

## About Sanitary Pads and Tampons



During your period, pads and tampons absorb the flow and protect your clothes from stains. They come in many styles. Some absorb more than others. To learn how to use them, read the package instructions and check with an adult.

### Pads or tampons? Trying tampons? Health alert

How do you choose between pads and tampons? Give each of them a try, then decide which you like best. It's up to you. Don't forget: You can buy both. Then you always have a choice. You can wear a pad or a tampon depending on:

- How you're feeling
- What you'll be doing (like dancing, swimming, or running)
- What you'll be wearing (such as a leotard, a swimsuit, or sweat pants)

If you think you want to try tampons, start by using slender, smaller tampons. You may want to choose a style that has a curved applicator at the end. These may be easier to insert. You may want to be at home when you put in your first tampon. Pick a time when you aren't in a hurry. Remember to relax.

If you're not leaking, it's tempting to leave a tampon in all day. But this is not a good idea. It can cause health problems, some of them very serious. Be sure to remove the last tampon you use with each period!

### About pads

Most pads have a sticky strip that clings to panties. Pads are made of soft material and lined with plastic to help prevent leaks. Pads may be shaped like rectangles or ovals. They can be thin or thick. Some pads come wrapped individually. These are easy to tuck in a purse, backpack, or locker. You can put an unwrapped pad in a baggie to keep it clean.

### About tampons

Tampons are worn inside your vagina. Some come in cardboard or plastic tubes to help you insert them. Don't worry: Tampons won't get lost inside your body. Once a tampon is inside you, the muscles of your vagina hold it safely in place. Each tampon has a string attached to help you pull it out later.

### Change every few hours

Change pads and tampons every 4 to 8 hours, more often if needed. This helps you avoid leaks and odor. Always wrap a used pad (toilet paper works well) and throw it out. Never flush pads down the toilet! Some tampons and their tubes are flushable. Check the package directions.

### What about at night?

Your flow may be heavier or lighter at night. You can wear a pad, tampon, or both. Don't forget to change your pad or tampon immediately when you wake up. Use whatever is most comfortable for you.

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