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When does ovulation start after period

Credit: Getty Images How your body, brain, and behavior change during your most fertile part of the month. Credit: Getty Images Each month, about two weeks before your period is due, your body preps for a potential pregnancy by ovulating, a process where an egg is released from an ovary into the fallopian tubes, where it may be fertilized by sperm. Your estrogen level peaks during this time, and progesterone begins to rise sharply, but these hormonal surges don't just affect your reproductive system—they affect your behavior, too. Read on to learn about some surprising things that happen to your body and your brain during ovulation. Advertisement Advertisement Credit: Getty Images Women are more sensitive to smell around the time of ovulation, according to a study published in 2013 in *Hormones and Behavior*. In particular, ovulating women were more sensitive to androstene and androsterone, human pheromones found in male sweat and urine, as well as to a musky odor, compared to women who were taking birth control pills (and therefore not ovulating). It's possible that a heightened sense of smell helps you better sniff out a potential mate during this time of peak fertility. Credit: Getty Images When female college students were asked to look at photos of 80 men—half of whom were straight, and half gay—and determine the sexual orientation of each, they were more likely to choose a gay man when they were ovulating. Credit: Getty Images Your skin color changes ever so slightly throughout your menstrual cycle, according to a 2015 University of Cambridge study. When women were photographed without make-up at the same time every day for a month, they had the most facial redness at ovulation. These changes are so slight they're not actually detectable by the human eye—but researchers suspect they may be linked to other changes in appearance or behavior, since other studies have found men rate women more attractive when they're ovulating. Credit: Getty Images Women use a higher, more feminine pitch when they're ovulating, according to a 2009 UCLA study. A higher voice pitch is associated with being younger (and thus more fertile), which may help explain why an earlier study in *Evolution & Human Behavior* found that women's voices were rated as more attractive during ovulation. "We've also found that women show many behavioral shifts during ovulation, including dressing and walking differently, which when all put together may be the way women inadvertently reveal their fertility status," explains Greg Bryant, PhD, a psychologist at the Center for Behavior, Evolution and Culture at UCLA and coauthor of the 2009 study. Credit: Getty Images Speaking of dressing: Ovulating women are more likely to choose revealing clothing, a University of Texas study found, and an earlier UCLA study found that people were more likely to rate women in their most fertile phase as "trying to look more attractive," compared to women post-ovulation. As if those bids for attention weren't enough, other studies have found that women are more likely to choose revealing clothing during their most fertile window. Credit: Getty Images Researcher's right after their period, and a 2014 study shows mothers dailly period, it's more and women who were shown both smoking-related and neutral images. "It may be low levels of estrogen and progesterone worsened withdrawal symptoms by interacting with other brain neurotransmitters that spur addiction," explains study coauthor, Adrienne Mendler, PhD, a psychologist at the University of Montreal. Conversely, women's brains reacted much less to smoking-related cues just after ovulation, when both hormones are at their peak. Credit: Getty Images Got wheezing? It'll most likely get better for a day or two around ovulation, according to a 2012 Norwegian study. When researchers charted symptoms of nearly 4,000 women over the course of their menstrual cycles, they found that while wheezing and shortness of breath were higher during the middle two weeks of the month (when estrogen levels are naturally high), both symptoms dipped right around the time of ovulation (days 14 to 16). "We see this anecdotally, too, so it makes sense that a woman should talk to her allergist about individualizing her asthma treatments to her menstrual cycle," says Bryan Martin, DO, president of the American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology. Credit: Getty Images If you need to get your cholesterol checked, don't do it before ovulation. That's when it's at its highest, according to a 2010 National Institutes of Health study published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism*. Researchers found that women's total cholesterol levels rose in the first half of their cycle, as estrogen increased, dropped immediately before ovulation, then declined rapidly post ovulation, in the second half of the cycle. Testing at the end of your cycle—when your levels are at their lowest—reduces the risk that you'll get a false positive. Advertisement Credit: Getty Images It probably comes as no shock that you cast a wide net in the dating pool when you're ovulating, since it's your most fertile time. But surprisingly, you do the same thing when you're shopping, too. When researchers surveyed 20- and 30-something women who weren't pregnant or taking hormonal birth control, they found that women who were ovulating were more likely to buy more items than women who weren't. Credit: Getty Images In a 2014 study, researchers found that women who were ovulating were more likely to vote for Barack Obama in the 2012 U.S. presidential election, while ovulating women in committed relationships preferred Mitt Romney. "We found that single women were more likely to relax their views about politics and religion when they're ovulating, possibly because their sexual desire is ramped up during this time," says Durante, who also notes her group saw similar results in men when their testosterone levels were high. Coupled-up women, however, were another story entirely, becoming more religious and conservative during this time. "We're not sure why, but it could be that their increased libido made them feel guilty, especially if they fantasizing about men they weren't involved with," theorizes Durante. Credit: Getty Images Durante has also found that women near ovulation are much more interested in boosting their status compared to other women. In a 2014 study, researchers had ovulating and non-ovulating women play the "dictators game," where they were given a fixed amount of money to share with other women. Ovulating women shared only half as much as the non-ovulating ones. Not only that, when men were added to the game, ovulating women gave about 60% to the guys, as opposed to 25% to the women. "This is consistent with other research that's been done on animals," says Durante. "Female monkeys, for example, go all Real Housewives with one another when they're at their most fertile." Advertisement Credit: Getty Images Ovulating women are half as likely to talk to their fathers, and speak to them for about half as long as when they're not ovulating, according to a 2010 UCLA study. It may be that you're subconsciously don't want your fatherly guidance and your dating life, so you're not talking to him as much. Credit: Getty Images You're not only more likely to choose a nice Lieboer type around ovulation—you're also more likely to convince yourself he'll make a devoted father and provider, according to Durante's research. In a 2012 study, women were shown online dating profiles of either a charismatic hottie or a reliable "nice guy" at different points of their menstrual cycle, and then asked to rate how helpful they would be at caring for a baby, food shopping, cooking, and helping with other household chores. "We found that when women were under the hormonal influence of ovulation, they basically decided themselves into thinking the sexy bad boy type would be better than the more reliable one," explains Durante. Credit: Getty Images Research has long shown that women gravitate toward "masculine" looking males during ovulation: think strong jaw lines and thin lips. But your partner is also more likely to feel threatened by these manly men, according to a study done at the University of Liverpool in the UK. Men whose female partners were ovulating rated other men with masculine features as more dominant (someone who looked like they could "get what they wanted"), compared to men whose female partners was on birth control, or not near ovulation. Advertisement You look at your underwear and notice some small brown spots. It's not time for your period yet — what's going on here? It's likely spotting, which refers to very light bleeding that happens outside of your usual menstrual cycle. It's not enough to fill a pad or a tampon, but it's often visible on toilet paper or underwear. Spotting can range in color from light pink to dark brown. Brown spotting gets its color from old blood, which can start making its way out of your body one to two weeks before the start of your period. For some, this is just a normal part of their cycle. For others, it may be a symptom of an underlying health condition. Here's a look at the potential causes of brown spotting and other symptoms to watch for. Brown spotting is often a sign of ovulation. Ovulation occurs when your estrogen levels are high. These drop after the egg is released. This decrease in estrogen can cause some bleeding and spotting. But if you take birth control pills, your brown spotting may be a sign of something else. Typically, birth control pills prevent ovulation. Your period Sometimes, brown spotting is just a precursor to your period. The brown blood or discharge may be the remnants of old blood that was never fully shed from your uterus the last time you had your period. This usually isn't cause for concern. But if you're regularly having very short cycles that last for only two weeks or so, it's best to follow up with your healthcare provider. If you use hormonal birth control, brown spotting may be a sign of breakthrough bleeding. This is bleeding that occurs between periods as your body adjusts to the hormones from your birth control. You'll likely experience some spotting and breakthrough bleeding in the first three to six months after starting a new method of hormonal birth control. It's especially common if you're taking a birth control pill that doesn't have estrogen. You can also have spotting on other estrogen-free birth control methods, including Depo-Provera shots or hormonal intrauterine devices, such as Mirena. Brown spotting can also happen if you take birth control pills and miss a few doses. Once you get back on schedule with your pills, the spotting should go away. Perimenopause refers to the period of time leading up to menopause. During this time, which can start up to 10 years before menopause, your hormones start to fluctuate. In response, you might not ovulate or menstruate as often as you once did. If you're in perimenopause, spotting and brown spotting may be a sign of hormonal changes. If you have PCOS, you may not ovulate regularly, or at all. Without regular ovulation, you'll likely experience some spotting between your periods. Other PCOS symptoms include: acne, infertility, skin abnormalities, hair growth on face, chest or abdomen, weight gain. If you think you have PCOS, your doctor can help you determine if you do. PCOS is a chronic condition that can lead to long-term health problems. If you have PCOS, you may also have unusual vaginal discharge. It can be foul-smelling, watery, or even blood-tinged. These are usually earlier symptoms of cervical cancer. Later symptoms include: back pain, fatigue, pelvic pain, problems going to the bathroom, unexplained weight loss. Getting regular Pap smears and reporting any unusual symptoms to your doctor are crucial for catching cervical cancer early, when it's easiest to treat. Brown spotting can be a completely normal part of your cycle. But if it's accompanied by any unusual symptoms, especially a fever, unexplained fatigue, or pelvic pain, it's best to follow up with your healthcare provider.

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