



Giving girls a better day.

 Girls on the MOVE- Africa

 Move_Africa_co



Periods are a natural, healthy part of a girl's life. They shouldn't get in the way of exercising, having fun, and enjoying life

Why do we get periods?

Most girls get their first period when they are around 12. A period happens because of changes in hormones in the body. Hormones give messages to the body. These hormones cause the lining of the uterus (or womb) to build up. This gets the uterus ready for an egg (from the mom) and sperm (from the dad) to attach and grow into a baby. If the woman does not get pregnant, the lining breaks down and bleeds. This same process happens every month. That is why most girls and women get their periods around once a month.

How will I know my first period is coming

There are some signs that a girl's period may start soon. These include:

- Breasts developing
- Hair under her arms and in her private parts.
- A girl has some clear, stringy liquid (called discharge) coming from her vagina.

Ways to manage your period

Most girls use a **pad** when they first get their period. They have sticky strips that attach to the underwear. Many girls prefer to use **tampons** instead of pads, especially when playing sports or swimming. A tampon is a cotton plug that a girl puts into her vagina. Most tampons come with an applicator that guides the tampon into place. The tampon absorbs the blood. Don't leave a tampon in for more than 8 hours because this can increase your risk of a serious infection called toxic shock syndrome. Some girls prefer a **menstrual cup**. To use a menstrual cup, a girl inserts it into her vagina. The cup holds the blood until she empties it.



What is a menstrual cup?

A menstrual cup is a type of reusable feminine hygiene product. It is a small, flexible funnel-shaped cup made of rubber or silicone that is inserted into the vagina to collect period fluid.

Inserting your menstrual cup

If you have used a tampon, you should find it relatively easy to insert a menstrual cup, however if you haven't there is nothing to fear, follow these steps:

-Boil your cup for 3-5 minutes before using it for the first time.

-Wash your hands thoroughly.

-Tightly fold the menstrual cup in half, holding it in one hand with the rim facing up. (see illustration on folding techniques)

-Insert the cup, rim up, into your vagina .

-Once the cup is in your vagina, rotate it to ensure it opens up, you may hear a 'pop' or suction sound which means it has created a seal. If you are in doubt use your fingers to feel the base for any folds and slowly rotate it again to unfold it. .

Folding technique 1



Folding technique 2



You should be able to move, jump, sit, stand, and do other everyday activities. You can wear a menstrual cup for 6 to 12 hours, depending on your flow

Removing your cup

-Wash your hands thoroughly.

-Place your index finger and thumb into your vagina.

-Pull the stem of the cup gently until you can reach the base.

-Pinch the base to release the seal and pull down to remove the cup.

-Once out, empty the cup into the sink or toilet.

Caring for your cup

Reusable menstrual cups should be boiled for a minimum of 5 minutes before use at the beginning of each period. They also need to be washed clean before being reinserted into your vagina during your period. Your cup should be emptied at least twice a day. Reusable menstrual cups can last for up to **10 years** with proper care.

Important information

-Do not use a menstrual cup if you have a IUD inserted

-Do not use a menstrual cup for post natal bleeding

-Do not share your menstrual cup

-Ensure your hands are clean when inserting and removing the menstrual cup

-ALWAYS boil your cup at the beginning of each period before using it

Safety information: Please remove cup before intercourse. Do not use menstrual cups for post-natal bleeding. Your menstrual cup should not be worn for longer than 12 consecutive hours. You must handle your menstrual cup with clean hands. Keep your menstrual cup clean at all times. Keep your menstrual cup away from damaging agents, pets, children and direct sun light.

Legal Disclaimer: If you have or are experiencing any gynecological problems please discontinue using your cup and consult a doctor. If you are experiencing any pain or discomfort while wearing your cup, discontinue use and consult your doctor. Our content is for reference purposes and is not intended to substitute for advice given by a physician, pharmacist, or other licensed health-care professional. You should not use this information as self-diagnosis or for treating a health problem or disease. Contact your health-care provider immediately if you suspect that you have a medical problem. .