



Periods

Private—only for women

About this booklet

Jean Hailes for Women's Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continued connection to land, waters and culture. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

This resource has been developed in partnership between Jean Hailes and Alukura Women's Health Service on behalf of Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (Congress), on the land of the Central Arrernte people.

We acknowledge the support and involvement of NT Health – Primary and Public Health, Central Australia.

We would also like to acknowledge the women of Mparntwe (Alice Springs) and surrounding communities who helped shape these resources.



Visit Jean Hailes at www.jeanhailes.org.au

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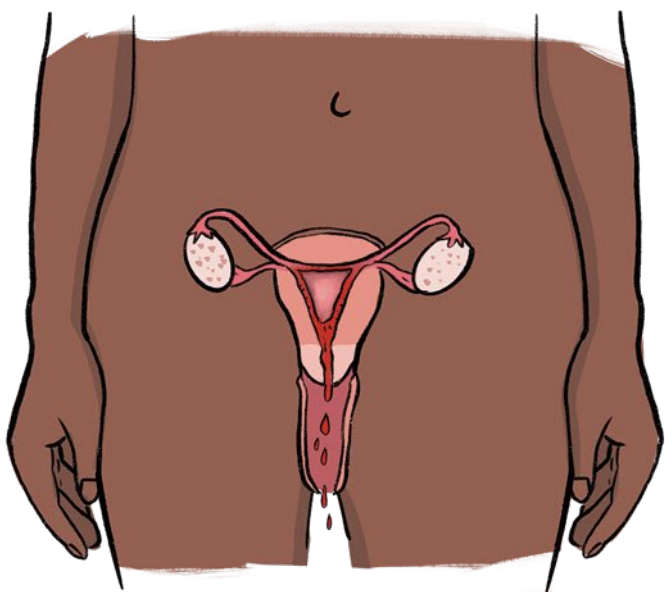
What is a period?

A period:

- is when you bleed from your vagina every month
- means you are not pregnant.

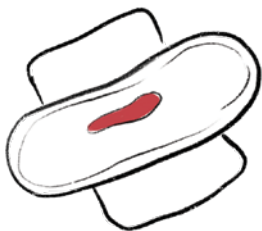
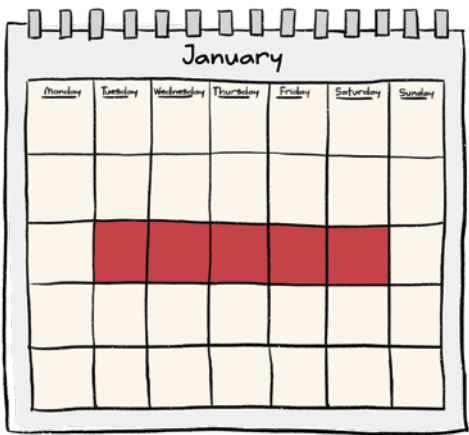
Periods are sometimes called 'monthlies', 'menstruation', 'bleeds', 'that thing'.

Most girls in Australia have their first period at age 12 or 13, but it can start as early as 9 and as late as 16.



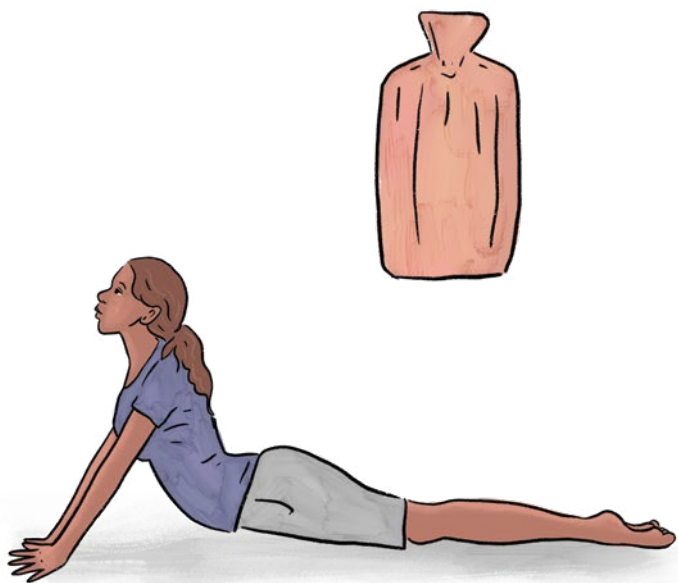
What to expect when you get your period

- About once a month you bleed for 3–7 days.
- Blood flow can change during your period – for example, heavier at the start and lighter towards the end.
- The colour of the blood can also change – for example, bright red at the start and dark brown towards the end.
- For the first 1–2 years after your period starts, it might not come every month.



Period pain

- On the first 1–2 days of your period, you might have pain in your tummy or lower back.
- The pain should go away with heat packs, medicine like Nurofen™ or gentle exercise.
- Talk to your health carer if you have strong pain or the pain doesn't go away.
- Your health carer might be a doctor, nurse or health worker.



Symptoms before your period

In the week before your period, you might notice:

- mood changes
(feeling sad or angry)
- pimples
- sore breasts
- trouble going to the toilet
(constipation or diarrhoea).

If you are worried about these symptoms, talk to your health carer.

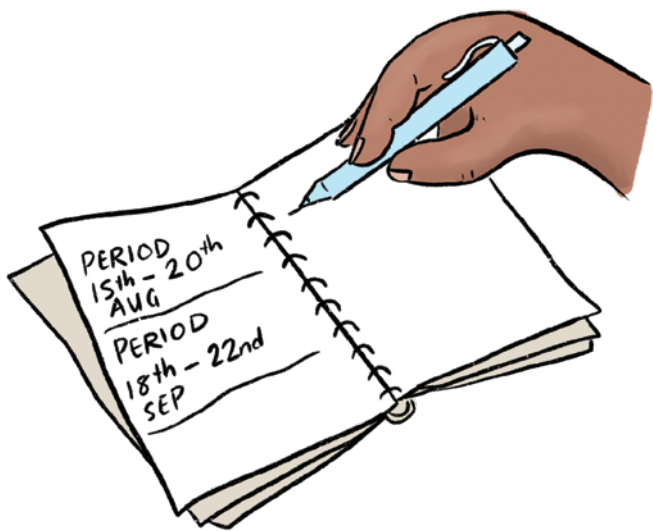


Keep track of your period

It's good to keep track of your period. You can use:

- a calendar
- a diary
- an app.

This information will help if you need to see a health carer about your period.



Reasons to see a health carer

Talk to your health carer if you are worried about your period.

You can talk to your health carer if you have bad period pain that stops you from doing things.



Reasons to see a health carer

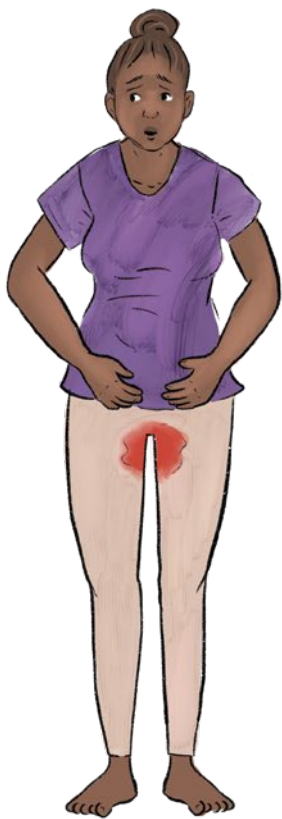
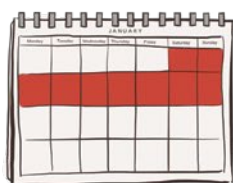
You can talk to your health carer if your period:

- doesn't come every month
- doesn't come at the same time every month
or
- doesn't come at all.



Reasons to see a health carer

You can talk to your health carer if you have heavy bleeding or if your period lasts for longer than 7–8 days.



Notes

Notes

Notes

About the artists



The cover artwork is **Arntarntarerreme (Looking after each other)** by Amunda Gorey. “This one is women with PCOS finding support in services and other women. The shelters on the sides represent the safety and privacy in these supports.”

Amunda Gorey is an Arrernte artist who grew up in the remote community of Santa Teresa, an hour south-east of Alice Springs.



Illustrations by Coolamon Creative.

Coolamon Creative is a 100% Aboriginal owned and operated creative services agency operating out of Darwin and Alice Springs.

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Disclaimer: This information does not replace medical advice. If you are worried about your health, talk to your health carer.

Jean Hailes takes a broad and inclusive approach to the topic of women's health. The terms 'women' and 'girls' are used throughout this resource to refer to all women, girls and gender-diverse people.

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