

RSE – Year 4

Lesson 5: Menstruation and wet dreams



Girls' changes –
Menstruation

Menstruation key questions

- What is menstruation?
- Why do females menstruate (have periods)?
- What are the effects of menstruation?
- How can females look after their bodies during menstruation?

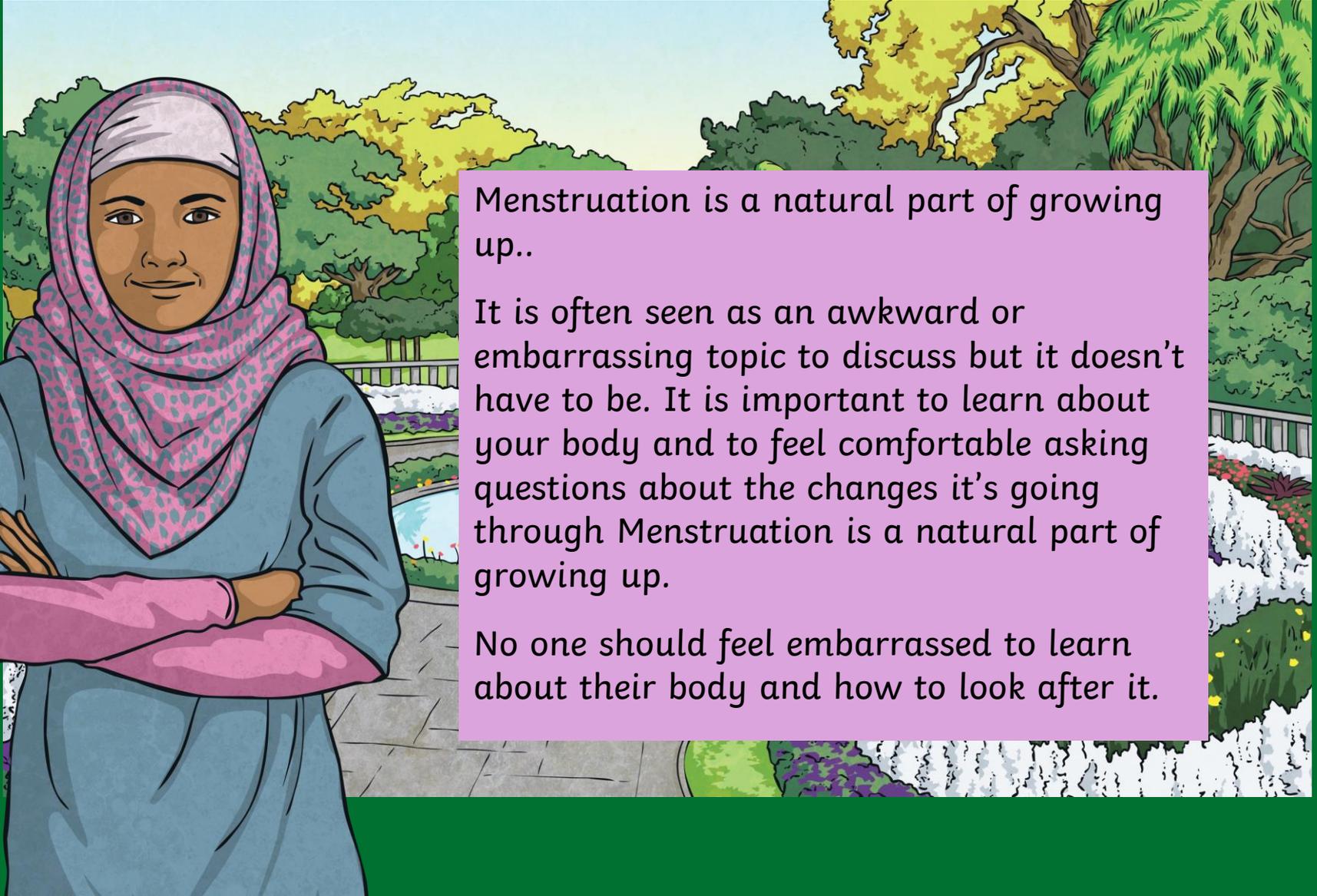
Puberty and the Female Body



Everybody goes through puberty. It's a time where the human body releases hormones as it gets ready to develop into an adult that can reproduce.

As the female body develops during puberty, one of the biggest changes is beginning menstruation.

Puberty and the Female Body



Menstruation is a natural part of growing up..

It is often seen as an awkward or embarrassing topic to discuss but it doesn't have to be. It is important to learn about your body and to feel comfortable asking questions about the changes it's going through. Menstruation is a natural part of growing up.

No one should feel embarrassed to learn about their body and how to look after it.

Periods: The Facts

- that men and boys can learn about menstruation too, so that they have more understanding and can be supportive of the girls and women in their lives?

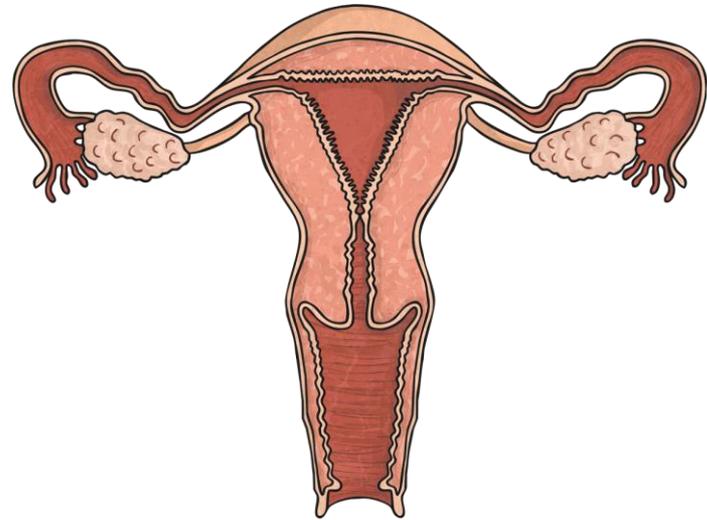


What Happens During Menstruation?

Menstruation is what happens as the female body gets ready to reproduce.

Without menstruation, and the release of eggs from the ovaries, babies can't be made.

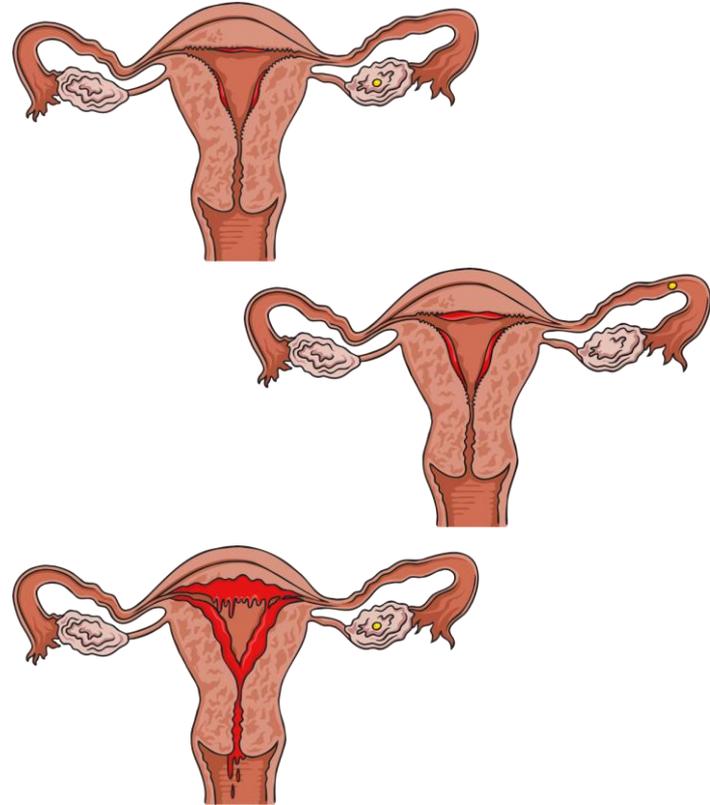
Roughly every 28 days, one of the ovaries releases an egg.



What Happens During Menstruation?

As the egg is released from the ovary, the uterus prepares to look after the egg, if it is fertilised, by producing a special lining to protect the egg.

If the egg isn't fertilised, then the body expels the tiny egg, along with the lining in the uterus that wasn't needed. This is what a period is — the blood that is released from the body is the unused lining from the uterus.



What Happens During Menstruation?

The average length of a period is between four and eight days but we're all different and periods may be longer or shorter than this.

During the period, there will be days where the flow is heavier (more blood is lost) and days when it is lighter (not much blood is lost).



Menstrual Symptoms

stomach cramps

headaches

sore breasts

fatigue

mood swings

acne or spots

food cravings

Period Preparation and Peace of Mind

Health and Beauty

So, almost every female will have periods during their life.

Knowing what to expect and being prepared is a really important part of menstrual wellbeing.

You don't need to feel anxious if you know all about periods and have everything you need for when you have a period.

Sanitary Products



It's up to the individual as to what sort of sanitary product they use.

Most girls start with sanitary pads. You can get disposable ones that are thrown away after use, or reusable ones that can be washed and worn again.

There are also special knickers that absorb the blood lost during a period. These can be washed and worn just like normal underwear.

Sanitary Products

Most girls and women carry sanitary products with them in their bag.

You could put them in a make-up bag, wash bag or even a pencil case, inside your school bag.

Some public toilets sell sanitary products in machines.

Don't flush any sanitary products down the toilet. Put them in the bin, wrapped in toilet paper or in a small plastic or paper bag.



Asking Questions and Getting Help



If there's ever anything you want to find out about menstruation or menstrual wellbeing, there are lots of people who can help and places you can look for information or advice.

- Family members may be able to answer your questions.
- Members of staff at school will be happy to help.
- Reliable websites offer information and advice.
- And if you are ever worried about your menstrual health or think that something might be wrong, you could speak to a doctor about it.

Key Vocabulary

Puberty -

the time when the human body develops from childhood to adulthood and the body changes as it prepares to be able to reproduce.

Hormones -

chemical substances in the body that act as messengers, travelling around the body.

Ovaries -

an organ in the female body where the ova (or eggs) are produced.

Uterus -

an organ in the female body where offspring are conceived and where they develop before being born.

Menstruation (or periods) -

the female body releasing an unfertilised egg and lining of the uterus each month.

Sanitary products -

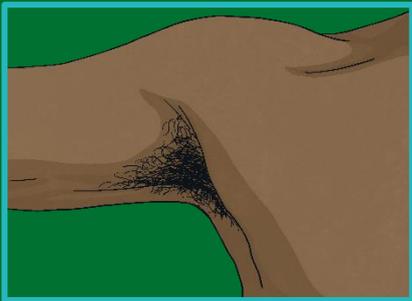
pads and tampons used by females during their periods to absorb the blood their body releases.

Boys' changes –
Wet dreams

Genitals

Your penis and testicles grow.

They may sometimes feel uncomfortable and due to your body producing more hormones (testosterone is one of these), you might get erections when you least expect them!



Erections

Boys might notice that their penis sometimes becomes hard. This is called an **erection**. It can be embarrassing and can happen when you don't want it to but don't worry, it is completely normal and maybe will happen less as you get older.

Hair

Both boys and girls will notice hair growth in different parts of their body. They might notice hair begin to grow on their legs, armpits and around their genitals. Hair growth around the genitals is called pubic hair. Boys might also grow hair on his face.

Wet dreams

Another change that young people might experience when they go through puberty is called **nocturnal emissions**, or **wet dreams**.

Males can experience wet dreams and, as you might have guessed from the word 'dreams', they happen when we are asleep.



You might ejaculate semen (the fluid containing sperm) from your penis in the night.

Either way, wet dreams are nothing at all to worry about. They are completely normal but not everyone experiences them.