

#PeriodDignity
SirGâr



FOR A PERIOD PROUD CARMARTHENSHIRE

PERIOD PRODUCTS, MENSTRUAL SCIENCE,
PERSONAL WELLBEING AND MENOPAUSE INFORMATION.

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PERIODS ARE NORMAL. THEY ARE NOT A CHOICE. WE ALL EITHER HAVE THEM, HAVE HAD THEM, OR KNOW PEOPLE WHO DO.



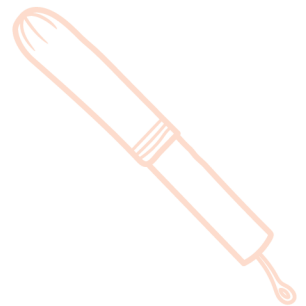
LET'S TALK ABOUT PERIODS!

Periods are not just a 'women's issue', they are not dirty and they are definitely not something to be ashamed of. No one should be disadvantaged because of their period. Everyone should have access to period products, as and when they are required, to use in a private space that is safe and dignified.

FREE PRODUCTS AVAILABLE

All schools across the county have products to be able to distribute to those who have periods in a school setting. You can also collect your free period products from over **75 distribution points** across the county, including our three town-centre Hwbs.

A full list of our **Distribution Points** can be found here.



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<https://www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales/council-services/community-information/bureau/period-dignity/>



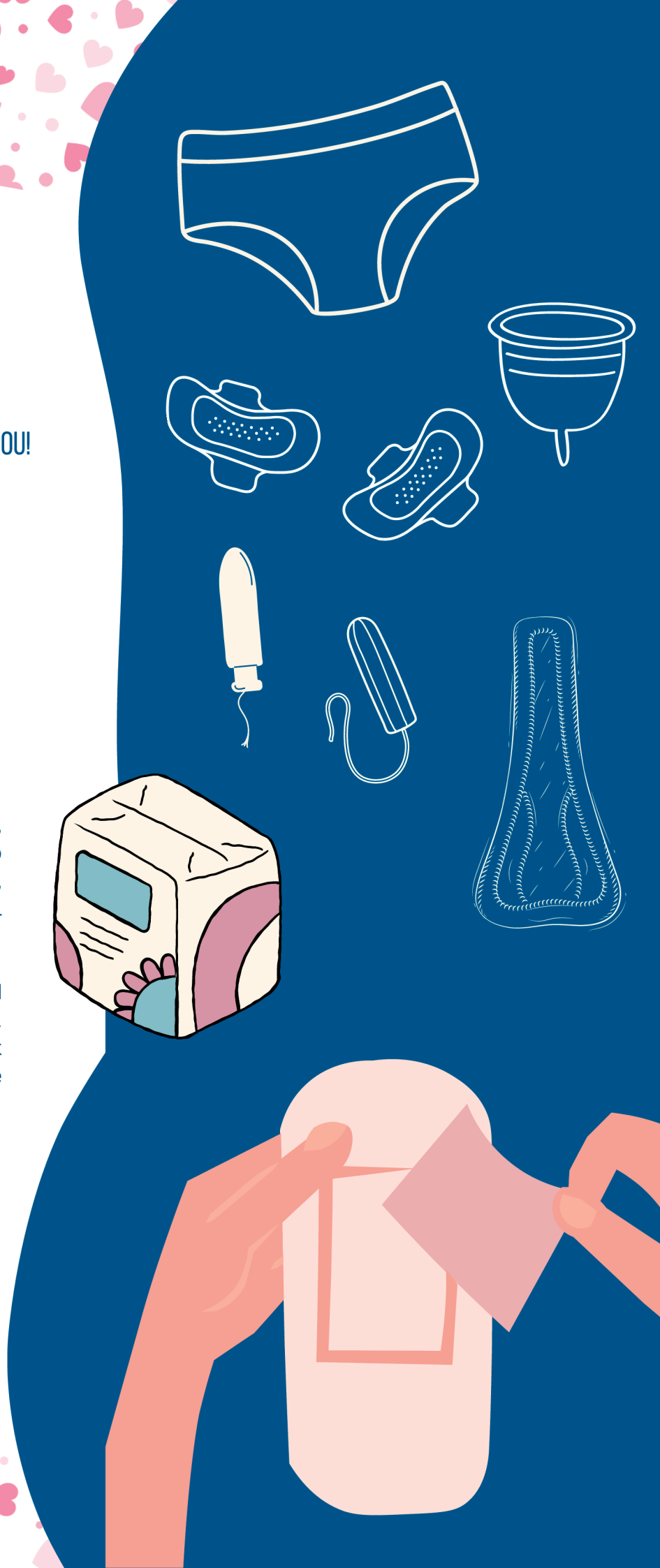
DISPOSABLES OR REUSABLES?

...CHOOSE WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU!

Figuring out what period products suit you is all part of getting used to your cycle. There are loads of options out there ~ pads, tampons, period pants, reusable pads, cups ~ and everyone's got their own preferences. It's totally normal to mix and match depending on what you're doing, how heavy your flow is, what you are up to that day or even what outfit you've got on.

Some people like the idea of reusables, others prefer disposables. Some swap between both. There's no right answer, just whatever makes you feel comfortable, clean and confident.

The key thing is this: **your period shouldn't get in the way of your life.** Once you find the products that work best for you, everything feels a whole lot easier.



MENSTRUAL CUP

The menstrual cup, first designed by a female inventor in the 1920s, has only recently boomed to the success that it deserves! **90% of people who try using a menstrual cup never look back.**

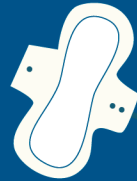
You can find menstrual cups in a variety of shapes and sizes to suit everybody.

Excellent for swimming!



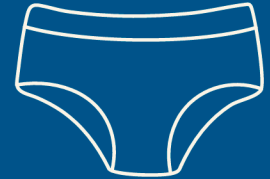
REUSABLE PADS

Menstrual pads, traditionally disposable, have been reimaged for the eco-aware era. Celebrated for their eco-friendliness and comfort and with a variety of fabrics, absorbencies and styles, they're tailored to individual needs and preferences.



PERIOD PANTS

Period pants, the mix of underwear and period protection. convenience. They come in various styles and protection levels, catering to different body types and flow intensities.



Reusables

PRODUCT OPTIONS

Disposables

TAMPONS

Tampons are still one of the most popular menstrual products today. Worn internally, people often find them comfy. Tampons come in a range of absorbencies, with or without applicators. Cardboard applicators are a more environmentally friendly option, and with so many varieties out there, it's worth trying a few until you find the ones that suit you best.



DISPOSABLE PAD

Sanitary towels are the go-to choice for many people. They're worn in your underwear and come in loads of different shapes, sizes, absorbencies from ultra-thin liners to extra long overnight pads. Reusable options are now widely available too, offering a comfy, eco-friendly alternative.



PANTY LINER

Panty liners are the lightest option and perfect for days when you're spotting, expecting your period, or coming to the end of it. They're also useful for daily wear if you're tracking cervical fluid or experiencing light discharge. Like pads, they're available in both disposable and reusable versions.



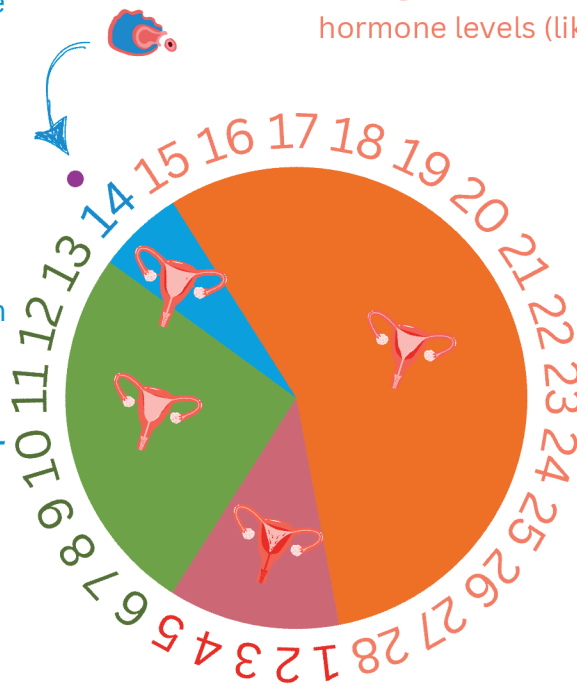
WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE?



• Ovulation (Around Day 14)

Ovulation is the main event of the cycle! Typically occurring around day 14, this is when the mature egg is released from the ovary. This is the time in the cycle that pregnancy is possible. Some people may notice slight ovulation cramps or increased cervical mucus, which can signal that ovulation is happening.

You might feel sociable, clear-headed and confident. Many people notice a natural boost around this time.



• Follicular Phase (Days 6-14)

After your period ends, the body enters the follicular phase. During this time, the pituitary gland releases hormones that stimulate the ovaries to produce a new egg. At the same time, the lining of the uterus begins to thicken again to prepare for a potential pregnancy.

You may feel more energetic and experience yourself lighter in mood, as hormone levels rise.

• Luteal Phase (Days 15-28)

After ovulation, the luteal phase kicks in. The body prepares for a possible pregnancy by further thickening the uterine lining. If the egg isn't fertilised, hormone levels (like progesterone) begin to drop, leading to symptoms like bloating, breast tenderness, or a dip in mood. This phase lasts about 10 to 14 days and ends with the start of your next period.

Energy may dip and emotions can feel closer to the surface. It helps to slow the pace and prioritise care.

• Menstrual Phase (Days 1-5)

This is when you get your period. Day one of your cycle is the first day that you see blood. The lining of the uterus (where a baby could grow) breaks down and sheds, which is what you see as bleeding. This phase usually lasts about 3 to 7 days. You might experience cramps, mood swings, or fatigue during this time, but it's completely normal.

You may feel tired or more inward-focused. This is a good time to rest, reflect and slow down.

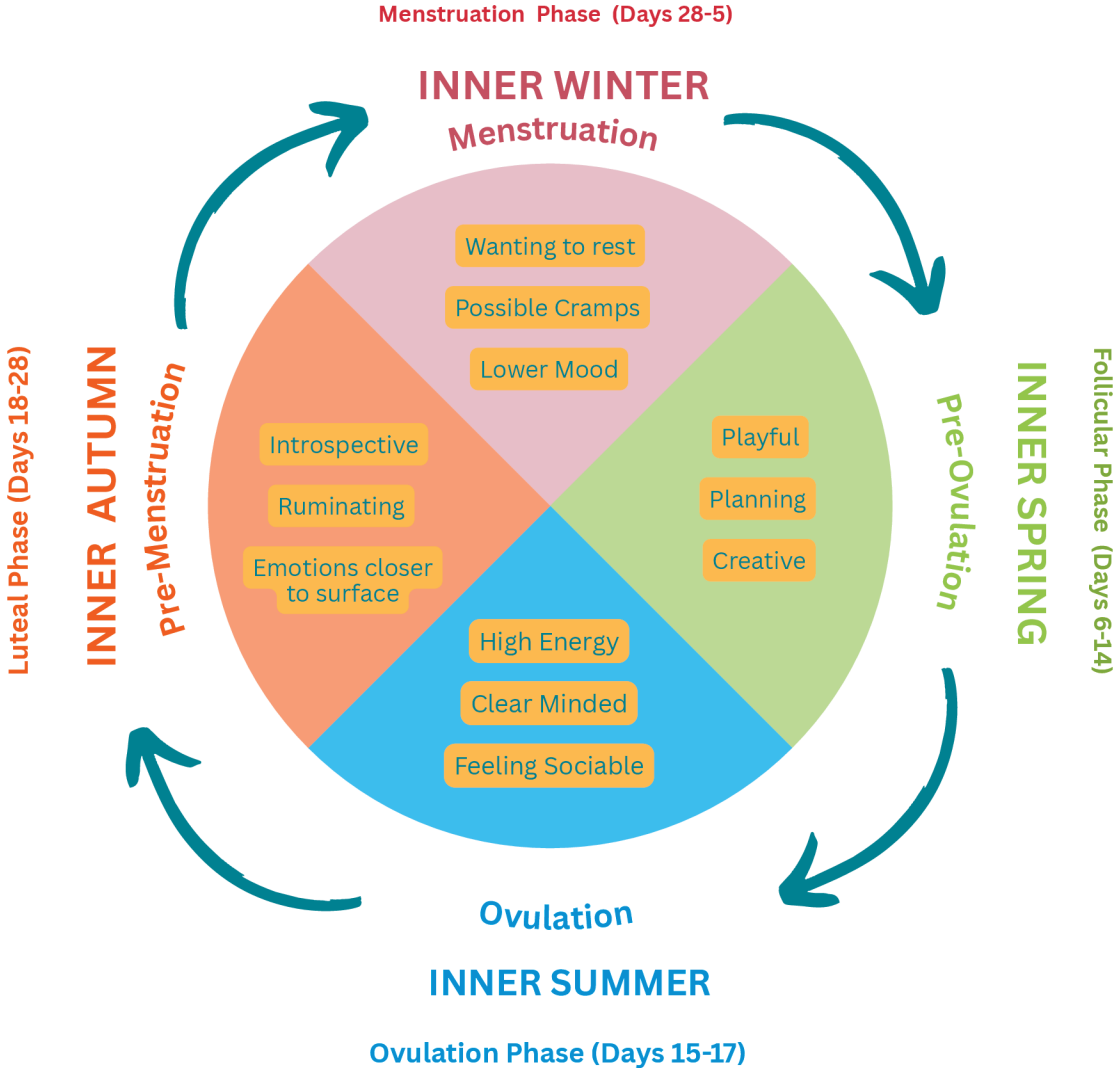


YOUR CYCLE ISN'T A PROBLEM TO FIX, IT'S A RHYTHM TO WORK WITH

Imagine being as in tune with your menstrual cycle as you are with the seasons of the year. You wouldn't go sunbathing in winter or skiing in the height of summer – so why push through exhaustion in your luteal phase, or expect high-energy days during menstruation? Not because any part of the cycle is good or bad, but because each phase has its good value to it, just like any natural cycle.

People with a menstrual cycle are constantly experiencing a rise or fall of hormones. At any given moment, you're either building toward ovulation or moving toward menstruation. All over the world, more and more people are taking note of where they are in their cycle and asking: How is this affecting me today? Whether it's your work, your communication, or your creativity, it's all connected.

Which phase are you in? And what comes up for you in each phase?





SELF-CARE DURING YOUR PERIOD

- Rest when you can – Your energy might dip, so don't over-schedule.
- Use heat – A hot water bottle or heat patch can ease cramps.
- Eat gently – Warm, nourishing meals can support digestion and mood.
- Stay hydrated – Helps reduce bloating and fatigue.
- Move slowly – Stretching, gentle walks, or yoga can ease tension.
- Say no – Give yourself permission to cancel or reschedule.
- Track your cycle – Helps you plan around your natural rhythm.
- Wear what's comfy – Soft clothes and leak-proof underwear are game-changers.
- Journal or reflect – This can be a good time to notice emotions or set intentions.
- Be kind to yourself – Lower expectations and offer softness, not pressure.



HOW TO CARE FOR SOMEONE ON THEIR PERIOD

- Offer warmth – A hot drink, blanket, or hot water bottle goes a long way.
- Don't make jokes – Avoid the "time of the month" comments, they're unhelpful.
- Check in – A simple "How are you feeling today?" shows care.
- Give space if needed – Some people feel more introverted or touch-sensitive.
- Do a small favour – Offer to make dinner or run an errand.
- Be patient – Mood and energy might dip; it's not personal.
- Support their choices – Whether they're using a tampon, pad, cup or pants, it's all valid.
- Respect boundaries – Physical or emotional, honour what they ask for.
- Make them laugh (gently) – Laughter can be a beautiful relief.
- Celebrate their strength – A quiet word of appreciation never hurts.

BLOODY
BRILLIANT



NHS:
PERIODS



WELLBEING
OF WOMAN



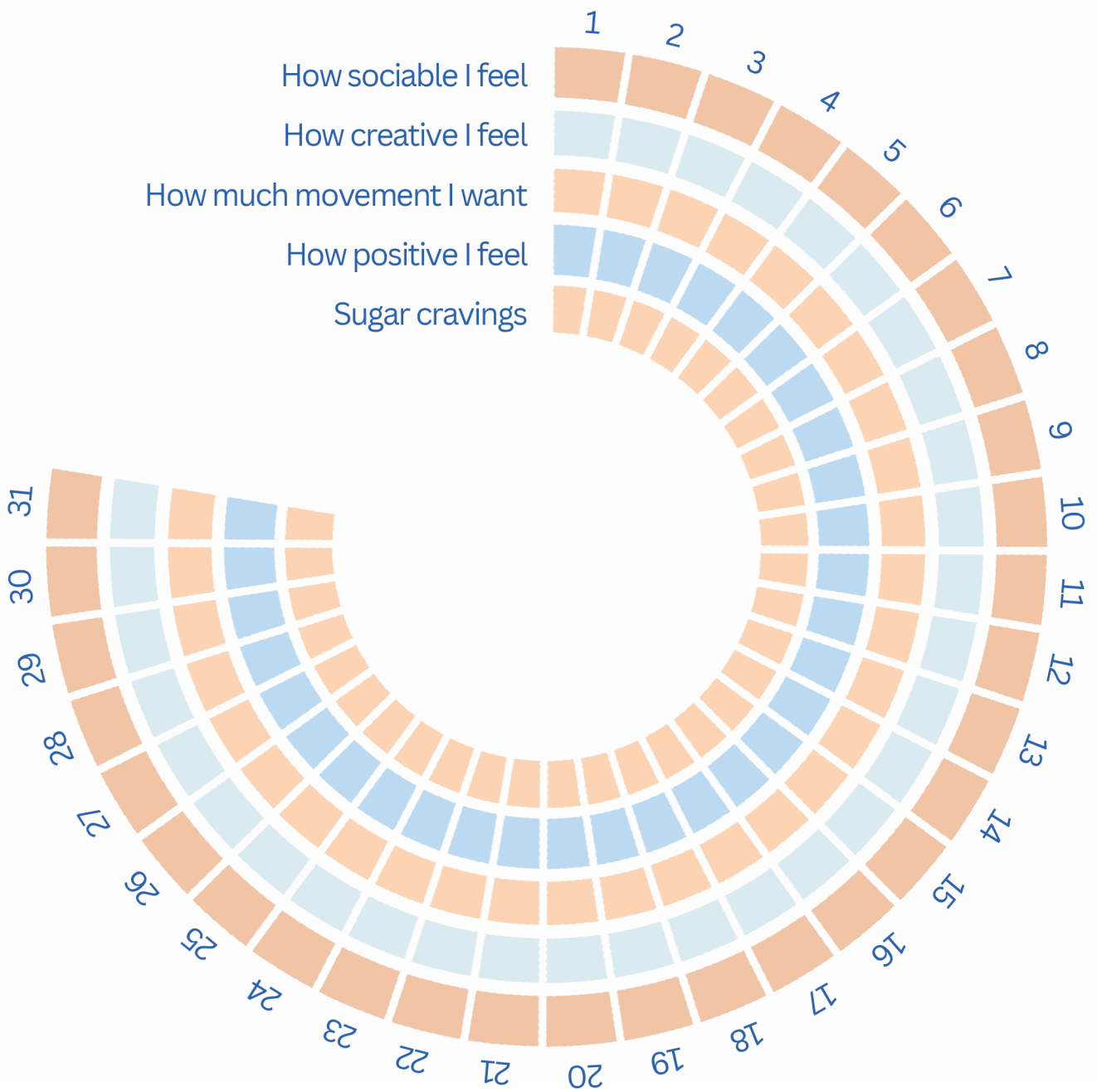
TRANS
HUB





CYCLE TRACKER

Use this chart to track how you feel each day of your cycle. On a scale of 1 to 5, mark things like how sociable, creative, or energetic you feel, with 1 being low and 5 being high. Over time, you'll start to see patterns that show how your cycle influences your mood, energy, and creativity.



OVULATING



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MIGHT YOU BE EXPERIENCING
PERI-MENOPAUSE?

- Irregular or changing periods
- Hot flushes or night sweats
- Mood swings, anxiety or low mood
- Brain fog or forgetfulness
- Irregular Sleep
- Vaginal dryness or discomfort
- Changes in sex drive
- Fatigue or feeling “not yourself”

MENOPAUSE

Menopause is something most women and people with periods will go through, yet so many of us reach it without really knowing what to expect.

At its simplest, menopause just means your **periods have stopped**. Not for a month or two, but **for 12 whole months in a row**. After that, you're officially menopausal. It usually **happens around the age of 51**, but it can come earlier or later.

Before that, there's **perimenopause**, which is basically the long and often wobbly lead-up. Hormone levels start to shift, and you might notice changes to your mood, sleep, periods, energy, and more. For many, this starts somewhere in their 40s and can last a few years, sometimes longer.

Once your periods have stopped, you're in menopause. And when you've gone a full year without any bleeding, you're in the post-menopause stage. It's not an overnight thing; it's a transition that can last anywhere from one year to nearly a decade - everyBODY is different!

A smaller number go through premature menopause, before 40. If you're in that group, you're not alone; it affects around 1 in 100 women in the UK.

Why does all this matter? Because menopause isn't just about periods stopping. The drop in oestrogen affects your bones, heart, skin, brain, and mood. It's a big change. But the more you know, the more you can take care of yourself and get the support you need. **You don't have to go through it alone, and you definitely don't have to just 'put up with it.'**



MENOPAUSE SELF CARE

1

SLOW DOWN

Menopause can be a powerful nudge to take your foot off the gas. Like autumn leaves dropping from the trees, it's okay to let things fall off your schedule. Give yourself space to rest, reflect, and focus on what really matters, your energy is precious!

2

HRT?

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) has come a long way in the past 20 years. There are now lots of types to choose from and it may be worth considering. To prepare for a GP appointment, try tracking your symptoms for a few weeks. The more you understand what's going on, the more helpful your conversation with a doctor can be. **You will find a symptoms tracker on the next page.**

3

EXERCISE

Regular movement can make a big difference. Exercise supports hormone balance, boosts your mood, and helps protect your bones and heart. Whether it's a brisk walk, yoga, dancing, or gardening, find something you enjoy and do it often.

4

NUTRITION

What you eat really matters. Cutting down on alcohol, caffeine and processed foods can ease symptoms. Try including more calcium-rich foods, leafy greens, healthy fats, and plant-based meals. Think of it as nourishment, not restriction.

5

SLEEP

Sleep can get disrupted during menopause, especially with hot flashes or night sweats. Try cooling your room with a fan, winding down with less screen time and eating lighter in the evenings. Earlier bedtimes and calming routines can also help you feel more rested.

6

COMMUNITY

You don't have to go through menopause alone. Sharing stories or just having a laugh with others who understand can make all the difference. Look out for a local Menopause Café, wild swimming group, or a women's circle, connection is great medicine.

