

## What is a normal period?



Periods are different for everybody.

Your child's period may be different to the period that their mother or sister has.

It is important to learn about how periods can be different so that your child knows what a healthy and normal period is.

Learning about normal periods will also help you know what to do if you are worried about your child's period.

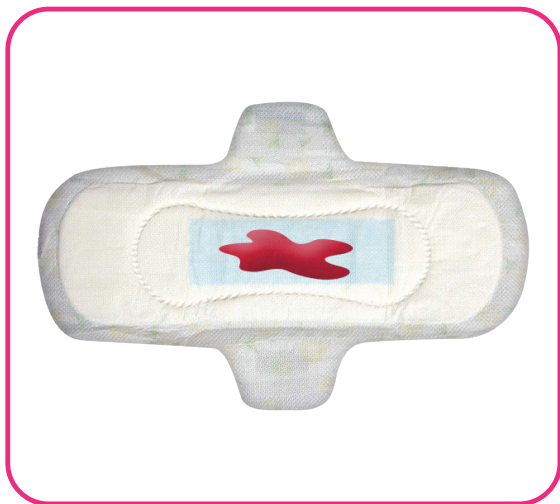


## What is on these pages?

This page is about periods and how to tell if a period is normal.

It has information on:

- what a normal period is
- when to talk to a doctor about your child's period
- using contraception to help your child manage their period
- how to talk to your child about periods
- tracking your child's period



## What is a normal period?

Periods are different for everybody.

Some people might have:

- a lot of blood
- a little bit of blood
- short periods
- long periods

Here are some signs of a normal period:

- bleeding that lasts between 3-7 days
- period blood that is bright red, dark red or brown
- period blood that is thin and watery or thick and blobby
- losing around 2-3 tablespoons of blood

- having some pains where the uterus is

These are called cramps

- feeling gassy or swollen in the tummy

This is called bloating.



It is normal for your child to have cramps or bloating when they have their period.

They can have some pain medication (e.g. paracetamol) or use a hot water bottle to help the pain go away.

If the pain is very bad you should take your child to see a doctor.

## When to talk to a doctor

Sometimes a period is not normal or healthy.

If you think your child's period is not normal or healthy you should talk to your doctor.

Your child's period might not be normal or healthy if they:

- bleed through pads and clothing even though they change their pads regularly
- have blobs (or clots) of blood in their period blood that are bigger than a 50 cent coin
- need to change pads or tampons throughout the night
- need to change their pad or tampon every hour





- bleed so much that they cannot leave the house
- bleed for more than 7 days
- have lots of pain
- have periods that do not come regularly

The first few times your child has their period, it might not come regularly.

This is OK.

A period should become more regular after 6 months.

If your child's period does not come regularly after 6 months it can be good to see a doctor.



It can also be good to talk to a doctor if your child has big mood changes when their period happens.

These mood changes might be feeling:

- very worried or anxious
- very sad or depressed
- angry
- tired

## Can you use contraception to help your child manage their period?



Sometimes parents worry about whether their child can manage their own period.

It is OK to be worried.

Lots of people with intellectual disability and autism can look after their period by themselves.

Education and support are important to help people with disability and autism to manage their period.



Some people might need to take some medicine to help with their period.

This medicine might include contraception.



Some people might need medicine because they:

- have a long or painful period
- bleed a lot when they have their period
- feel bad or depressed when they have their period



If you are worried about your child's period, you should speak to your doctor to get advice.

Before you take your child to the doctor, it is important to talk to your child about why they are going to the doctor.

This will help your child to learn how to take care of their body.



You can ask the doctor for easy read information and pictures.

This can help you and your child understand what the doctor has said.

Having this information will help your child to understand what it is happening to their body.

It can also help them to make choices about their body.

This is called supported decision making.

To learn more about supported decision making, go to: [Supported decision making](#)

## How to talk to your child about periods



Talking to your child about going to the doctor for their period can be hard.

You might not know what to say.

Here are some examples of things you can say to start a conversation with your child.

- Your period seems like it hurts a lot.

Would you like to talk to a doctor about how to make it hurt less?

We can go together if you like?

- Sometimes it can be hard to know when your period is going to start

We can talk to a doctor about medication to help your period come around the same time each month.

- You seem to be bleeding a lot when you have your period

Is it uncomfortable?

Sometimes a doctor can give you something to help you bleed less when you have a period.

Would you like to talk to a doctor about that?





## Tracking your child's period

It can be helpful to track your child's period.

Tracking a period means writing down things like:

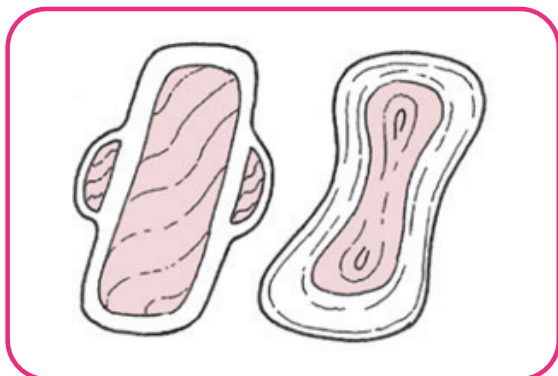
- when your child starts and finishes their period
- when they have pain
- how they are feeling before their period starts
- how they are feeling when they have their period
- if they are angry or upset when their period happens

You can use a calendar, diary or an app to help you keep track of your child's periods.



This will help you and your child to know:

- when their next period will start
- if your child will be sad, angry or tired before or during their period
- when your child usually has pain
- what is a normal period for your child

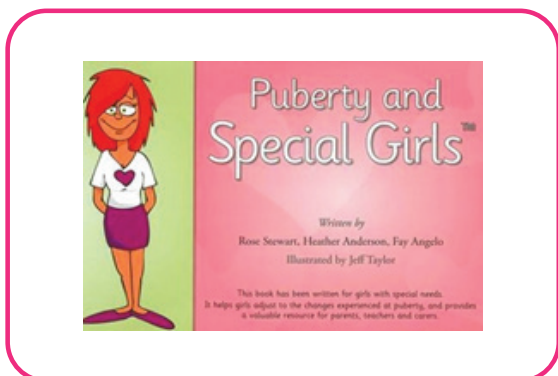


## Resources for you to use

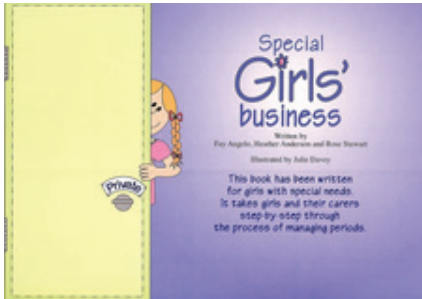
[All About Sex: Periods](#)



[Body Talk: Girl Stuff](#)

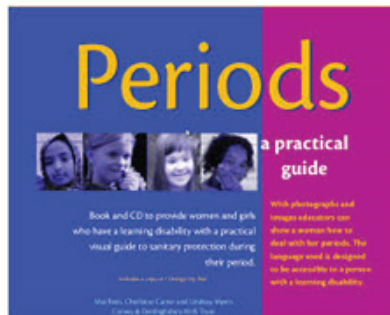


**Puberty and Special Girls Business**  
by Fay Angelo, Heather Anderson,  
and Rose Stewart



## Special Girls Business

by Fay Angelo, Heather Pritchard,  
and Rose Stewart



## Periods: A Practical Guide

by Me-and-Us



## Tara grows up (DVD)

by IHC





## What to read next:

- [Supporting decision making](#)
- [Introduction to contraception](#)

For more information go to the  
Planet Puberty website

[www.planetpuberty.org.au](http://www.planetpuberty.org.au)