

Hi, Bright Parents!

Bright means intelligent.

Bright people are smart.

They know their body and they know how to listen to their body.

Your child can embrace their period as an intelligent function of their body, rather than dreading it... they just need the right tools!

If you feel like navigating periods with your teen/tween can be nerve-racking, awkward, or like you don't know where to begin, you're not alone in feeling that way.

The resources on this page are here to help you... and make it a positive experience for you and your child!

If you have any questions about the products or information in this booklet, or about guiding your teen through menstruation, please contact me at demi@brightgirlhealth.com

WHAT'S IN THIS BOOKLET?

PERIOD CARE PRODUCTS:

This eBooklet includes information about period care products that help to meet the needs of a range of different people.

I have included links to products that are easily accessible for you and your teen to try.

I have included some discount codes for each product.

LEARNING RESOURCES:

This eBooklet also includes education resources to help further learning for yourself and your teenager.

PRACTITIONER DIRECTORY:

Our practitioner directory is constantly being updated with menstrual health practitioners who are best qualified to find and treat the root cause of period concerns.

ENJOY!

*Demi
Spaccavento*

YOUR TEEN'S FIRST PERIOD

WHEN SHOULD TEENS GET THEIR FIRST PERIOD?

The average age a period should start is between 9 and 16. Everyone is different.

If your teen doesn't have their period yet, but has other puberty signs, such as pubic hair, breast growth, growing taller, and a changing body shape, then this is a great sign that the body is on track and their period is on its way.

The advice of a health practitioner can be sought if your teen is 14, 15, or 16 and isn't showing signs of puberty.

HOW TO TALK ABOUT PERIODS WITH YOUR TEEN:

- Keep it lighthearted
- Keep it positive
- Read through this page together
- Share something personal first to help them feel comfortable to open up
- Use the conversation starters at the bottom of this page

WHAT IS EXPECTED?

Period symptoms and irregularities are more expected when teens first start having their period.

It takes time for the body to be able to regulate the menstrual cycle. In fact, it can take up to 6 years!

It's important for teens to be kind and patient with their body during this time. Aim towards balanced hormones and minimal period symptoms over time.

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH? - PERIOD SYMPTOMS

Ideally, we want irregular or symptomatic teenage periods improve with time.

Extreme symptoms in teenage years (fainting, vomiting, extreme pain, etc.) are not normal. If your child is experiencing severe symptoms, it's a good idea to consult an experienced menstrual health or hormone specialist to find the root cause.

IS IT TIME TO SEEK HELP FOR PERIOD PAIN?

The links below will help you determine if your child's period symptoms are typical, or if they warrant seeing a medical practitioner.

Take the
Period Pain Assessment Online Screening Tool (PIPPA)
developed by Canberra Health Services

PIPPA period pain screening

This 5 question screening will let you know if you should see a practitioner about your period pain

Self-management tools

Read the self-management tools for period symptoms published by Canberra Health Services

Note for your doctor

Download a letter to initiate a conversation about your best pathway for period pain help with your doctor

HELP SEEK FOR PERIOD CONCERNS

IT'S TIME TO SEE A HEALTH PRACTITIONER WHEN:

1. Symptoms are extreme
2. Symptoms are disrupting their ability to carry on with (and enjoy) everyday life
3. Worrying symptoms become a pattern

FINDING A PRACTITIONER

Most GPs and family doctors are the first place people go for help with period concerns. It's important to remember that most general practitioners do not specialise in periods and hormones, and that's ok. But what that means is that they're not always the most equipped to diagnose and treat menstrual health symptoms.

Ask your doctor to refer you to a menstrual health or hormone specialist.
OR, look for one on our practitioner directory.

Practitioner directory on next page →

DR TASH - Gynaecologist & Endocrinologist

Dr Tash is an Australian Gynaecologist and Endocrinologist who has years of experience treating period symptoms and hormones. She will be able to investigate period concerns in teens and give them strategies to support or treat their hormones and symptoms.



Find Dr Tash here: <http://www.drandreadis.com.au/>



BRIGHT GIRL HEALTH PRACTITIONER DIRECTORY

MENSTRUAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER DIRECTORY

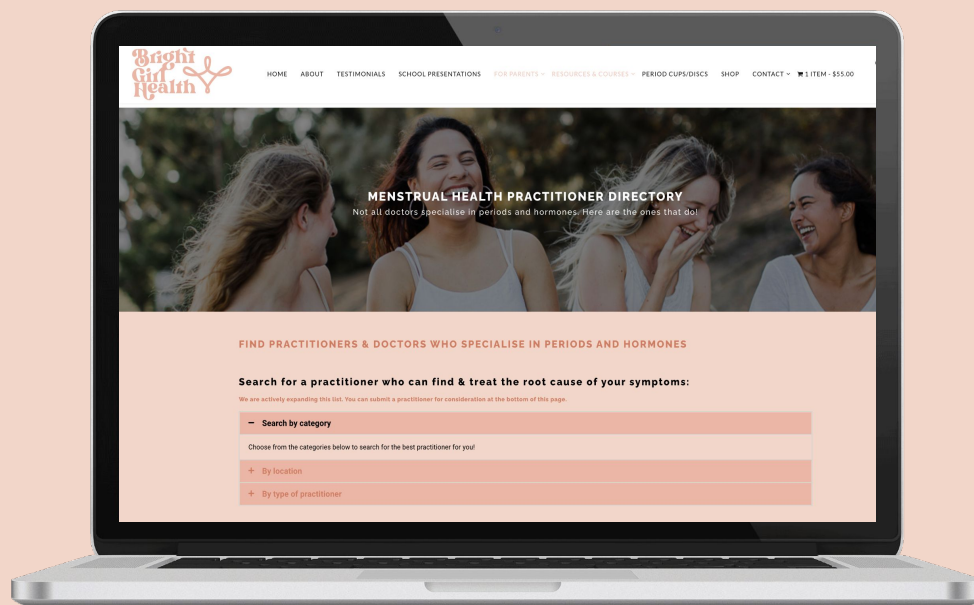
Not all doctors specialise in periods and hormones. Here are the ones that do!



CONNECT WITH A MENSTRUAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

The Bright Girl Health practitioner directory allows you to search for menstrual health practitioners by:

- Location
- Type of practitioner
- Area of concern (eg: teenage periods, missing periods, period pain)



SEARCH THE DIRECTORY

FREE RECIPE eBook



Easy and delicious recipes to help reduce period pain, PMS and cravings

WRITTEN BY OUR NUTRITIONISTS

[Download recipe book](#)



Nutty Chocolate Bark

TO SATISFY PERIOD CRAVINGS

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup cacao powder
- 1/8 cup chopped, mixed dry roasted nuts, eg: almonds, brazil nuts, pecans, peanuts, pistachios
- 4 tbsp melted coconut oil
- 1 1/2 tbsp maple syrup (or sweetener of your choice - see page 7)
- 1 tbsp dried coconut flakes
- 1 tbsp dried goji berries or dried cranberries
- 1/2 tbsp pumpkin seeds
- Pinch of salt (optional)

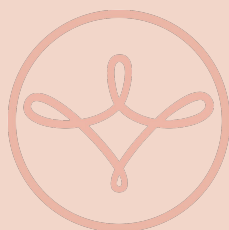
Makes 10-12 pieces - Dairy free
Gluten free - Vegan

[Click to see nutrition panel](#)

Recipes from our nutritionists to make periods a better experience

Period care

products



SUSTAINABLE PERIOD CARE

More than ever before, there are many different options to manage your period and to suit every menstruator's needs. Environmentally conscious and reusable options are also becoming more easily available.

The choice is no longer limited to just pads or tampons...

There are menstrual cups to go all day without thinking about our periods, period swimwear so we can still swim on our period, reusable pads if we prefer external options, and period underwear so we can cut down on disposable products to be more environmentally conscious.

More options means more freedom and more people who get their needs met. Periods do not have to stop us living life!

DISPOSABLE PADS AND TAMPONS:

CAN TAKE UP
HUNDREDS OF
YEARS TO BREAK
DOWN

MAY CONTAIN
HORMONE
DISRUPTING
COMPOUNDS

TAMPON
APPLICATORS ARE
ONE OF THE MOST
COMMON ITEMS
POLLUTING
BEACHES

As conscious consumers, we can think about the potential impact our period care products have on the environment.

PRODUCTS THAT ARE ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS

- **Biodegradable and organic pads and tampons**
These options are still disposable, however, they are designed to break down much faster than conventional pads/tampons. They often tend to also use less plastic in their packaging. Organic options also contain less hormone disrupting compounds and skin irritants like certain pesticides, bleaches and fragrances.
- **Reusable options**
Reusable menstrual hygiene options include:
 - Period cups
 - Period-proof underwear
 - Reusable padsThese options don't need to be disposed of so they create less waste. They are gaining popularity because of their benefits to our health and the environment.



ORGANIC PADS & TAMPONS

● INTERNAL ● EXTERNAL ○ REUSABLE ● DISPOSABLE

It's important for us to make informed choices about period care products. Some pads and tampons can contain harsh hormone disrupting chemicals (EDCs) that impact our hormones. Many disposable pads/tampons contain plastics that take many years to break down in landfill. More brands are now offering organic options with biodegradable materials and packaging.

For a more environmentally and hormone friendly alternative, choose pads and tampons that are:

- Organic
- Biodegradable
- Free from dioxins, bleaches, phthalates, polypropylene
- Disclose their ingredients

Many people's skin can be irritated by the above ingredients.

WHERE DOES PADS/TAMPON WASTE END UP IF IT CANNOT BREAK DOWN?



IN OCEANS, RIVERS, STREAMS

IN LANDFILL WHERE THEY TAKE HUNDREDS OF YEARS TO BREAK DOWN

BURNED IN OUR WASTE SYSTEMS EMITTING FUMES

BEACHES & WATER POLLUTING THE ENVIRONMENTS OF MARINE ANIMALS

TOM
ORGANIC

NOW PROUDLY
MADE IN AUSTRALIA.*

SMALL CHOICE. BIG IMPACT.



MADE IN AUSTRALIA*



ORGANIC COTTON



CRUELTY FREE



*Excluding maternity pads & overnight pads.

Learn more www.thetomco.com

PERIOD UNDERWEAR



INTERNAL



EXTERNAL



REUSABLE



DISPOSABLE

HOW DO THEY WORK?

Period-proof underwear are a reusable period care option, designed to absorb period blood and keep you dry without the need for pads or tampons. Period underwear have an absorbent section in them (similar to having an inbuilt pad) with multiple layers that absorb blood, prevent leaks, and keep moisture away from skin. They hold more blood than a pad or tampon, so you can often go longer without needing to change them. However, wear time will depend on how heavy your flow is.

Cleaning your period underwear:

1. Remove the period underwear
2. Rinse off excess blood on the surface under cold water in a sink or bathtub until the water runs clear
3. Put them in the washing machine on a cold cycle **WITHOUT** fabric softener. They can be added in with the rest of your laundry with similar colours.
4. Hang, dry and wear them again!

BENEFITS OF PERIOD UNDERWEAR

HOLDS 2-4
(sometimes more)
TAMPONS WORTH
OF BLOOD

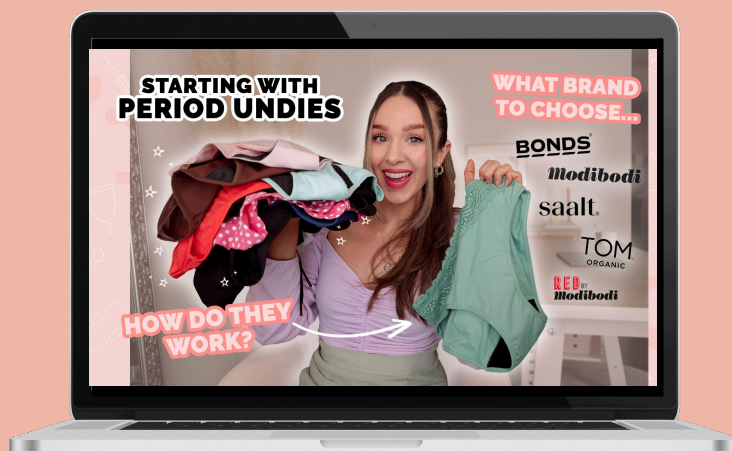
WEAR FOR
HOURS, WASH,
AND REUSE

NO PLASTICS

CUTE AND
COMFORTABLE

NO NEED FOR PADS OR
TAMPONS

SWIMWEAR OPTIONS
AVAILABLE



Getting started with period
undies video

MENSTRUAL CUPS

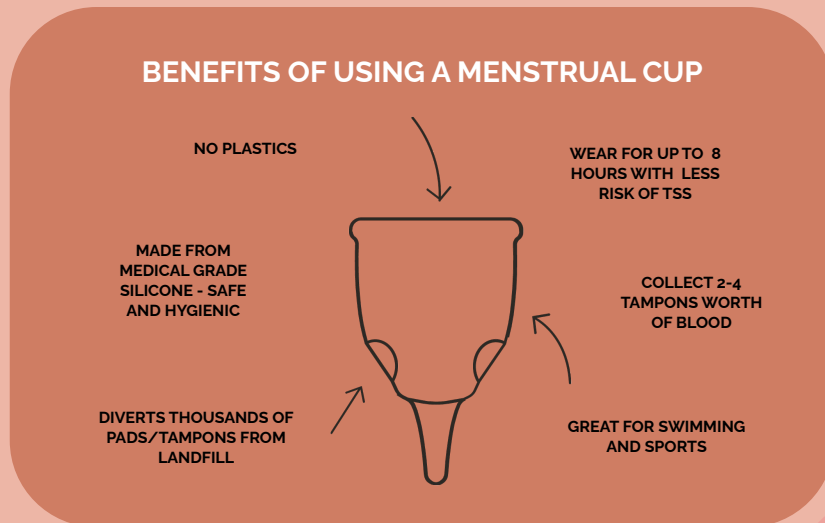
INTERNAL EXTERNAL REUSABLE DISPOSABLE

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Menstrual cups are inserted into the vaginal canal, just like a tampon would be. Instead of absorbing menstrual blood like a tampon, cups collect the blood.

The cup gets folded up, the tip is positioned at the vaginal opening, and it is gently directed inside the vaginal canal on a diagonal angle. Once inside, it opens up and the holes around the rim of the cup create a seal to the walls of the vagina, ensuring it does not move out of place and that blood will not leak out. If inserted correctly and if it's the right size for you, you shouldn't be able to feel the menstrual cup and it shouldn't cause discomfort.

BENEFITS OF USING A MENSTRUAL CUP



[CLICK HERE TO SHOP](#)

Available from
thetomco.com
Supermarkets &
pharmacies

TOM
ORGANIC

PERIOD CUP +
STERILISER CASE

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Learn more www.thetomco.com



MENSTRUAL CUPS

INTERNAL EXTERNAL REUSABLE DISPOSABLE

CLEANING THE CUP

A menstrual cup is reusable, meaning it is cleaned after each use and used again. It can last you years, saving a lot of money! Because the cup is made of 100% medical grade silicone, it is very hygienic and safe.

After removing, rinse cup the sink with cold water and gentle soap and reinsert.

When your period is over, you can sanitise the cup by boiling it in a pot on the stove for a few minutes (follow manufacturers instructions). Alternatively, the TOM Organic cup comes with a steriliser case to sanitise your cup in the microwave. Do this before reinserting before your next period too.

GETTING STARTED WITH CUPS VIDEOS



[Watch period cup playlist](#)

TEEN PERIOD CUP



The Saalt TEEN cup is smaller and easier for first time cup users.

Teenagers can use a cup as soon as they feel comfortable and confident to try it out. The Saalt teen cup is a smaller fit to make starting out with a cup easier!

[SHOP TEEN CUPS](#)

[MORE ABOUT TEENS & CUPS](#)



REUSABLE PADS

INTERNAL EXTERNAL REUSABLE DISPOSABLE

HOW DO THEY WORK?

Reusable pads absorb your period without the need for disposable pads or tampons. They have an inbuilt absorbent section that absorbs blood. Reusable pads usually clip onto your underwear. They usually hold more blood than a disposable pad, so you can often go longer without needing to change them. However, wear time will depend on how heavy your flow is. Just make sure to change after 8 hours! When you're ready to change a reusable pad, it can be rinsed or soaked, and then put in the washing machine.

To clean your used pads:

1. Remove the reusable pad
2. Soak in cold water for to get out the excess blood on the surface and prevent staining. Follow product guidelines for soaking.
3. Wash in the washing machine on a cold cycle without fabric softener. You can put them in with the rest of your laundry with similar colours.
4. Hang, dry and wear them again!

BENEFITS OF USING REUSABLE PADS

HOLDS 2-4
(sometimes more)
TAMPONS WORTH
OF BLOOD

WEAR FOR HOURS,
WASH, AND REUSE

NO PLASTICS

CUTE AND
COMFORTABLE

NO NEED FOR PADS OR
TAMPONS

DECREASES WASTE
FROM DISPOSABLES



Period Ready Kit

PARENT-TEEN MASTERCLASSES
& RESOURCE KIT

Super helpful, informative and useful. I wish I'd known all of this when I was younger!

Everything I expected and more! It is so important to know this from a young age.

EASY PEASY PERIODS. NO AWKWARD CONVERSATIONS REQUIRED.

- 2x 90 minute 'Period Perfect Masterclass' videos
- A copy of ['The Bright Girl Guide' ebook](#) – an all encompassing guide to the menstrual cycle and hormones
- Access to a resource kit of activities and worksheets
- Access to our exclusive Facebook group for BONUS resources and a community of support from like-minded families
- Unlimited access to the masterclass recordings to watch back as you wish
- You will receive instant access to material to experience the Masterclasses at your own pace



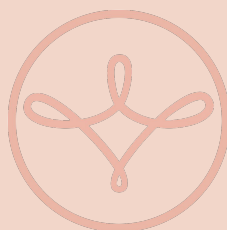
More info for parents

Use code 'PARENT20' for \$20 off

Learning

resources

**USE THESE RESOURCES TO FOSTER CONVERSATION
AND COMMUNICATION AROUND PERIODS WITHIN
YOUR FAMILY**



YOUR VIEW ON PERIODS

1. What can be scary about getting your first period?

2. What can be some exciting things about getting your first period?

3. What new responsibilities come along with having a period?

4. How might having a period change your school life or the way you work at school?

5. Make a list of questions you have about periods.



Why a period happens

The endometrium

EXCERPT FROM
'THE BRIGHT
GIRL GUIDE'
BOOK

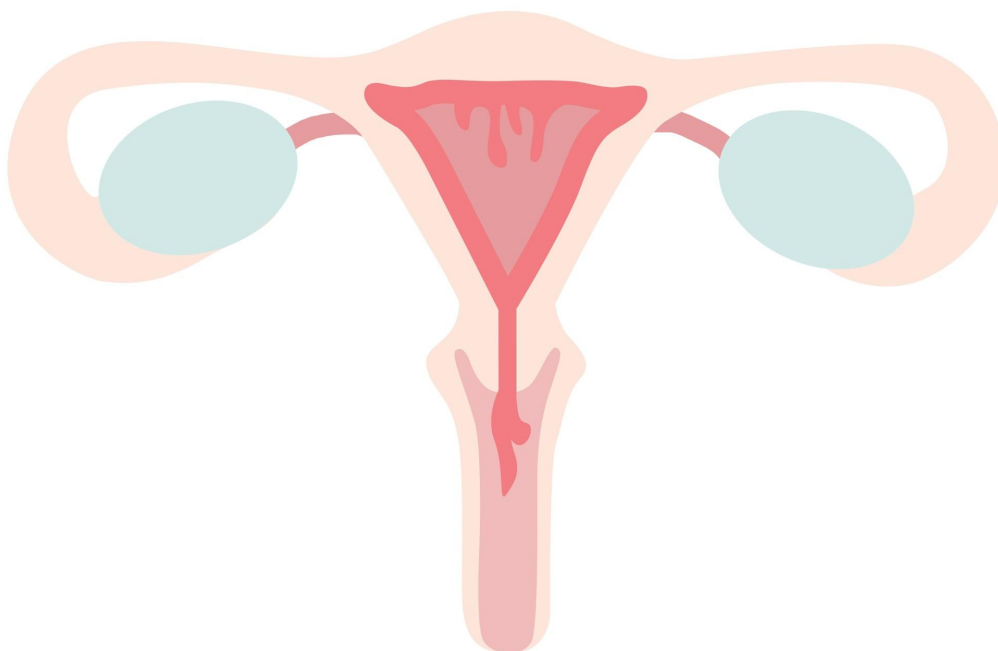
[CLICK HERE FOR
MORE](#)

WHY A PERIOD HAPPENS

Most months people do not get pregnant. This means that the uterus does not need the thickened endometrium that was built up throughout the cycle.

The menstrual bleed, or period, is the body expelling the inner layer of the endometrium that it no longer needs. The period bleed is made up of this layer of the endometrium, white blood cells and some mucus.

The diagram below shows the endometrium being shed at the time of menstruation. The period blood exits the body through the vaginal canal.



Your period bleed is the body realising that pregnancy did not occur and it no longer needs the thickened endometrium that was built up, so it is shed.



[CLICK
HERE TO
SHOP](#)

MAKE HORMONES & PERIODS SIMPLE.

A BEAUTIFUL AND EASY TO READ BOOK TO
UNDERSTAND YOUR BODY BETTER.

AVAILABLE AS eBOOK OR PAPERBACK

PERIOD DIARY 1

1. Write down 5-10 words that you associate with having a period.

Using 3 different coloured highlighters, colour code each word you wrote above into one of 3 categories:

- Positive words (eg: Intelligent, insightful, grateful, communication)
- Neutral words (eg: biology, red, uterus)
- Negative words (eg: pain, suffering, frustrating, stupid, annoying)

2. Reflect on how many words you have in each category above. For each negative word you have written down, write down a positive word you would like to replace it with (eg: Write 'insightful' instead of 'frustrating').

NEGATIVE WORD	POSITIVE REPLACEMENT

3. Write 2-3 sentences to describe having a period using all the positive words you've listed in the table above (eg: my period is intelligent because it can communicate to me about my health).



Phases of the menstrual cycle

Your period speaks

What might your period say if it could talk?
Maybe it would say something like...

“Wear the white pants, it will be fine... just kidding!”

“I heard you have a pool party this weekend... it would be a shame if I came and ruined it!”

“I bled all over your favorite underwear! Sorry not sorry”

Sometimes it can feel like our period is out to get us, or that the period symptoms we experience are just annoying. However, period symptoms can be a useful way the body communicates.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS: YOUR PERIOD'S LANGUAGE

Your body is intelligent and your period can give you *signs and symptoms* that act as an alarm or indicator to let you know an area of your health may need attention.

We might get frustrated at our body when we experience period symptoms like pain, acne, headaches, heavy bleeding or irregular periods. However, it's important that we recognise these symptoms as the body's way of communicating. We should listen to these signs and symptoms instead of getting angry about them.

Signs and symptoms are things you CAN SEE that tell you about things you CANNOT SEE.

WHAT WE CAN SEE (Sign or symptom)	WHAT WE CAN'T SEE (Cause)
Late period	Potentially: Stress, nutrient deficiency, hormone imbalance, etc.
Excess period pain	Potentially: Excess oestrogen, stress, reproductive health condition, etc.

PERIOD DIARY 2

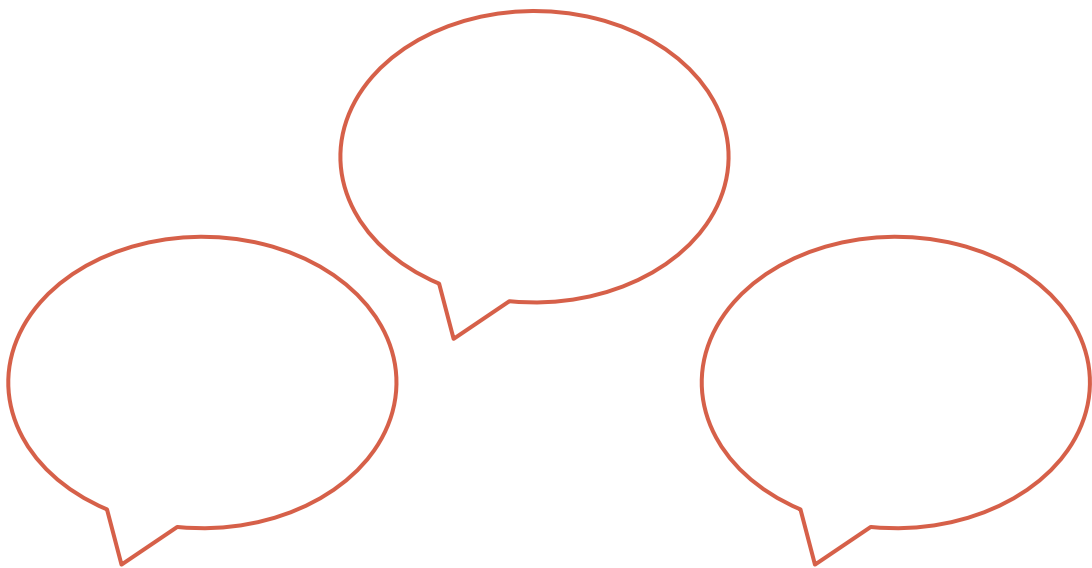
Fill out the speech bubbles with phrases that you personally feel like your period might say to you if it could talk.

Be honest! If you feel like your period would be sassy, rude, mean or angry, allow the phrases you write to reflect that.

If you feel your period would be insightful, calm, absent or silent, you can reflect those feelings in the speech bubbles too.



Fill out the next set of speech bubbles with what you would want to say to your period if it could understand you



HAVING A BETTER PERIOD STARTS WITH UNDERSTANDING YOUR BODY



"THE BRIGHT GIRL GUIDE"
AVAILABLE NOW!

WWW.BRIGHTGIRLHEALTH.COM/SHOP

ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE FOLLOWING ONLINE RETAILERS:

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amazon kindle

Book Depository

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fishpond.com.au

wordery
your online bookshop

Phases of the menstrual cycle

Characteristics of cycle phases

EXCERPT FROM
'THE BRIGHT GIRL
GUIDE' BOOK

[CLICK HERE
FOR MORE](#)

The menstrual cycle is not just when we're bleeding - it includes every day in between periods! There are 4 phases of the menstrual cycle. On any given day you are in one of these 4 phases (unless you're pregnant, using hormonal birth control, or haven't had your 1st period yet). The 4 animals below represent how we might feel as we move through these phases.

SLOTH PHASE

Menstruation/period bleed

- This phase is the days of your period bleed
- Usually lasts 4-7 days
- May feel more tired, slow and inward focussed (like a sloth)
- May feel the need for more rest at the beginning of this phase

LIONESS PHASE

Before ovulation

- This phase is the time after your period ends
- Lasts until ovulation time (the length of this phase can vary from person to person)
- May feel more energetic and confident (like a lioness)
- May feel more happy and have more stable emotions in this phase

CAT PHASE

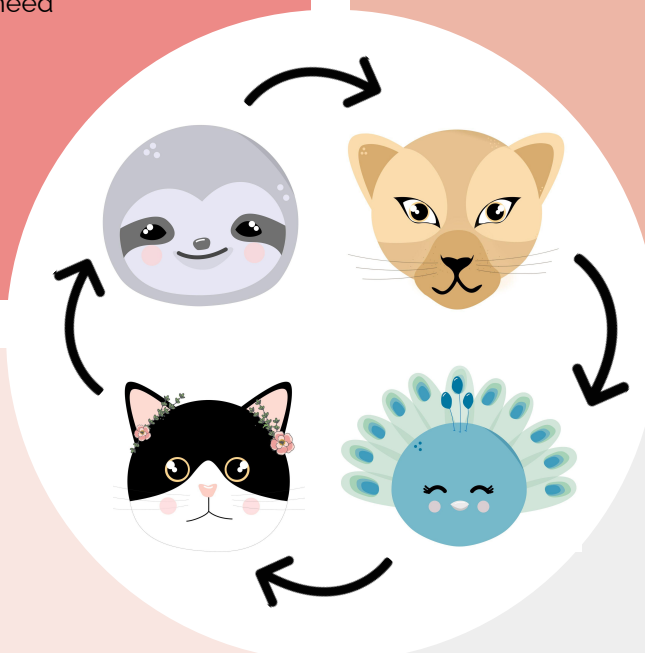
After ovulation

- Begins after ovulation happens
- Usually lasts 10-17 days. On average, it's ~2 weeks leading up to your next period. This phase typically will not vary much in length
- May be characterised by PMS (pre-menstrual syndrome) symptoms
- May experience mood swings (like a cat)

PEACOCK PHASE

Ovulation

- Roughly 1-3 days surrounding the time an egg is released from an ovary
- Ovulation is typically said to happen around cycle day 14, however, it often doesn't. It can happen on different days each cycle.
- May have increases in confidence (like a peacock)
- Some people may experience ovulation pain, spotting, or nausea



PERIOD DIARY 3

VISUAL PERIOD DIARY:

Create an artwork that reflects the way you feel on **THIS DAY** of your cycle and what you might need to feel better supported on this day. Here are some ideas:

- Use colours that reflect your mood
- Include words that reflect your dominant feelings or moods on this day of your cycle
- Include imagery that reflects what your body craves, desires or needs on this day (eg: more rest, time with friends, alone time, nourishing food, exercise and fresh air, etc.)

WRITTEN PERIOD DIARY: (alternative to the visual diary)

Write a diary entry that reflects on how you feel on **THIS DAY** of your cycle and what you might need to feel better supported on this day. Reflect on:

- Where are you in your cycle at the moment? (period, just after your period, period is coming up)
- The dominant feelings from this day you are experiencing
- Write down 2-3 things you feel like your body needs on this day (eg: more rest, time with friends, alone time, nourishing food, exercise and fresh air, etc.)

REFLECTION:

Write down what you need in order to feel supported and comfortable during your period.

PERIOD PLAYLIST:

Make a playlist of songs to suit and support your different moods during your menstrual cycle. You might name your playlists according to the different phases of your cycle (sloth, lioness, peacock, cat from previous activity).

Getting to the bottom of period concerns

Knowing when to seek help

EXCERPT FROM
'THE BRIGHT GIRL
GUIDE' BOOK

CLICK HERE FOR
MORE

WHERE TO SEEK HEALTH INFORMATION & ADVICE

When we go to the doctor for a heart problem, we get referred to a heart specialist.

When we go for a skin problem, we get referred to a dermatologist.

It should be the same for period problems.

When seeking professional help for period issues, it is very important to connect with **a practitioner who specialises in menstrual health, hormones, and period concerns**. Not every doctor does.

If you have ongoing period concerns, they should not be brushed off.

It is also very important to investigate and address the **root cause** of period issues. Many ongoing or severe period symptoms can be indicative of a deeper issue.

Medications like the oral contraceptive pill, while they *may* decrease period symptoms, have many side effects and do not treat the root cause of the problem, resulting in symptoms re-occurring once someone stops taking the medication. Teenage periods are more expected to be irregular while the body learns this new function. Using more natural methods of treating the root cause can be a preferred route of many practitioners when treating teenagers.

HOW DO I KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP FROM A PROFESSIONAL?

1.

Just because it's 'common' doesn't mean it's normal

Just because you know people who experience a particular period irregularity doesn't mean it's 'normal' or 'good' if it is bothering you (ie. horrible period pain, acne, bad mood swings, poor digestion, etc.). Surveys show that 80% of menstruators experience period pain, varying from mild to disabling pain. Just because it's common, doesn't mean you should endure being miserable each month. If this is you, seek solutions!

2.

If a symptom stops you from living your best life, participating in everyday activities and doing the things you want to do

20-40% of menstruators said that their PMS symptoms were troubling enough to negatively impact their daily life. If period irregularities are stopping you from participating in or carrying out everyday activities, listen to your body and investigate your symptoms further.

3.

Look for patterns

Something that happens once and never happens again may not be cause to run to the doctor in a worry, unless it's a new or concerning symptom, or the first 2 rules apply. However, when period irregularities form a pattern by arising again and again, it's important to investigate the signs your body is giving you. If you notice recurring period symptoms or irregularities, it can be helpful to:

- **Chart your symptoms** so you can keep track of patterns. Don't just rely on memory. You can also show this chart to a health professional, and they can use it to help get to the bottom of any issues.
- **Look for patterns on your chart** - Do concerning symptoms happen more than once, or do they occur in a particular phase of your cycle?
- **Connect with a menstrual health practitioner** - You can ask your GP to refer you to a menstrual health specialist. Google "menstrual health practitioner" to find one in your area, or use the [Bright Girl Health practitioner directory](#). Many naturopaths, functional medicine doctors & Chinese medicine doctors specialise in menstrual health.



BRIGHT GIRL HEALTH PRACTITIONER DIRECTORY

MENSTRUAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER DIRECTORY

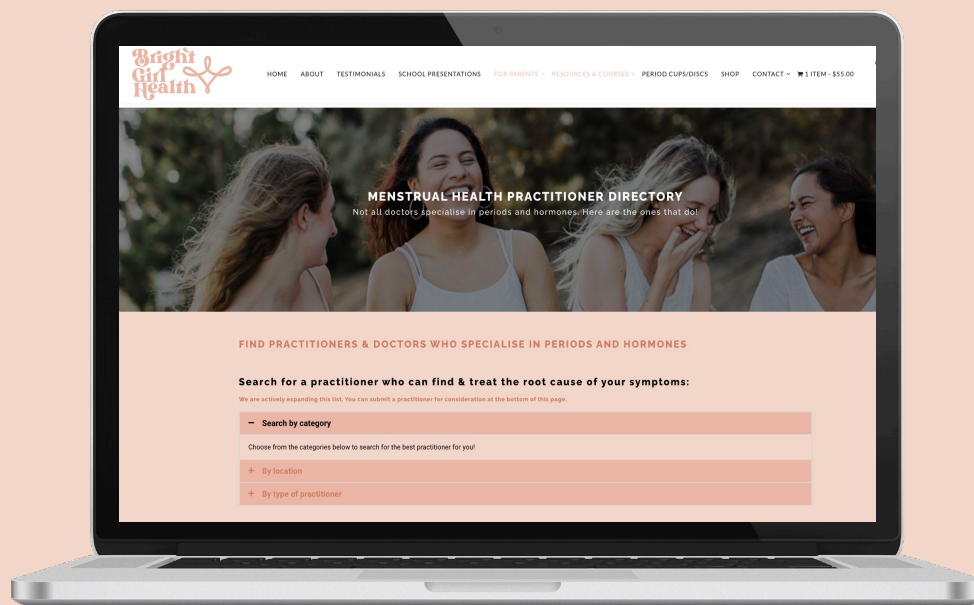
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SEARCH THE DIRECTORY



Period Ready Kit

PARENT-TEEN MASTERCLASSES
 & RESOURCE KIT

2x 90 min masterclass videos
 with Demi Spaccavento

A copy of 'The Bright Girl
 Guide' ebook

A database of worksheets &
 activities for deep learning

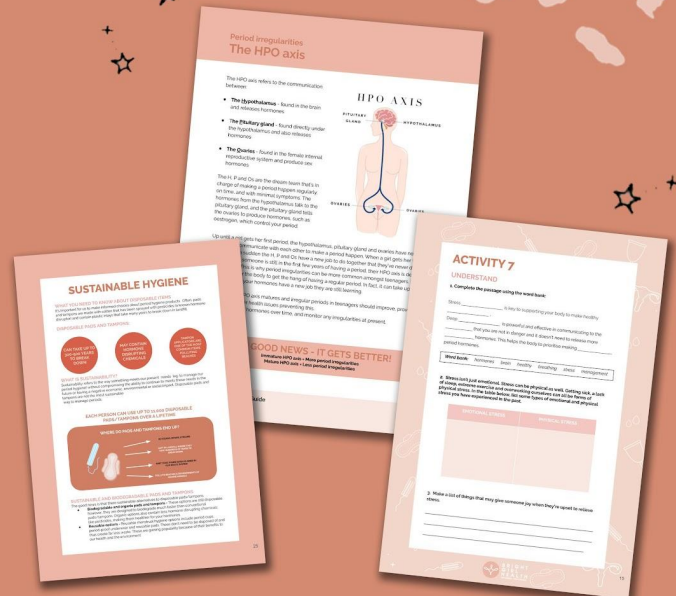
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 FOR MORE
 INFO

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 FOR \$20 OFF

PARENT-TEEN ECOURSE

Activities &
 worksheets

DESIGNED BY AN
 EXPERIENCED TEACHER
 FOR DEEP LEARNING



ABOUT DEMI SPACCAVENTO



Demi Spaccavento is the founder of Bright Girl Health, a menstrual health educator, keynote speaker, and a passionate high school teacher.

Demi is the most sought after menstrual health presenter for schools in Australia. She has presented to thousands of students, empowering them to be in tune with their body and never dread their period again. Demi's communication style is high-energy and entertaining, and has been described by students as 'relatable' and 'fun'.

Demi has no filter when it comes to talking about periods and believes that we should never be kept in the dark about our own bodies. She believes that the menstrual cycle does not have to be your enemy – it can be your greatest tool for better health and wellbeing!