



Guide to Your Period

The menstrual cycle includes not just your period, but the rise and fall of hormones and other body changes that take place over the month. At first, your periods may not be regular; you may have two in one month, or have a month without a period at all. Periods will become more regular in time. This sample guide is based on a 28-day cycle, but your cycle could be as short as 23 days or as long as 35. The number of days your period lasts also varies. Every woman is different.

Days 1/ 2 Your period begins and the flow is at its heaviest. You may have cramps or stomach pain.

Days 3/ 4 Your body removes the rest of the tissue in the womb.

Days 5/6/7 There is still some blood, but the cramps should be over.

Days 8/ 9 The bleeding and pain are over, and your face begins to clear up (yeah!).

Days 10/11/12 Your body should feel great!

Days 13/14 Ovulation happens around this time (some women have cramps, but you likely won't feel a thing when you ovulate).

Days 15/16 Hormone levels rise, helping to keep your body strong. At the same time, your breasts may be tender.

Days 17/18/19/20 Your hormones are shifting, which can cause any or all of these symptoms: bloating, tender or sore breasts, moodiness, and cramping. You may feel very emotional during this phase, but many young women do not have pain or mood changes at all.

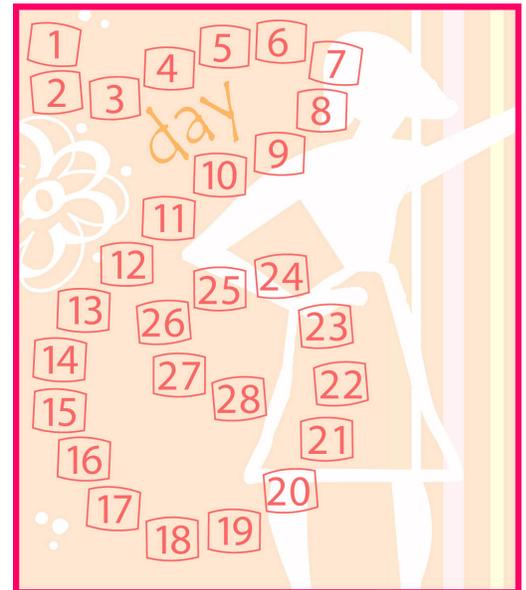
Days 21/22 A drop in hormone levels can cause you to feel tired and you may feel like you need more time alone.

Days 23/24 If you have PMS (premenstrual syndrome), you may have any or all of the following symptoms: mood swings, crabbiness, worries about things that may not be that important, a lack of interest in your usual activities, sleepiness, breast pain, bloating (an uncomfortable feeling that your stomach is bigger), headaches, cravings for certain foods, and trouble focusing.

Days 25/26 Important hormones are at very low levels, so you may have even stronger PMS symptoms.

Days 27/28 This is the end of the menstrual cycle, and your hormone levels have gone way down. The lining of your womb gets ready to be shed during this time and your body prepares to start the cycle again. Most women have cramps during this time, which can let you know that your period is about to begin.

To learn about your own pattern or schedule, it can help to keep track of your periods on a calendar. Check out our girlshealth.gov cycle calendar on the next page!



Check out the interactive version on-line at www.girlshealth.gov



Visit www.girlshealth.gov for more information on relationships, stress, and keeping your mind healthy!

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health

Last updated August 2008

girlshealth.gov Cycle Calendar 2008

January 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

March 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

April 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

May 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

For more information on staying healthy and changes in your body, visit www.girlshealth.gov!

girlshealth.gov Cycle Calendar 2008

July 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

August 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

December 2008						
S	M	T	W	TR	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

For more information on staying healthy and changes in your body, visit www.girlshealth.gov!