

Clinician Evidence Summary

Whole Woman Reproductive Wellness – Session 1

Key Clinical Points:

1. The Menstrual Cycle as a Vital Sign

- The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recognizes the menstrual cycle as a vital sign.
- Cycle regularity reflects endocrine, metabolic, and neurologic health.

2. Ovulation as Protective

- Ovulatory cycles support bone density (via estrogen).
- Progesterone supports neuroprotection and sleep regulation.
- Anovulatory cycles correlate with long-term metabolic risk.

3. Inflammation During Menstruation

- Prostaglandins mediate uterine contraction and inflammatory response.
- Excess prostaglandin production correlates with dysmenorrhea severity.

4. Stress & Hormonal Impact

- Cortisol suppresses reproductive hormone signaling via HPA axis activation.
- Chronic stress reduces luteal progesterone production.

5. Luteal Phase & Mood

- Progesterone metabolite (allopregnanolone) modulates GABA receptors.
- Rapid hormonal shifts can influence anxiety and depressive symptoms.

6. Normal Parameters

- Cycle length: 21–35 days
- Bleed length: 3–7 days
- Mild to moderate cramping considered physiologic

Clinical Takeaway:

Cycle literacy improves early detection of endocrine disorders, reduces unnecessary pathology labeling, and supports integrative reproductive care models.