



A GIRL'S GUIDE

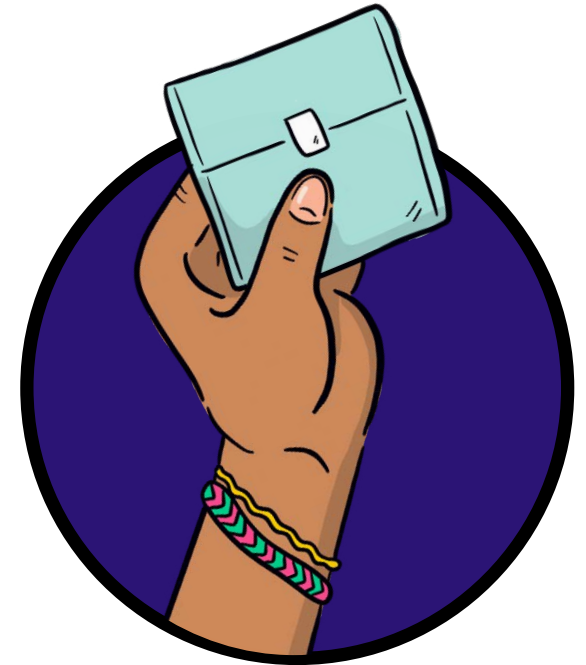
TO PUBERTY
& PERIODS



*Written by Marni Sommer,
Margaret Schmitt, Christine
Hagstrom and Caitlin Gruer*

*Illustration by
Emily Scheffler*





CHAPTER FOUR
**CARING FOR
YOUR PERIOD**

SO MANY PERIOD PRODUCTS!

It can be confusing knowing what product to use! How do you know what type to choose? The next section has some basic facts about the most common types. But remember, there is no right or wrong answer. It's about what's **most comfortable for you!**



PRO TIPS:

WHAT'S IN YOUR BAG?

Your period can be irregular! When a girl starts menstruating, her period may not come as regularly for the first year or two. That's normal! But it does mean you need to be prepared. Here are some tips from a few girls about what they like to do:



"I always **carry an extra product**—or two—just in case! You never know when you (or a friend!) might need one. I like to use pads, so I keep a couple extra in one of my backpack's pockets."

(more about products— page 38!)



"I often get cramps when I'm on my period. Sometimes I go lay down on a cot in the nurse's office if the cramps are really bad. **(They might also have extra products in case you forget!)** I also keep my favorite snack in my backpack for when I'm feeling down."

(more about cramps— page 31!)



"My period isn't 'regular' yet, but **tracking my cycle on a calendar** helps me estimate when it will start!"

(more about tracking— page 42!)



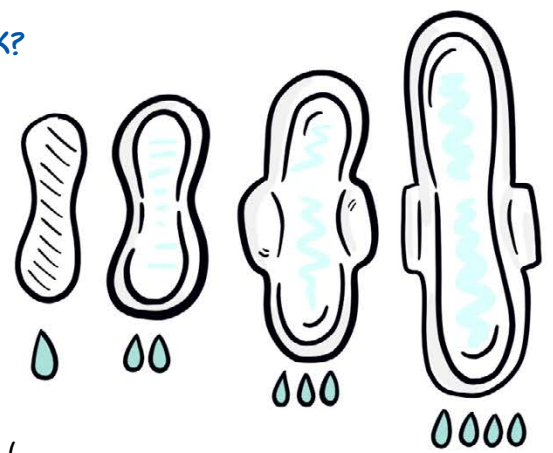
PADS

PANTY LINER OR PAD?

A pad is thicker and more absorbent, so it can hold more liquid (blood) than a panty liner. Panty liners can be worn on light bleeding days, or when wearing a tampon to give extra protection.

THIN OR MEDIUM OR THICK? WINGS OR NO WINGS?

For lighter flow days, you can wear a thin pad. For heavier flow days, you can wear a medium or thick pad. For sleeping, you might prefer a thicker overnight pad.



Some girls prefer pads with wings, which wrap around the bottom of your underwear, but it is completely up to you!



HOW LONG SHOULD YOU WEAR IT?

On average, for **2-3 hours**. When your period is lighter, change every 6-8 hours. Some people may have a heavier period flow and need to change more often.

WHAT ABOUT DISPOSAL?

Wrap pads in tissue, a product wrapper or toilet paper and put into the trash can. **Don't try to flush a pad** down the toilet because it might get clogged.



HOW TO PUT ON A PAD



1 PEEL IT!

Peel the pad or panty liner off of the wrapper- just like a sticker!

2 STICK IT!

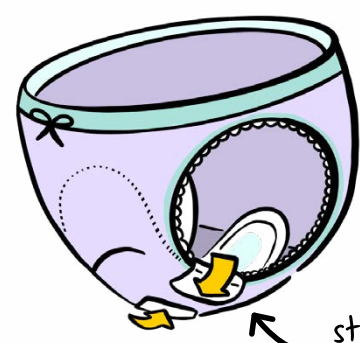
One side of the pad is sticky! Stick it to the bottom area of your underwear.



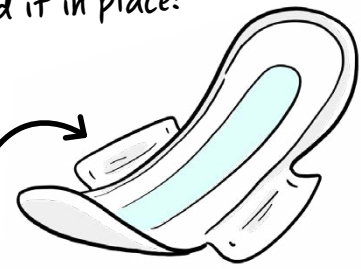
sticky side DOWN!!

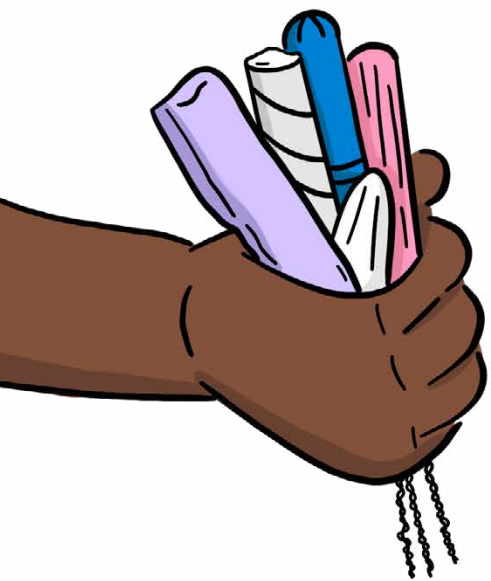
3 WING IT!

If your pad has sticky "wings," wrap them around the bottom of your underwear. They help hold it in place!



sticky wings





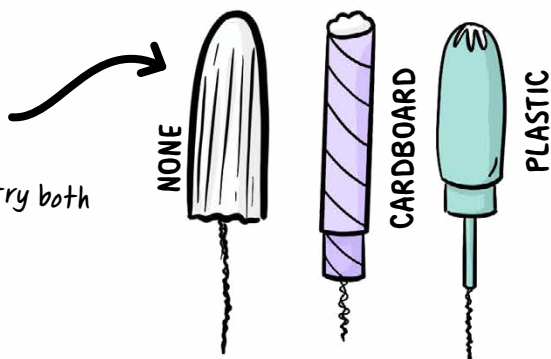
TAMPONS

LIGHT OR REGULAR OR SUPER?

You can try them all and see which is most comfortable! Most girls start with "light." If your blood flow is very heavy, you might want to change to the regular or super sizes.

APPLICATOR OR NO APPLICATOR?

This is up to you! You can try both and see which you like best. (For more about tampons, see page 89!)



HOW LONG SHOULD YOU WEAR IT?



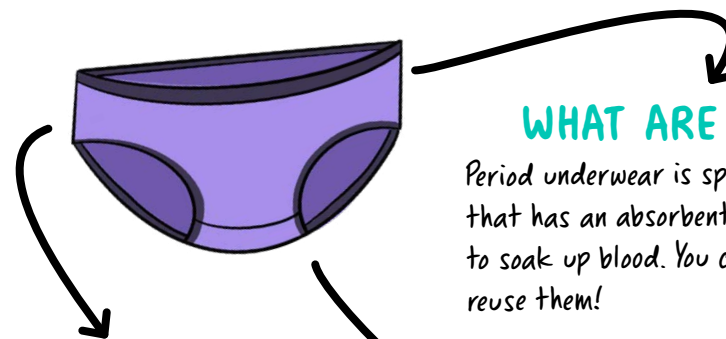
On average, for **2-3 hours**. When your period is lighter, change every 6-8 hours. Some people may have a heavier period flow and need to change more often. It's best not to wear one for longer than 8 hours though.



WHAT ABOUT DISPOSAL?

The same as pads! Wrap them in tissue, a product wrapper or toilet paper and put into the trash can. Remember- **NEVER flush** them down the toilet!

PERIOD UNDERWEAR



WHAT ARE THEY?

Period underwear is special underwear that has an absorbent material in it to soak up blood. You can wash and reuse them!

WHAT SIZE?

The same size as your other underwear! They come in different fits and styles — so select one you find most comfortable!

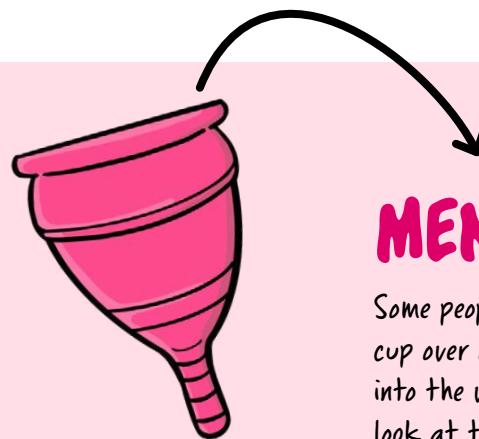
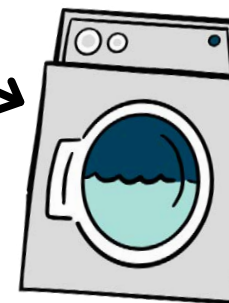


WHAT THICKNESS?

Up to you! If you have heavier blood flow, try thicker options.

HOW LONG SHOULD YOU WEAR THEM?

Depends on your blood flow! Change once or twice a day. To wash them, read the instructions provided as some can go directly into a washing machine and others should be washed by hand.



MENSTRUAL CUPS

Some people like to use menstrual cups. You can use a cup over and over. Similar to tampons, cups are inserted into the vagina. Most cups are reusable. Ask an adult or look at the product box for more information.

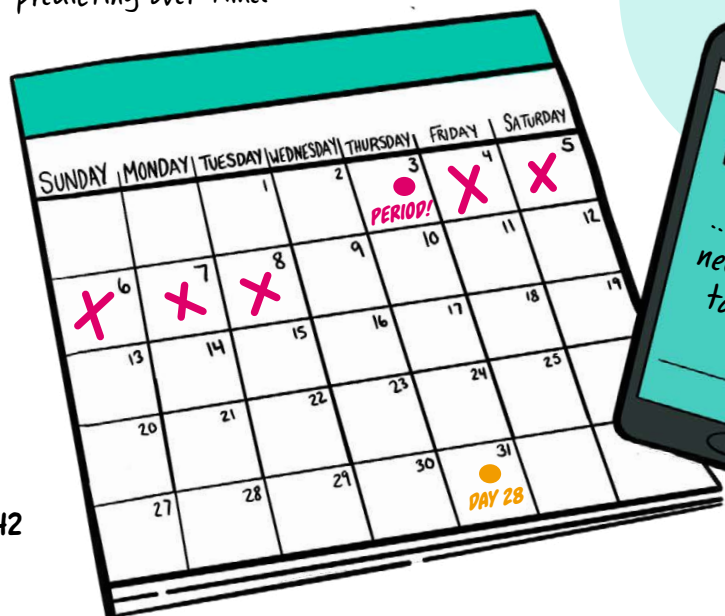
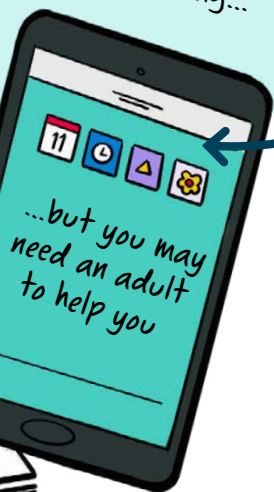
HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN I'M GETTING MY PERIOD?



ONE WAY TO TRY TO KNOW IS TO TRACK ON A CALENDAR.

Mark the first day of your period and then count forward 28 days. Your next period will start soon! Remember that cycles can range from 21-35 days. You'll get better at predicting over time!

There are also many apps that can help you with tracking...



HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

That's totally OK! This is a confusing time. Talk to someone who you trust! It's a good idea to talk to someone who has been having their period for years like your mother, older sister, aunt, teacher, cousin, older friend, or school nurse. They will have lots of good advice for you!





*For questions or more information about
our organization, please contact us at:*

MARNI@GROWANDKNOW.ORG

WWW.AGIRLSGUIDE.ORG

WWW.GROWANDKNOW.ORG