

# **Havasu** **Helping** **GIRLS**

girls. matter. period.

## ***My First Period***

***A Guide to Help You  
Learn & Prepare***

[havasuhelpinggirls.com](https://havasuhelpinggirls.com)



**For starters...  
getting your  
period is nothing  
to be ashamed of.**

***It's completely natural  
and normal.***



While an average cycle lasts around 28 to 30 days, it can range from around 21 to 35 days. Within each cycle, your period will last for a few days at a time. The length of your period will vary from person to person.

Remember, every period is different! That's completely ok. Getting your period is one indicator that your reproductive system is functioning properly.




## **Signs That Your First Period May Come Soon**

**Hair growth  
under your  
arms and  
around your  
pubic area**

**White vaginal  
discharge**  
*...it's like milky-white  
water coming out  
of your vagina.  
It's nothing to  
worry about!*

**Feeling bloated,  
some pain in your  
stomach/lower  
back, cramps,  
emotional  
changes**


# A typical 28-day menstrual cycle...

DAYS 1 - 7 

...your period is the “beginning” of your menstrual cycle

DAYS 8 - 14 

...one of your ovaries releases an egg and the uterus begins to rebuild its lining

DAYS 15 - 28 

...the uterus wall will continue to thicken until there's a drop in hormone levels. The lining breaks down and another period begins

A few days before your period starts, you might start to see some symptoms.

You may get stomach aches or notice your breasts feel a little sore. You may also get acne, feel tired, or go to the bathroom more often.

However, some people have no symptoms and will feel the same as they always do.

## What It Means...

**Menstruation:** Also called “having a period.” This is the vaginal bleeding that happens as part of your monthly cycle.

**Uterus:** You might also hear this called the “womb.” It's the hollow, pear-shaped organ in a woman's pelvis. The uterus is where a fetus (unborn baby) develops and grows.

**Ovary:** Where eggs (ova) develop. Eggs are released from the ovaries and travel down the fallopian tubes into the uterus.

Learn more on our website!

# PUBERTY IN GIRLS

Between the ages of 10-14 your body will begin to change. These changes do not happen all at once and may not start at the same time for everyone. Don't worry if your body starts to develop before, or after, your friends.

## TALKING ABOUT PUBERTY AND YOUR PERIOD

While you might feel nervous or embarrassed to talk about your period or the topic of puberty.. it is nothing to be ashamed of.

The adults in your life know that these changes are coming! If you have questions, ask a parent or a trusted adult in a way that makes you feel comfortable.

## Signs of Puberty

Emotional Changes... like having crushes, independence, self-consciousness, etc.

Breasts Growing  
(may be one of the first signs you see)  
Hips widening

Height and weight increases,  
hair growing in armpits and  
the pubic area

Acne, tiredness, sweat & body  
odor becoming more noticeable

Sexual curiosity  
Desire to be more independent



# PERIOD QUESTIONS

**Is “period blood” different than regular blood?**

No, but it also contains cells from the shed uterine lining which may appear as “clots.” The color of period blood can vary from bright red to dark brown.

**Can I go swimming when I’m on my period?**

Yes, just use a tampon. The tampon won’t fall out when you’re swimming.

**How long should my period last?**

The average is 5 days.. but everyone’s period is different. It can range from 2-7 days.

**Will I lose my virginity if I use a tampon?**

No! Virginity has nothing to do with menstruation or tampon use.

**Will anyone know that I am on my period?**

Nope, not unless you choose to tell them.

**Can I pee with a tampon in?**

Yes! Urine comes out through the urethra, while a tampon is inserted into the vagina.

***What else should I know about managing my period?***

Take a shower or bath regularly and make sure to wash your genital area with water.

Change your period product (tampon, pad, etc) at recommended time intervals. This will help avoid bacteria build-up, staining, and odors.



# Period Products and How to Use Them

## - PADS -

Pads are the most used period product. There are many different kinds and they vary in thickness, absorbency, and length. Pads adhere (stick) to your underwear to stay in place while they absorb period blood.

1

### Remove the Wrapper

*...wash your hands first, then take the pad out of the wrapper. You can save the wrapper to dispose of the used pad later.*

2

### Remove the Backing

*...the pad will usually have a strip of paper that covers the sticky part of the pad. Sometimes the wrapper also doubles as the backing.*

3

### Place the Pad in Your Underwear

*...center the sticky side of the pad in the crotch of your underwear. If the pad has “wings,” remove any backing and wrap them around to adhere to the outside of the underwear.*

4

### Dispose of the Pad

*...after the pad has become saturated, pull it off your panties and roll it up in the wrapper from your new pad, then toss it in the trash can. Never flush a pad down the toilet!*

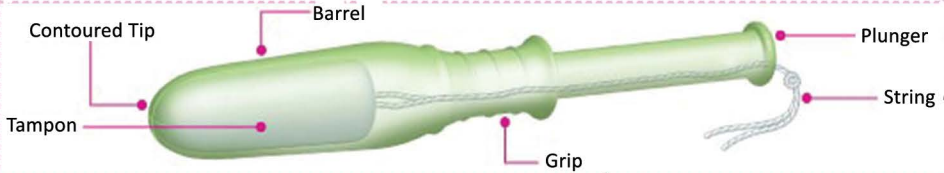
## TYPES & SIZES OF PADS

- Ultra-Thin or Maxi (thicker) pads
- Size 1: Regular
- Size 2: Long/Super
- Size 3: Extra Long Super
- Size 4: Overnight
- Size 5: Extra Heavy Overnight



# - TAMPONS -

Tampons are designed to absorb period blood by being inserted into the vagina. They come in different sizes. The size of tampon is based on your blood flow and has nothing to do with the size of the vagina. Use the lowest absorbency tampon that will meet your needs and change the tampon regularly (every 4-6 hours).



1

## Wash Your Hands

Your vagina isn't dirty, but clean hands are healthier for everyone! It's always smart to wash your hands with soap and water before and after you insert a tampon.

2

## Get Out Your Tampon

Unwrap your tampon. If you're unfamiliar with tampons, here's the basics: the tampon itself is **INSIDE** the applicator. The applicator makes it easy to get the tampon into your vagina. The smaller tube is actually a "plunger" that you use to push the tampon out of the applicator. Check out the diagram above to see each component.

3

## Locate Your Vagina and Get Ready

If you're not familiar with where exactly everything is "down there" then grab a mirror and take a look so you know where the vaginal opening is. Find a position that lets you relax and still reach your vagina. Most people will sit on the toilet or stand while slightly squatting to insert a tampon. Remember to relax your muscles.

4

## Insert The Tampon

Hold the tampon at the grip and place the tip at your vaginal opening. Aim the tampon toward your lower back, not straight up. The vagina doesn't go straight up into your body, it has a slight angle. Slowly insert the applicator from the tip, all the way to the grip. When you've inserted it far enough, your fingers on the grip will probably be touching your vulva. Now, use another finger to push the plunger all the way and release the tampon. Then pull the applicator (both plastic pieces) out. The string will be the only thing left sticking out of your vagina. If your tampon is uncomfortable, it's probably because it isn't far enough inside. If that happens, just use your finger to push the tampon farther in, and that usually fixes it!

5

## To Remove Your Tampon

When it's time, wash your hands first... Then, get in a comfortable position, locate the tampon string, relax, and pull the string to remove the tampon. Throw the tampon in the trash can (do not flush). Then wash your hands.

### Using a "click" or compact tampon

If you're using a compact tampon, you'll have to pull the plunger out first until it "clicks" to make it work. When you hear the click, the tampon is ready for insertion! If you don't hear the click, the plunger won't work to release the tampon. See the picture to the right for an example



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**Tampons and Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS):** Tampons need to be changed frequently to prevent toxic shock syndrome. TSS is a rare life-threatening condition caused by specific bacterial toxins that can sometimes develop when tampons are left in too long. According to the FDA, it's best to change a tampon every 4-8 hours. You shouldn't leave it in longer than 8 hours. If you remove it before 4-8 hours, that's ok. Just know there probably won't be much absorbed on the tampon. If you find yourself bleeding through a tampon before 4 hours, you might want to try a thicker absorbency. If a tampon is mostly dry after 4-6 hours, consider using a lighter absorbency. You should try to match the absorbency level of the tampon you are using to the heaviness of your menstrual flow. This can change throughout your period.

## Other Period Product Options Include:

Menstrual Cups and Discs  
Reusable Pads  
Period Underwear

*learn more about these options on our site*

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