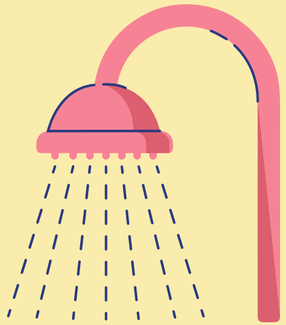
Hygiene

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General hygiene



- Make sure to wash your body regularly
- If you want to wash the genital area, do so with warm water, unscented soap, and on the external area
- After using the toilet, wipe front to back
- Change your clothes (especially underwear) after working out/sweating
    - For swimmers, don’t wear a wet swimsuit all day



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Types of feminine hygiene products

Pads





Menstrual discs/cups





Tampons





Period underwear

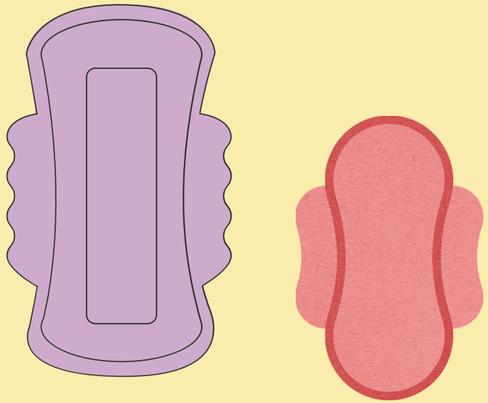




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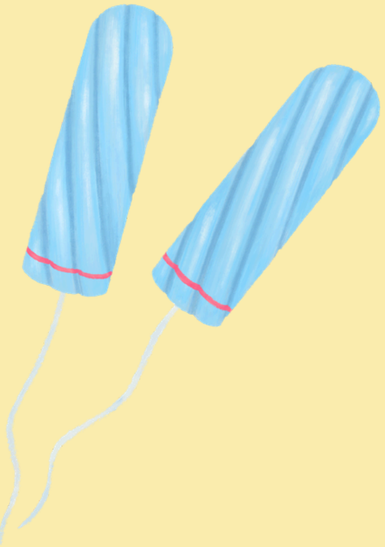
Pads

- Most doctors recommend changing your pad at least every 4-8 hours to avoid bacteria growth
    - However, you should definitely change it before it gets full
- They are multiple types of pads designed for heavier flows and comfort levels throughout the day
- Pads stick on to the inside of your underwear and absorb blood



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Tampons

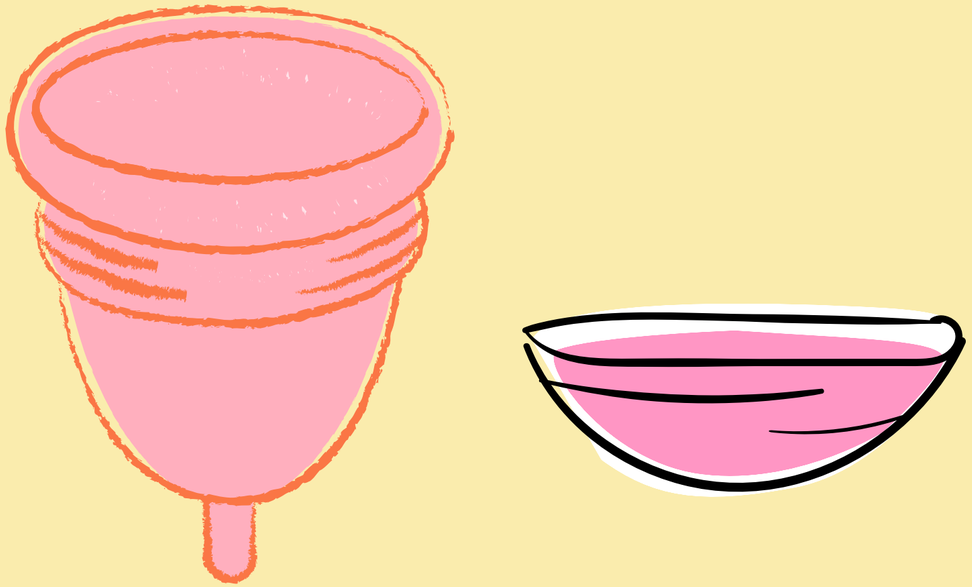


- Tampons absorb blood from inside the vagina
- Make sure to change your tampon every 4-6 hours
- You cannot sleep with a tampon in
- Some tampons come with applicators which can make it easier to insert them
- Remove them by lightly pulling on a string
- If possible, avoid super absorbency tampons, as these typically increase the risk of TSS*

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Menstrual cups/discs

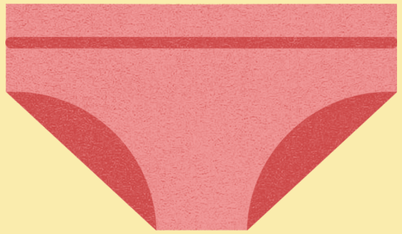
- Made of flexible materials, menstrual cups or discs catch blood rather than absorbing it
- It can be inserted similar to a tampon
- Again, make sure to empty it several times a day (ideally before it leaks)



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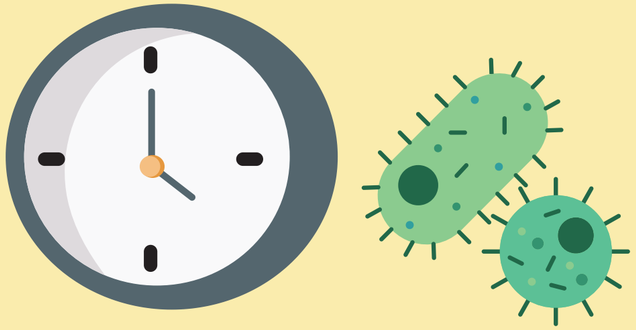
Period underwear

- Most period underwear typically hold between 1-2 tampons worth of flow
- They typically have a moisture barrier that keeps you dry and limits any chance of leaking while absorbing the blood flow
- Make sure to wash them properly and separately from other items (they can be either hand washed or put in the washing machine)
- Apply them just like normal underwear
- Most brands/individuals recommend wearing them for a maximum of 12 hours



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Toxic Shock Syndrome



- Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS) is very rare but dangerous disease that sometimes can be caused by prolonged tampon usage
    - Tampon usage isn't the only cause; only about half the cases are related to menstruation
- TSS only affects 1 in 100,000 people
- It is caused by a bacterial infection, so as long as you remember to change your respective feminine hygiene product regularly, the risk of infection is less common

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When to use each products



- During menstruation, test out different products and see what works best for you
- For water-based athletes or gymnasts, internal products (like tampons or menstrual discs/cups) would work best since they are more secure
    - There is also period swimwear if you really aren't comfortable with the other options
- For some women, high intensity training or exercise is also easiest with internal products

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For sources and citations, please see here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FkPsT6ZxSg7BThoxeKLjadrmCZ4_qCbjrVkpth89SLU/edit?tab=t.0

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