Many girls drop out of school when they are menstruating. This is not a solution since it may mean missing a week of school every month which will cause you to fall behind. We hope this leaflet will give you the information you need to feel confident during your period.

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Pre Menstrual Syndrome or PMS

Offensive Messages
Some girls feel sad or moody during the time their ovaries are preparing the eggs for menstruation. This is called premenstrual syndrome (PMS).

Pimples
Some girls have an outbreak of pimples around the time of their periods. This is due to hormones. Usually the pimples associated with periods will become less of a problem as girls get older.

Why have I missed my period?

Although the earliest sign of pregnancy is a missed period, missing a period can mean more than one thing. You could miss a period because you are overeating, not getting enough sleep, or just irregular periods. If you are worried about missing periods speak to a doctor. This will help you understand more about your own period and help you figure out what could be causing you to miss a period.

When should I see a doctor or visit the clinic concerning my periods?

If your period is much heavier than usual and goes on for more than 7 days
• When you haven’t had your period in 2-3 months (You may be pregnant or you may be stressed)
• If something happens in between your periods
• If you experience extreme cramping pain

Textile Shock Syndrome (TSS) is a lethal threatening infection that can occur, especially if you are using tampons. It usually happens when a tampon is forgotten inside the vagina. This can cause a dangerous infection, so if you do use tampons, make sure that you change them regularly. (see definition on page 9)

Symptoms:
A sudden high fever, low blood pressure, vomiting or diarrhea, a rash resembling a sunburn, particularly on your palms and soles, confusion, muscle aches, redness of your eyes, mouth and throat, seizures and headaches.

Myths about your Period
• I’ll lose my virginity if I use a tampon. Not true! You can’t lose your virginity by wearing a tampon. Virginity is a “state of never having had sex”. This means that a tampon can’t break your virginity because it is not a sexual partner.

• I can’t exercise when I’ve got my period. Not true! Exercising is actually good for you because it helps ease the pain of cramping and also boosts your mood! So, you don’t have to stop exercising when you are having your period. If you wear a secure pad you’ll be fine.

• I can’t swim when I’ve got my period. You can swim! Just make sure you have the right period protection, such as a menstrual cup or tampon. If you are swimming it might be better to wear a tampon. If you’re wearing a tampon, just remember to change it regularly.

• I won’t get pregnant if I have sex during my period. Wrong! The fact is, you can fall pregnant. Here’s why: Once inside you, sperm can live for 3-5 days. Ovulation can happen during your period or soon afterwards. So even a few days later, the sperm can fertilize the egg and result in your falling pregnant.

When other changes can happen during your period

Some girls experience belly and mood changes around the time that their ovaries are preparing the eggs for menstruation. Other girls may experience menstrual cramps during the first few days of their periods.

Cramps can be painful. You feel them in your lower back or tummy. Some girls find their cramps get better as they get older. Sometimes they go away completely.

A light painkiller can help cramps. You can also hold a hot water bottle over your tummy for some relief. Exercising regularly helps lessen cramps, too. Hot tea, some herbal remedies and also eating liquorice has been known to help lessen cramps. If these things don’t help, ask your doctor for advice.

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This leaflet explains what's happening in your body. This is a thing that happens to almost every young woman. There is no shame in having a period. It is a natural thing that your body is preparing so that you might have a period. Starting your menstrual period signals that you are growing up to become more like an adult woman. Puberty is a time when your body begins to change and that I'll become a woman and have a period. I've heard this means I will become a woman and have a period. I've heard my body will change and that I'll become a woman and have a period. I've heard my body will change and that it will begin to bleed. What does this mean, and how does it happen? A period is the 2 to 7 days when blood and tissue flow out of the body through the vagina. The menstrual cycle then begins again. The lining of the uterus will start building up, and about 2 weeks after the last day of your period, another egg will be released. That is why we call it a monthly cycle.

How long do periods last? When you first start having your periods, it may last only a few days. Your first few periods may be very light. You may only see a few spots of reddish brown blood. Anywhere from 2 to 7 days is normal. But this is not the same for every girl. Your first few periods may be very light. You may only see a few spots of reddish brown blood. Anywhere from 2 to 7 days is normal. But this is not the same for every girl. When puberty begins (between the ages of 10-14), some of these hormones prepare your body each month for a possible pregnancy. This is called the menstrual period. When puberty begins (between the ages of 10-14), your brain signals your body to produce hormones. Some of these hormones prepare your body for a pregnancy. This is called the menstrual period. Menstrual periods are a natural part of growing up. Puberty is a time when your body begins to change and that I'll become a woman and have a period. I've heard this means I will become a woman and have a period. I've heard my body will change and that it will begin to bleed. What does this mean, and how does it happen? A period is the 2 to 7 days when blood and tissue flow out of the body through the vagina. The menstrual cycle then begins again. The lining of the uterus will start building up, and about 2 weeks after the last day of your period, another egg will be released. That is why we call it a monthly cycle.

How often will I get my period? A menstrual cycle is counted from the first day of bleeding in one month to the first day of bleeding in the next month. The average menstrual cycle is about 28 days, but cycles that are 21–45 days also are normal. It may take 6 months or more after your period cycle to get your period cycle.

How will I catch the blood? You can use a sanitary pad, tampon, or menstrual cup to absorb and catch the blood. Tampons and cups are inserted into the vagina. Pads are worn inside your underwear to collect your menstrual flow (blood). They come in different sizes, styles, and thicknesses. Some have extra material on the sides called “gaps” that help keep the ride of your underwear to help keep your pad in place and give better protection. A thinner, shorter version of a pad is a “panty liner.” Some girls wear panty liners on the last days of their periods when the flow is light or on days when they think their periods will come.

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