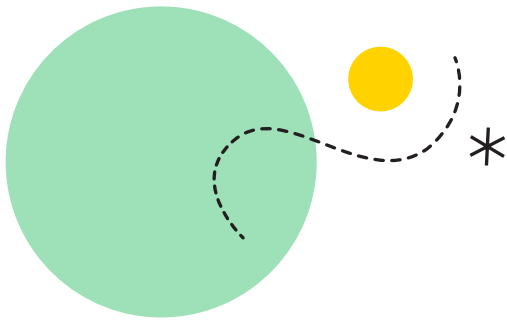
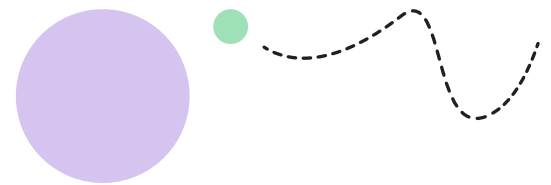




What you need to know. Period.

Menstrual health & misinformation



* *What you need to know. Period.* is for everybody: for people who get a period, people who will eventually get a period, and even people who will never get a period. Together, we can have open and honest conversations about **menstruation**.

Words you need to know. *Period.*

Menstruation is often called a period because it's the period of time each month when a person with a uterus bleeds. The uterus is a triangle-shaped area inside the body (below the belly button). This is where a baby can grow during pregnancy. Most periods last anywhere from 3-8 days and happen once a month.

Periods are a part of life. But, most people don't talk openly about periods or menstrual health. Of course, it's okay to be private about some things in life, but we don't need to keep periods a secret. We all need to have honest conversations about our bodies, ask our important questions, and get answers and help when we need it.

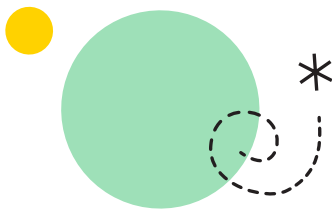
Getting a first period is part of puberty. Most people go through puberty, whether they get a period or not. Even though most of us will go through puberty eventually, many people don't talk about it or ask their questions. Keeping it a secret can feel lonely and can lead to feelings of shame and embarrassment about what you're experiencing. But it doesn't have to be this way.

It's essential to bring periods into everyday conversations to ditch the unnecessary shame and embarrassment many people feel around having a period. Talking about menstrual health can be a powerful and freeing experience for everyone, not just for people who get a period.

There are lots of words people use to talk about periods without actually using the words **period** or **menstruation**. This is confusing and keeps us in a cycle of secrecy, shame, and embarrassment.

Here are some helpful words we can use to talk about periods:

- A period
- Having or getting a period
- Menstruation or menstrual cycle
- Menstruating
- Bleeding
- A cycle
- Moontime
- Flow





Let's talk. Period.

Is it harmful to use negative or unclear words and phrases to talk about periods? Why?

Where do you turn to when you have a question about something? Particularly something you feel like you shouldn't speak openly about. What do you do when you have questions about puberty and periods?

You probably go online when you have a question about something you don't feel comfortable talking about. That's pretty common. Just one problem: There's lots of misinformation and disinformation about periods on the internet.

Misinformation is when the facts are wrong. **Disinformation** is getting the facts wrong on purpose to mislead or confuse someone. And then there are things that are just bizarre, like ads for period products that use blue liquid to represent blood. Why not use red liquid? It's no secret the period blood is red.

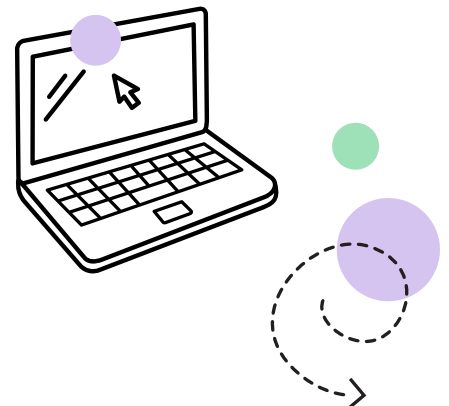
Most of us go online to get answers. But, it can be tricky to tell if the information we're getting is true. The best way to make sure that the information you're getting is true, is to go to a **reliable source**. A reliable source means it's information you can trust.

Here's a checklist to help you tell whether a website you're using to find answers to your questions is a reliable source:

- The address starts with "https." The "s" means the website is secure.
- The address has a padlock symbol next to it. This means it's a secure website.
- The website doesn't have spelling or grammar errors.
- The website is easy to use and all of the links work when you click on them.
- The website looks professional.
- The website doesn't have many pop-up or ads.



Another way to check if the information you find online is true is to look for the same answer on a few different websites. If the websites look reliable and all say the same thing about the information you're looking for, it's probably true.





Let's try it. Period.

1. Do an online search for the answer to the question "what are period cramps?"
2. Identify one reliable source from the list of search results. What makes you think it's a reliable source?
You can use the checklist above to help you with your search.
3. Check the answer on 3 reliable sources. Do they all say the same thing?
4. Based on your research, what's the answer to the question "what are period cramps?"



Ways to learn more

There are lots of ways to continue your learning about periods and about your health. The internet can be a good way to get answers to your questions, especially if you're using reliable sources and know where to look.

Here are some websites where you can continue your learning:

The Endometriosis Network Canada: endometriosisnetwork.com - More information about what endometriosis is, treatments, and other helpful resources.

YourPeriod.ca: yourperiod.ca - A website from the The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) with in-depth information about periods, period-related health conditions like endometriosis, and reproductive health.



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