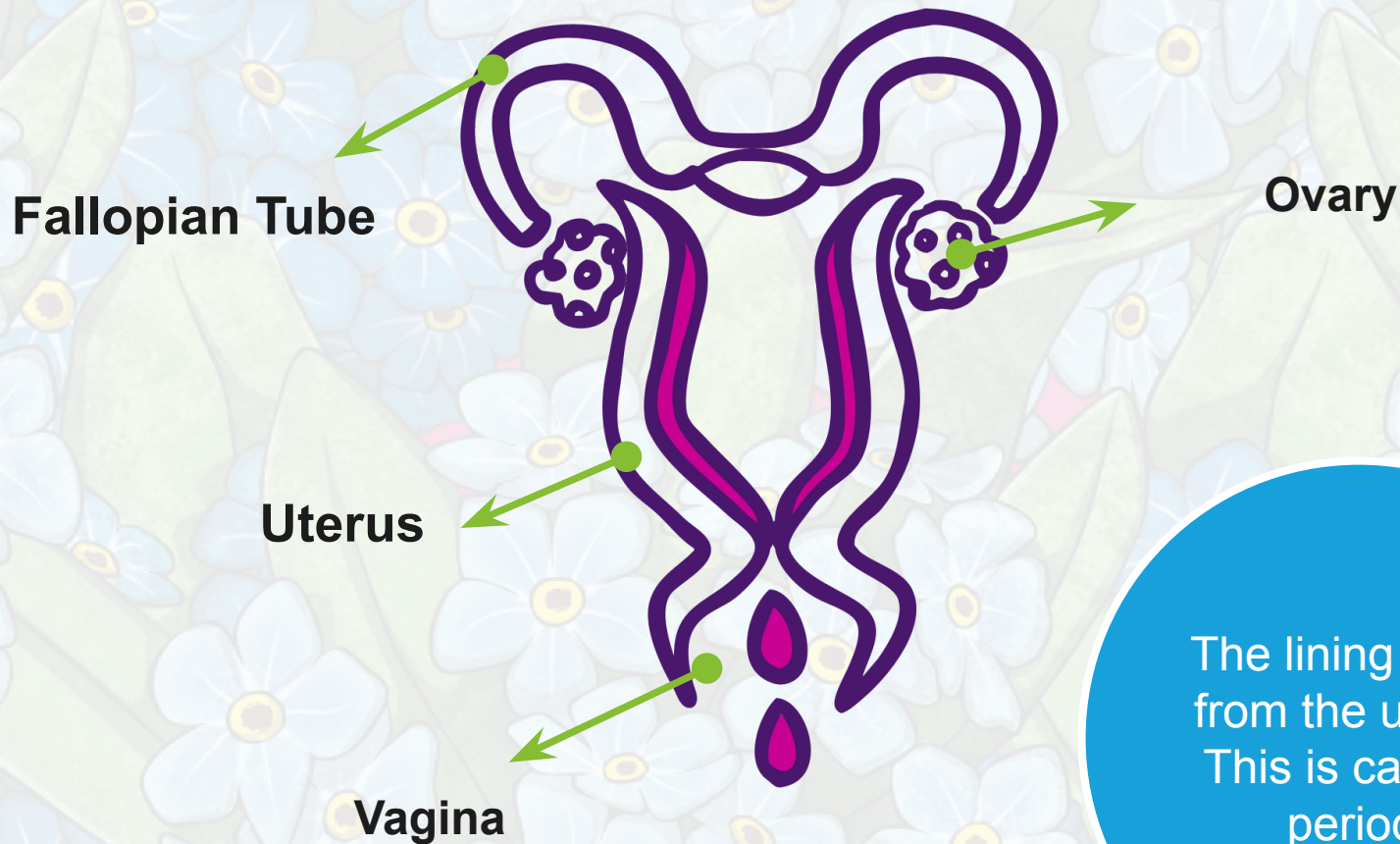
Partner Talk – What questions do you have about periods?



The Menstrual Cycle

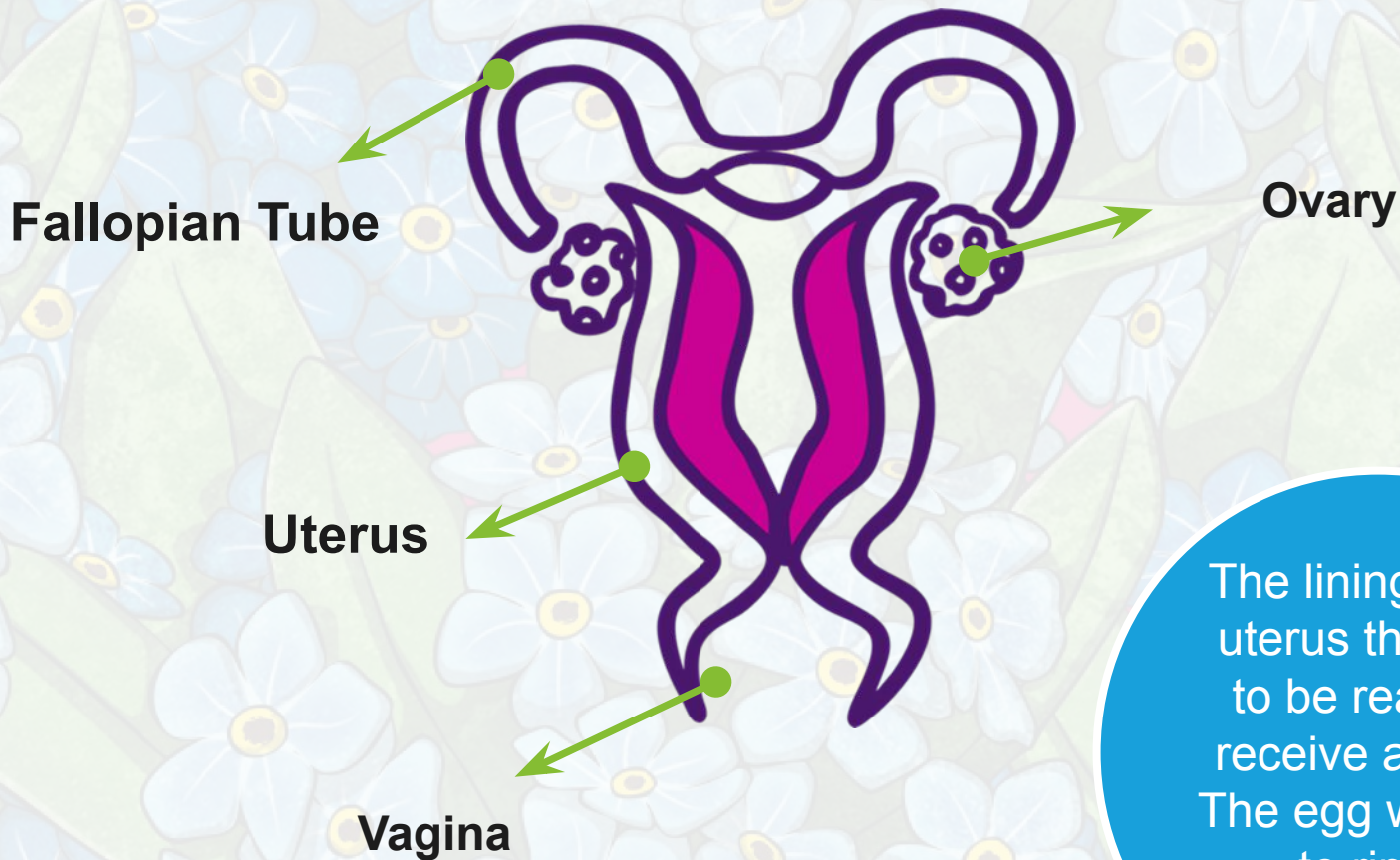


The Menstrual Cycle Days 1-5



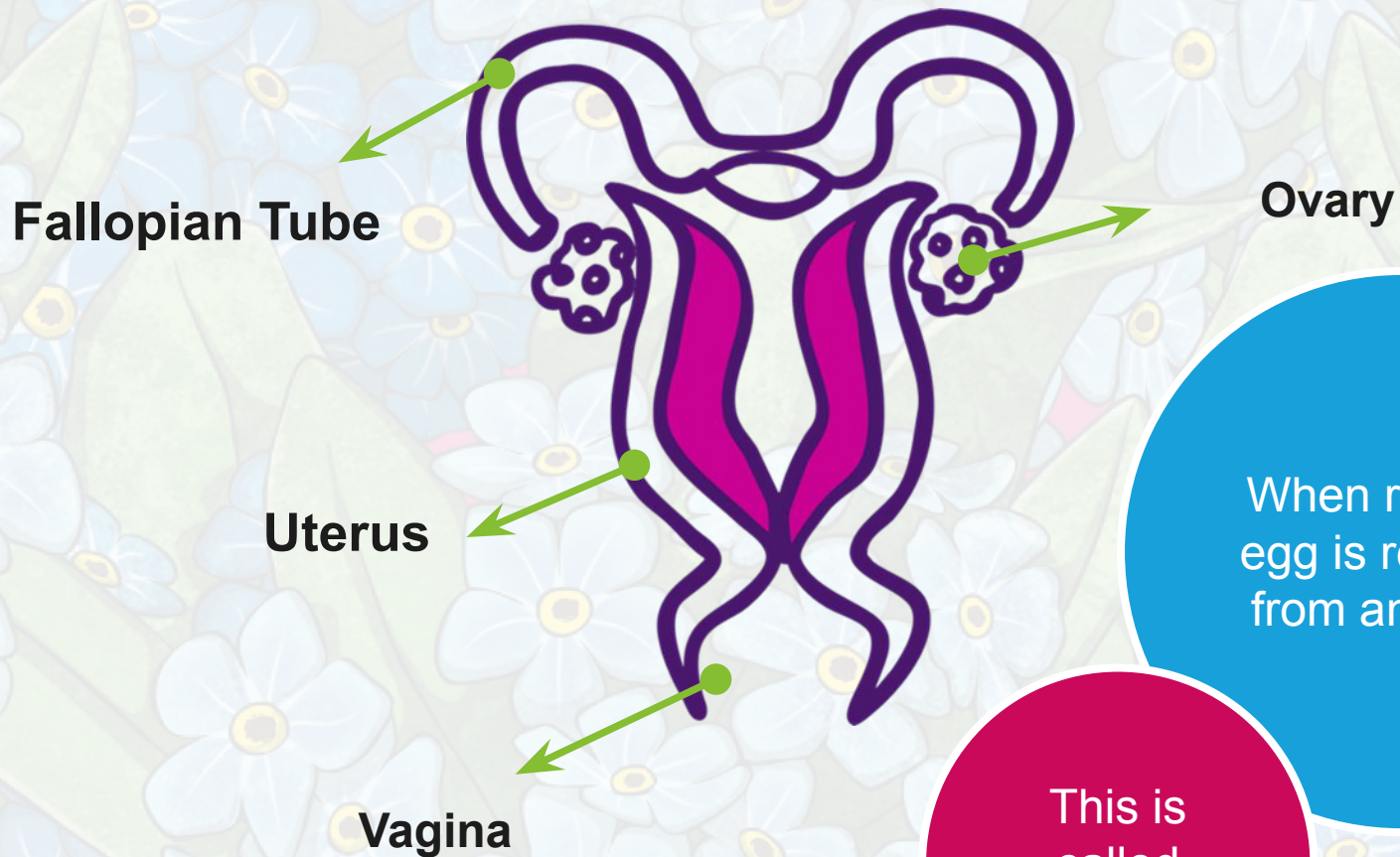
The lining is lost from the uterus. This is called a period.

The Menstrual Cycle **Days 6-13**



The lining of the uterus thickens to be ready to receive an egg. The egg will start to ripen on day 12.

The Menstrual Cycle Day 14



When ripe, the egg is released from an ovary.

This is called ovulation.

The Menstrual Cycle Days 15-28



The lining of the uterus will stop developing if the egg is not fertilised.

The cycle will start again.

When Will My First Period Start?

Usually between 10 to 16 years old;

about 2 years after your breasts develop;

after you grow pubic hair;

after you start to notice vaginal discharge.

Remember –
Every girl is
different!



What Symptoms Will You Have?

Many girls will experience PMS (Pre-Menstrual Syndrome). The symptoms can include:

difficulty
concentrating

stomach
cramps

feeling
bloated

tender
breasts

mood
swings

tiredness


food
cravings

headaches

spots

Partner Talk – What could you do to help ease some of these symptoms if they occur?

PMS - Things You Can Try!



Eat a well balanced diet.


Take part in some gentle exercise.

Use a hot water bottle or use a heat pad.



Have a nice warm drink.

Massage your stomach.



Have a warm bath.

During Your Period: What Happens?

Bleeding can last between 3 and 8 days.

The average blood loss is only around 80ml (roughly 3 tablespoons).

Your first period may be so light, you may not even realise that you are having one.

Blood flow may be heavier in the first few days.

Periods happen once a month but your body takes time to get into a routine so for the first year or so the time between each period may vary.

During Your Period: Feminine Protection

There are **many different** types of protection you can use during your period to absorb the blood and to stop it getting on to your clothes/underwear.

Some of the same products can also be used for vaginal discharge.

It is a personal choice and different for each girl.
The most common type of protection are:

**Sanitary
towels**

Tampons

Pantyliners

Partner Talk: What do you know already about the three types of feminine protection?

Pantyliners

These are worn outside your body in your underwear.

They are best used:

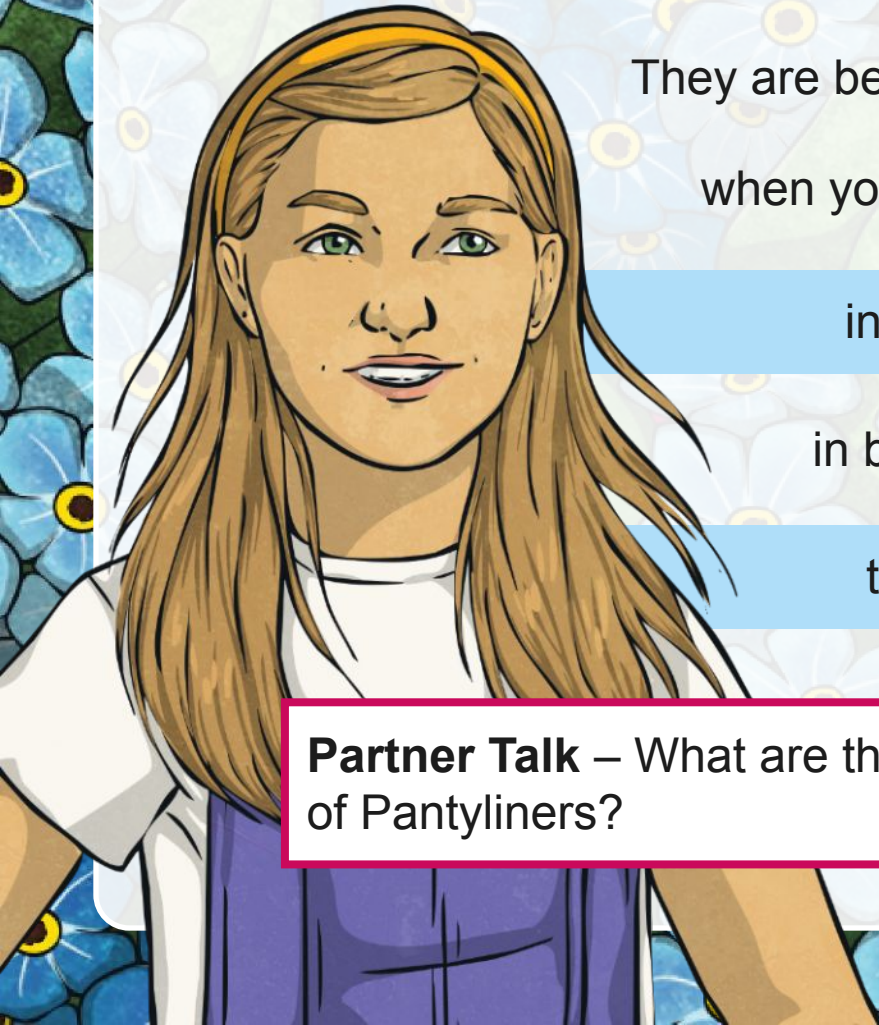
when your period is light;

in addition to a tampon;

in between periods to absorb discharge;

to help keep you fresh every day.

Partner Talk – What are the advantages and disadvantages of Pantyliners?



Sanitary Towels

These are worn outside your body in your underwear.

There are many different absorbencies depending on how heavy your period is.

Some have sticky tabs called 'wings', which help provide extra protection to the sides of your underwear.

They should be changed frequently to keep fresh and dry (generally every 4 to 6 hours but more often when your period is heavy).

Partner Talk – What are the advantages and disadvantages of sanitary towels?



Tampons

These are worn inside your body in your vagina to absorb blood.

There are many different absorbencies depending on how heavy your period is.

Some come with an applicator to help when inserting them into the vagina.

They are good for swimming and other sports, such as gymnastics.

Should be changed regularly (every 4 to 8 hours but more often when your period is heavy).

Partner Talk – What are the advantages and disadvantages of tampons?



Period Pants

These are underwear with a pad built into the lining.

There are a range of pant styles available.

Each style holds a different amount of absorbency.

After use, the pants can be rinsed and washed like a normal item of clothing and then re-used.

Partner Talk – What are the advantages and disadvantages of period pants?



Re-useable pads and tampons

These are worn just like non re-useable ones.

These are washable cloth pads or sponge like tampons, which are used in exactly the same way as standard pads and tampons.

Both the pad and tampons can be washed and re-used which helps save money and the environment.

Partner Talk – What are the advantages and disadvantages of re-useable pads and tampons?



How Will I Know When My Period Will Start?

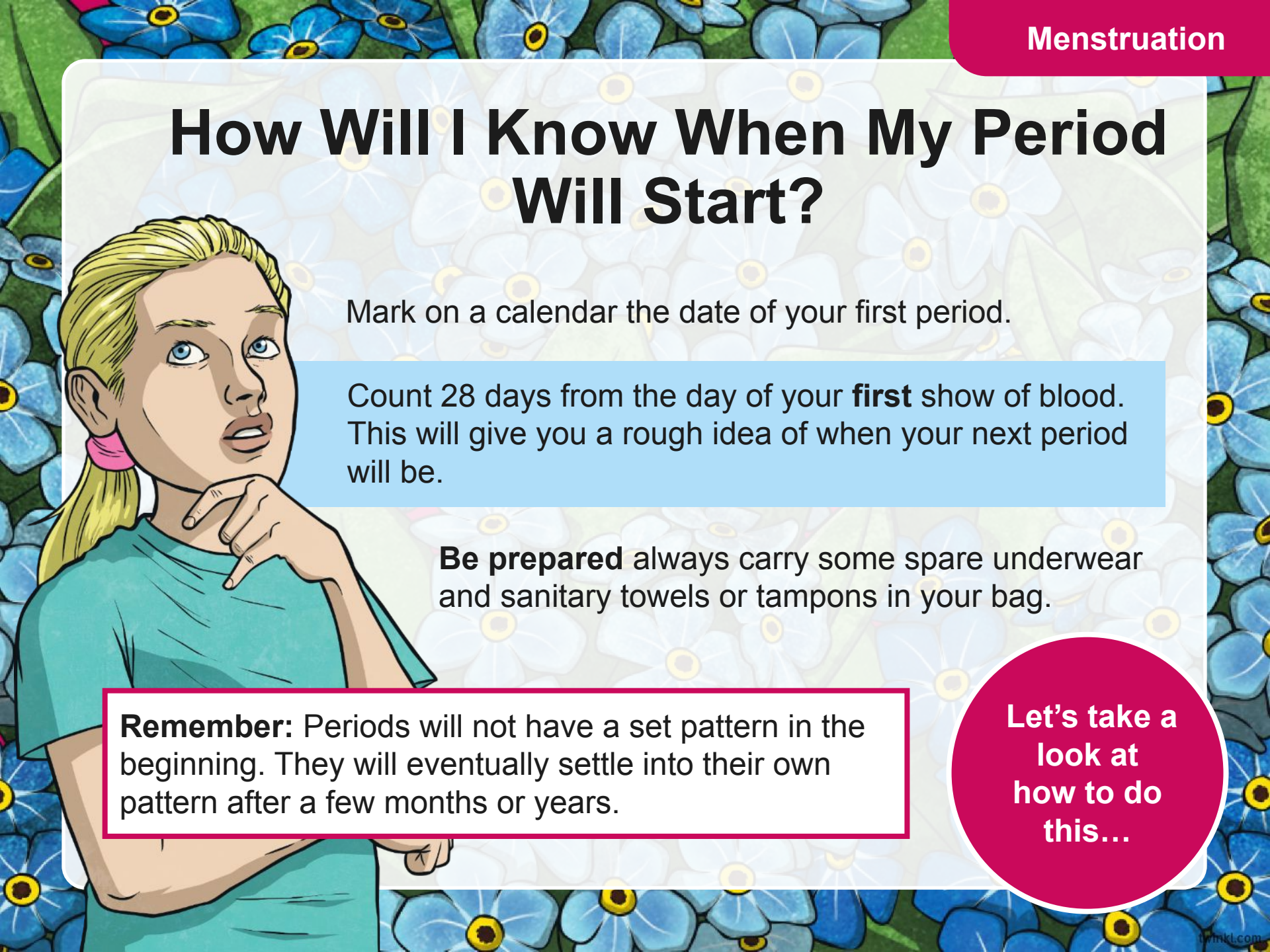
Mark on a calendar the date of your first period.

Count 28 days from the day of your **first** show of blood. This will give you a rough idea of when your next period will be.

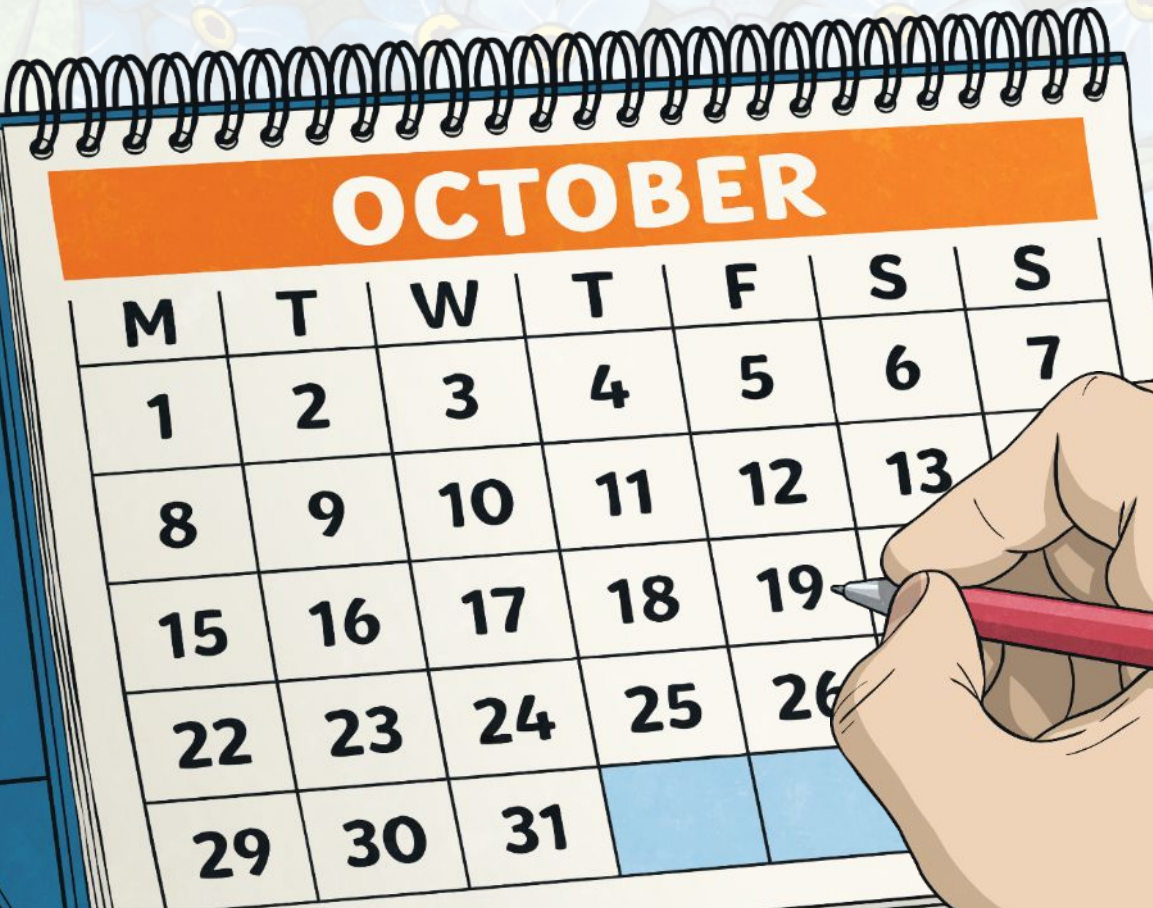
Be prepared always carry some spare underwear and sanitary towels or tampons in your bag.

Remember: Periods will not have a set pattern in the beginning. They will eventually settle into their own pattern after a few months or years.

Let's take a look at how to do this...



Working Out When Your Next Period Will Start



Remember

Having a period is a normal healthy thing to happen.

It is a natural process for every girl/teenager/woman.

It can take some time getting used to having periods and feeling confident about dealing with them.

Periods are a sign that your body is working properly; they are a special part of being a female.

Remember: no-one will know that you have your period, unless you tell them.

Any question is a good question

Do you have any questions you would like to discuss?



What if I start my period at Primary School?

There is always someone to talk to. Adults in school will be able to help you.

There are sanitary towels available for you to use and the adults in school know where these are kept.

During your period, you will be able to use certain toilets in school (e.g. the top floor toilet) that are more private and have special bins to get rid of your sanitary towels.

It might feel embarrassing to ask, but remember, it happens to all females so we are all here to support you (we've been there ourselves) and you can always ask a trusted friend to come with you.



BBC
Teach

