

Lesson 8

Healthy behavior

Preventing unintended pregnancy.

Health terms

- cycle
- ejaculation
- embryo
- fallopian tubes
- fertile
- fertilization
- fetus
- implantation
- menstruation
- ovaries
- ovulation
- predict
- pregnancy
- vaginal intercourse
- uterus

Student Journal The Menstrual Cycle & Pregnancy

Journal entry

List as many parts of the reproductive systems as you can remember.

Circle the parts you think are most involved in pregnancy and creating a baby.

Ovulation

What is ovulation? _____

Where is an egg fertilized? _____

If an egg is fertilized, where does it travel to and attach itself?

Menstruation

Why is it difficult to predict when a pregnancy can occur?

How pregnancy happens

How does a person become pregnant?

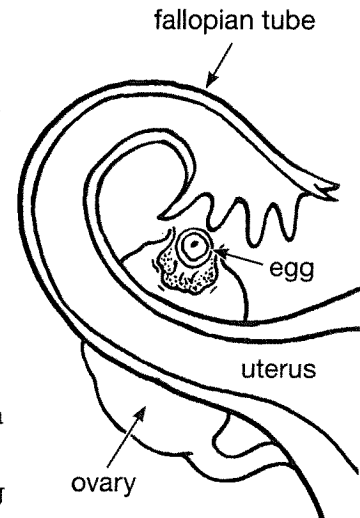
Ovulation, Menstruation & Pregnancy

► Ovulation

Ovulation is the release of a ripe egg from an ovary. During the years a person is fertile, the ovaries release an egg every month. On average, the ovaries will release about 500 eggs in the person's lifetime. All the eggs someone will ever have are already in the ovaries at birth (about 300,000). About 14 days before a period, one of the ovaries releases a ripe egg into the fallopian tube. Finger-like structures pull the egg into the tube.

The egg travels down the fallopian tube to the uterus. This usually takes about 5 days. After it reaches the uterus, the egg is shed during the next menstrual period.

If a couple has vaginal intercourse while an egg is in the fallopian tube, a sperm can enter the egg and fertilize it. The fertilized egg travels down the fallopian tube to the uterus. But instead of being shed with the next period, it attaches to the lining of the uterus. This is the beginning of a pregnancy.



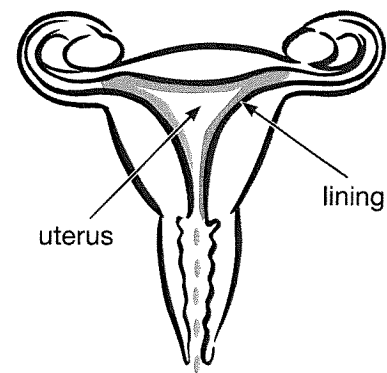
► Menstruation

Menstruation, or having periods, begins during puberty. Periods are part of the menstrual cycle. It's called a cycle because it happens over and over. The menstrual cycle happens because a person's body is preparing to reproduce.

The menstrual cycle has 4 stages:

- **Stage 1 is menstruation.** The lining of the uterus is made up of blood and tissue. This lining has been getting thicker to support the growth of a fertilized egg. When the egg has not been fertilized this lining isn't needed. So it flows out of the body through the vagina. This is when a period happens. About 4 tablespoons of bloody fluid leaves the uterus over the next 3 to 7 days. The first day of the period is Day 1 of the menstrual cycle.

During a period, a person can use disposable or cloth pads, special underwear, or a tampon or reusable cup inserted into the vagina to catch the fluid.

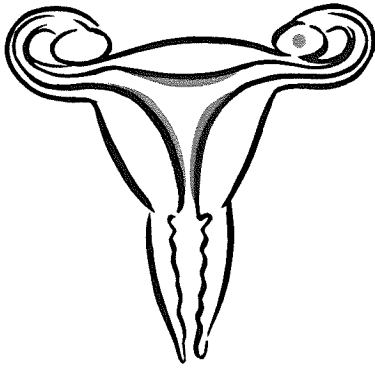


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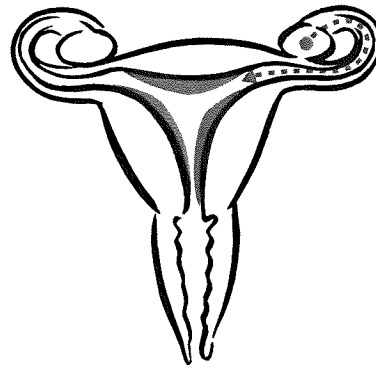
Ovulation, Menstruation & Pregnancy

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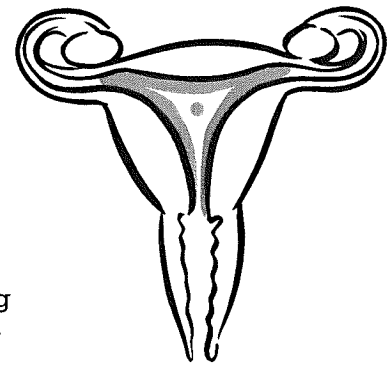
- **Stage 2 is when an egg ripens in an ovary.** As the egg ripens, the lining of the uterus begins to build up and become thicker again. The timing of this part of the cycle is the least easy to predict. It can take 6 to 12 days or more.



- **Stage 3 is ovulation.** Once the egg has been released from the ovary, the person is fertile and is most likely to become pregnant. Ovulation happens 13 to 15 days before the next period.



- **Stage 4 is when the egg travels to the uterus.** This is the part of the menstrual cycle that is almost always the same length—about 14 days. The egg usually takes 3 to 4 days to reach the uterus. If the egg has been fertilized, it attaches to the lining of the uterus and begins to grow. This is the start of pregnancy. If the egg hasn't been fertilized, a period will start in about 10 more days.



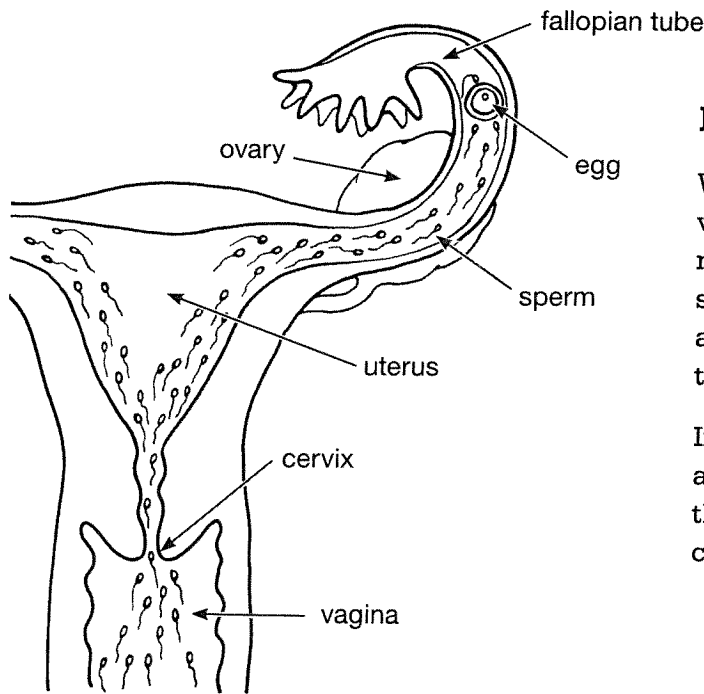
When people have their periods, they can keep doing everything they usually do. They can bathe, wash their hair, swim and play sports. Menstruation is a normal, healthy part of life.

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Ovulation, Menstruation & Pregnancy

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► How Pregnancy Happens



Fertilization

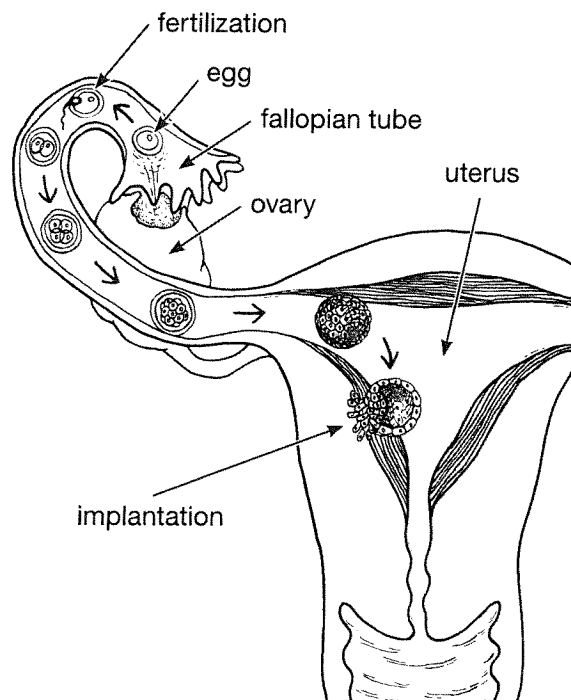
When ejaculation happens during vaginal intercourse, semen containing millions of sperm leaves the penis in spurts. The sperm travel up the vagina and through the uterus, and some of them reach the fallopian tubes.

If there is a ripe egg in one of the tubes, a single sperm may enter the egg. When the sperm and the egg combine, it's called *fertilization*.

Implantation

Once an egg has been fertilized, changes happen quickly. It begins to divide and form new cells even on its way to the uterus. When the fertilized egg reaches the uterus it attaches itself to the lining. This is called *implantation*. It is the start of a pregnancy.

For the first 8 weeks of pregnancy, the new organism is called an *embryo*. After that it is called a *fetus*. The fetus will continue to grow and develop in the uterus for the next 40 weeks until ready to be born.



Understanding Menstruation & Pregnancy

Directions: Answer the questions using what you've learned.

① What is ovulation?

② What is it called when a sperm joins with an egg?

③ When in the menstrual cycle can fertilization take place?

④ How does a person become pregnant?

⑤ Why is it hard to predict when a person can become pregnant?

Self-Check

I answered all 5 questions.

