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| **Source** | **Key Facts** | **Category** |
| Menstrual cycle: An overview (2023) Johns Hopkins Medicine.Available at: https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/menstrual-cycle-an-overview#:~:text=The%20average%20menstrual%20cycle%20lasts,have%20any%20symptoms%20at%20all. (Accessed: 26 January 2024). | * The average menstrual cycle lasts 28 days. |  |
|  | * The cycle starts with the first day of one period and ends with the first day of the next period |  |
|  | * The average woman ovulates on day 14. |  |
|  | * A woman is generally most likely to get pregnant (fertile) if she has sex a few days before, and during ovulation. |  |
|  | * On average, a young woman has her first menstrual period at about age 12 |  |
|  | * The length of women's cycles varies, particularly for the first year or 2 after a young woman has her first period |  |
|  | * Women may have cycles as short as 21 days, or as long as 45 days during the first few years. |  |
|  | * However, anything outside of aforementioned range may require medical attention. |  |
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|  | * A typical cycle lasts between 24 and 38 days |  |
|  | * Most people have their period (bleed) for between three and seven days. |  |
| **Source** | **Key Facts** | **Category** |
| Professional, C.C. medical (no date) Menstrual cycle (normal menstruation): Overview & Phases, Cleveland Clinic. Available at: https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/10132-menstrual-cycle (Accessed: 27 January 2024). | * A typical cycle lasts between 24 and 38 days |  |
|  | * Most people have their period (bleed) for between three and seven days. |  |
|  | * The menses phase * The follicular phase * The ovulation phase * The luteal phase | Phases of menstrual cycle |
|  | * The menstrual phase begins on the first day of a girl’s period. It typically lasts between 3-5 days. * The follicular phase begins on the day you get your period and ends at ovulation. During days 10 to 14, one of the developing follicles will form a fully mature egg (ovum). * Ovulation phase occurs roughly at about day 14 in a 28-day menstrual cycle. A sudden increase in another hormone — luteinizing hormone (LH) — causes your ovary to release its egg. * Luteal phase lasts from about day 15 to day 28. Your egg leaves your ovary and begins to travel through your fallopian tubes to your uterus. If the egg becomes fertilized by sperm and attaches itself to your uterine wall (implantation), you become pregnant. |  |
|  | * People start menstruating at the average age of 12. However, you can begin menstruating as early as 8 years old or as late as 16 years old * People stop menstruating at menopause, which occurs at about the age of 51. At menopause, you stop producing eggs (stop ovulating). You’ve reached menopause when you haven’t gotten a period in one year. |  |
|  | * Some people experience symptoms of menstruation and others don’t. The intensity of these symptoms can also vary. The most common symptom is cramps. |  |
|  | Other signs you’re getting your period are:   * Mood changes. * Trouble sleeping. * Headache. * Food cravings. * Bloating. * Breast tenderness. * Acne. |  |
|  | * It’s also normal for your period to change during other life events that affect your hormones, such as after childbirth or when you’re lactating. |  |

To track your period:

* Mark the first day of your period on a calendar with an X. This is day one.
* Continue to mark each day you’re bleeding with an X. Stop marking when your bleeding stops.
* When bleeding starts again, mark it with an X. This is day one again.
* You can then count the number of days between each first X to get the length of your cycle. Count the number of X’s to see how many days bleeding lasts.