

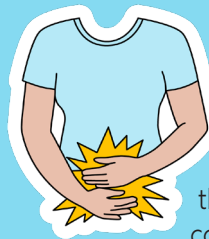
Before you get your period, you may have some symptoms. People call these symptoms PMS or pre-menstrual syndrome. These may include:

- Sore breasts
- Pimples
- Cramps
- Mood swings
- Headache/backache
- Feeling tired or having trouble sleeping
- Sadness or crying

It is normal to have:

- ▶ Blood clots in your period that are smaller than a \$2 coin
- ▶ Different colours of period blood from bright red to brown
- ▶ Mild cramps with your period

This doesn't seem right?



Some people have very painful or long or heavy periods. Some people can feel very uncomfortable in their body when they have their period. Some people can feel very depressed and worry about their mental health. If something like this is happening to you, book an appointment with a nurse at Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa.

We can help you work out what might be going on, and what you can do about it.



Remember – you are not alone!

If you need support, you can reach out to your support people. Lots of people have experience with their own or other people's periods. You can also come to see us at Sexual Wellbeing Aotearoa for advice.

For more information or to make an appointment, check out our **website**:



You can also contact us to discuss contraception, pregnancy tests, abortion services, STI tests and treatment, cervical screening, HPV vaccination.



just
about...

Periods



Periods (īkura) or menstruation (mate wahine) are a part of the menstrual cycle.

Every month, your body prepares for a possible pregnancy by making a thick lining inside your uterus. If you don't become pregnant, the lining is not needed and comes out of your vagina. That's what a period is.

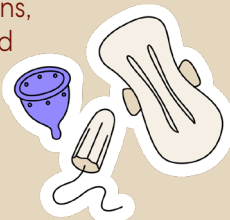


A menstrual cycle usually lasts between 23-35 days. It starts from the first day you start bleeding until you start bleeding again. A period (the bleeding) usually lasts around 2-7 days.

Top tips

Before your period:

- ▶ Make sure you always have spare products (pads, tampons, menstrual cup or period underwear).
- ▶ Track your menstrual cycle so you have an idea about when to expect your next period. You can track your cycle by counting the days from the first day you start bleeding until the next time you start bleeding again.



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During your period:

- ▶ Change your product (including period underwear) every 4-6 hours.
- ▶ Change your underwear (if it's not period underwear) every day.
- ▶ Gently clean your vulva with warm water every day. Don't use soap inside your vagina, as this can irritate the area.

Am I normal?

Everyone has different experiences.

Periods can be regular or irregular. Irregular means that your period might come early or late and that is very common when they first start. Your cycle can change throughout your life. It can be different if you are using some types of hormonal contraception. Contraception is something people can use to stop them getting pregnant or to manage their periods.