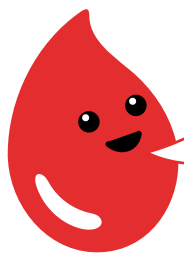
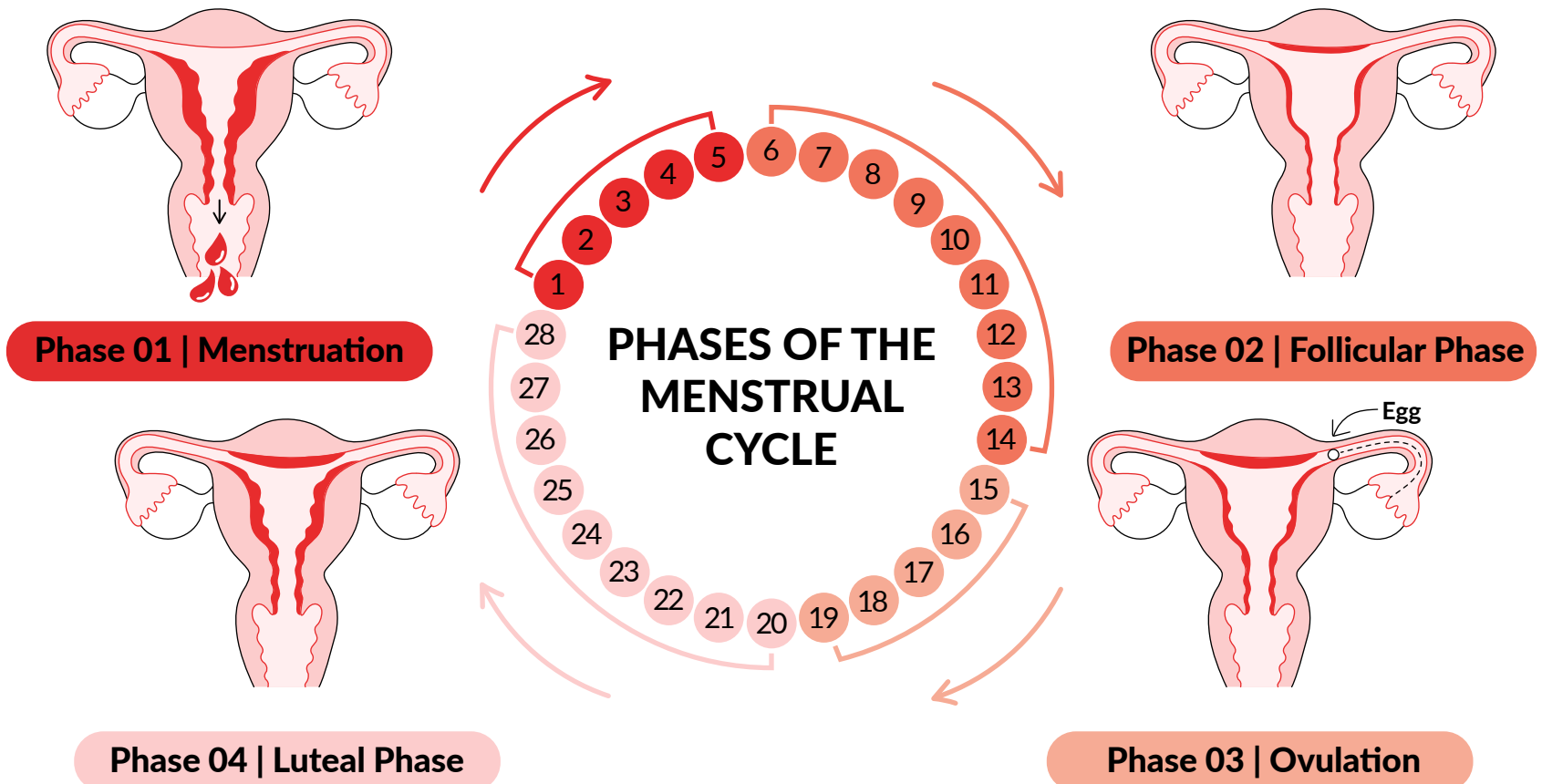


## WHAT IS THE

# Menstrual Cycle?



**Welcome**  
TO THE INCREDIBLE WORLD  
OF THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE!

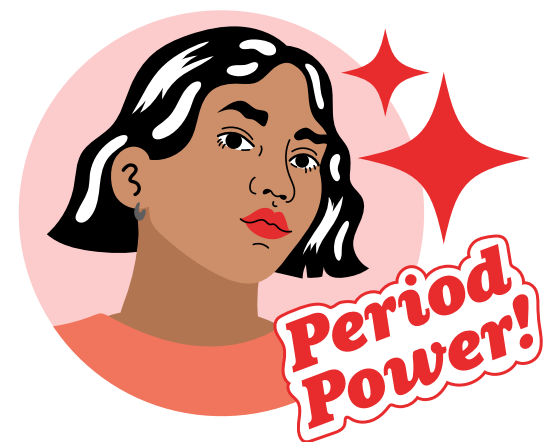
The menstrual cycle is a repeating process for people who menstruate that begins at puberty and ends at menopause. The biological purpose of the menstrual cycle is reproduction. The average cycle lasts approximately 28 days, and can vary from 21-35 days.<sup>(3)</sup>

### Phase 01 | Menstruation

- **Menstruation** is the beginning of the menstrual cycle. In this phase, there is a regular shedding of menstrual **blood** and endometrial tissue from the inner lining of the **uterus** through the **vagina**. This is commonly called **period**. Typical periods can last from 3-7 days.<sup>(4)</sup>
- Symptoms: Cramping is common as the uterus sheds the inner lining.<sup>(4)</sup>

### Phase 02 | Follicular Phase

- Continues from menstruation to ovulation, typically ending mid-cycle at day 14.<sup>(4)</sup> The lining of the uterus thickens because of increased estrogen in preparation for pregnancy. The ovaries prepare the egg for **ovulation**.<sup>(6)</sup> This is a *vulnerable time for pregnancy*.<sup>(2)</sup>



### Phase 03 | Ovulation

- Occurs mid-cycle around day 15.<sup>(4)</sup> A mature egg is released from the ovary into the fallopian tube.<sup>(4)</sup> Still a *vulnerable time for pregnancy*. If sperm reaches the egg during this time, pregnancy can occur.<sup>(5)</sup>

### Phase 04 | Luteal Phase

- Begins with Ovulation and finishes the cycle back to **Menstruation**.<sup>(3)</sup> There is an increased blood supply to the endometrium, as it prepares to receive and nurture a fertilized egg, which is a pregnancy.<sup>(6)</sup>
- If no pregnancy occurs, the inner lining of the uterus along with the egg are shed at the start of the next cycle - which is menstruation!<sup>(3,4)</sup>
- Symptoms: Hormones may fluctuate to begin the cycle over again. You may experience moodiness, acne breakouts, food cravings, headaches, difficulty sleeping, breast tenderness, or bloating.<sup>(3)</sup>

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to reach out to a healthcare professional. Your body is incredible – celebrate it and take care of yourself throughout this monthly cycle!

**PERIOD.**  
THE MENSTRUAL MOVEMENT



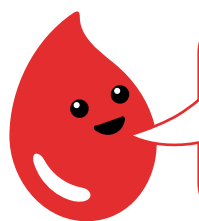
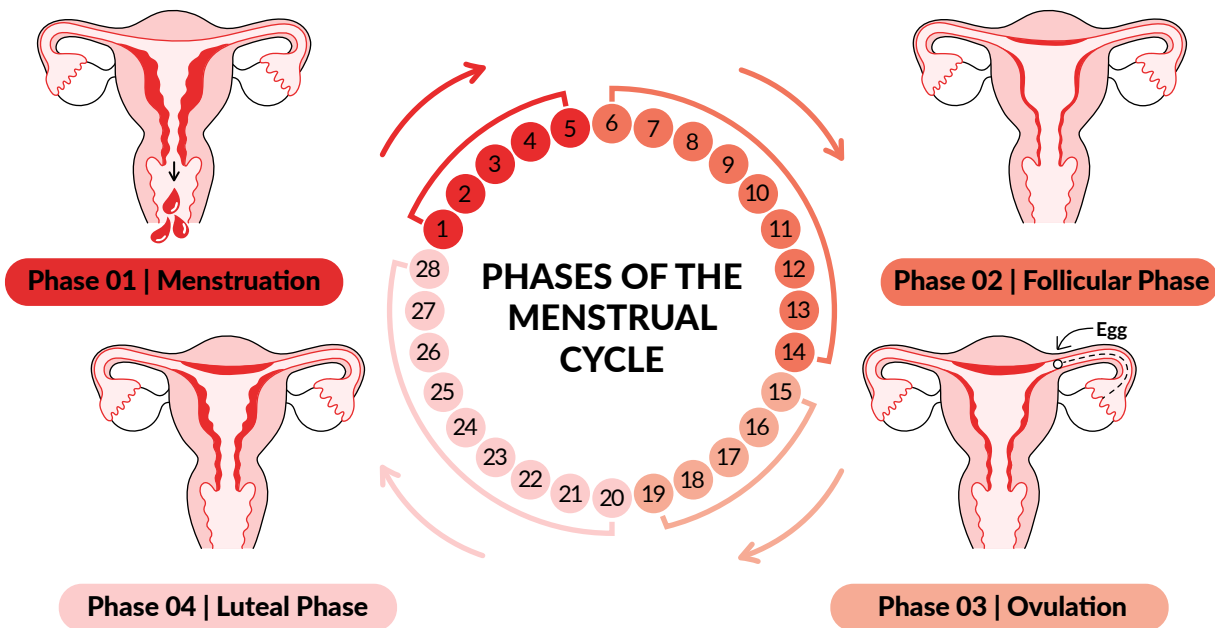
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Visit [period.org](https://period.org) to learn more | Follow us @periodmovement



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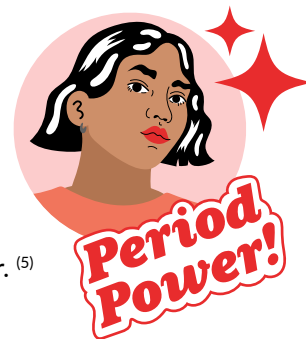
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