

Taking Care of Yourself During Your Period



You may notice signs that your period is coming for a week or two before it starts. Most of these signs go away soon after each period begins. You may have some, all, or none of the signs listed below.

All worn out

You may be tired and need extra rest just before your period. You might have headaches, too. Try to get enough sleep. Take a nap if you need one.

Tender, swollen breasts

Your breasts may swell and hurt. To ease your discomfort, try these tips:

- Hug a heating pad or soak in a warm bath.
- Try cold packs.
- Wear a firm bra that fits correctly when your breasts are swollen.
- Talk to your parents if your breasts still hurt.

Cramps

You may feel pain or cramps in your lower belly (abdomen) and even in your lower back. This happens when the muscles of the uterus tighten to help shed its lining. You can soothe the pain several ways:

- Take a warm bath.
- Hold a hot water bottle or heating pad over the cramp area.
- Relax with gentle exercise, such as stretching.
- Eat healthy foods.
- Don't smoke.
- Get enough sleep.
- Sip a warm drink.
- Take ibuprofen or naproxen as long as you aren't allergic to it.
- Check with your parents or healthcare provider if cramps get in the way of your normal life. There may be medicines that can help you.

Keeping track

It's a good idea to keep track of your periods. You might use a calendar, diary, or journal. Mark the day your period starts and the days you have flow. Over time, your cycle should become more even. By keeping track, you can watch your own pattern appear. Then you'll know when to expect your next period.

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