

It's period positive to include all genders, because whether you menstruate or not, *'everybody had a room that was a womb'* Chella Quint #periodpositive

Period Facts

A period is the part of the menstrual cycle when a woman (or trans man/non-binary person) bleeds from their vagina for a few days. The blood that comes down is the uterine lining that has built up throughout the menstrual cycle. The average cycle length is 28 days, but it can range from 21 to 40 days. Day 1 is the first day of bleeding.

The uterine lining builds up each month to prepare for implantation of an embryo (formed by a sperm fertilising an egg). If there is no embryo (i.e. most months!), the lining will be shed as the blood in the period. The average blood loss in a period is 30 to 72mls (5 to 12 teaspoons), although some women bleed more heavily than this.

The average age of first period is 12, but some girls will start earlier or later. A delay in starting periods isn't usually a concern and most girls will have started their period by the age 16-18.

Period Myths Busted

Periods are a healthy and normal bodily function. Most girls will have started their periods by age 16-18. If someone is late starting their period, they should contact their GP. In most cases it will not be a cause for serious concern.

Someone can get pregnant on their period! It is a lower risk time in the menstrual cycle to have unprotected sex, but it is certainly not zero risk and having sex at any point during the menstrual cycle without using contraception puts someone at risk of pregnancy. Everyone should use contraception every time they have sex. No exception.

There are other options than tampons and sanitary towels. There are now many more environmentally friendly alternatives; menstrual cups, period pants or reusable/washable sanitary towels.

Being 'period positive' is very important to help remove any stigma, shyness or shame associated with this normal bodily function. If someone hears language that could create negativity around periods, they could help to tackle this by encouraging peers to use the correct language. For example, by talking about 'menstruating' or 'being on my period,' rather than 'being on the blob' for example.

!! If someone has unprotected sex (without the use of condoms or any other contraception) then they may become pregnant and will need to seek medical advice or obtain a pregnancy test as soon as possible. The earliest point someone can take an accurate pregnancy test is 3 weeks after the day of unprotected sex. If someone is worried about this, they should seek help from their local GP surgery or sexual health clinic **!!**

Worried about anything you have seen or discussed today? Try this website to answer your questions or ask a trusted adult if you are still worried:

NHS support: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/periods/>