

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BODY

Myths, Hormones, and Reproductive Health



MYTH VS. FACT

”

MYTH: Periods are supposed to hurt very badly.

FACT: Debilitating pain is not normal. It can be a sign of a real condition.





WHY THIS MATTERS

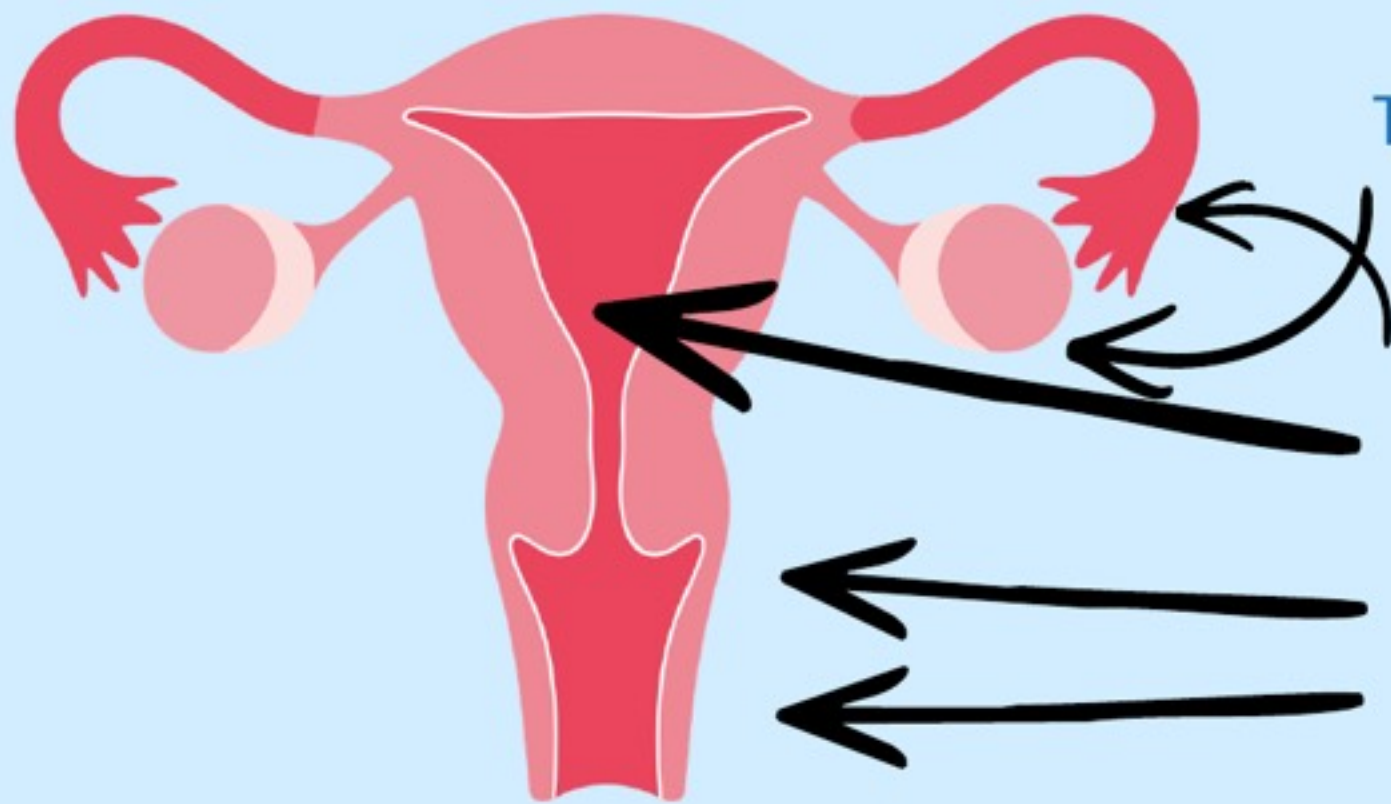


Understanding your body is ALL about your health!

Knowing what's normal helps you catch problems early, advocate for yourself, and feel confident.

3

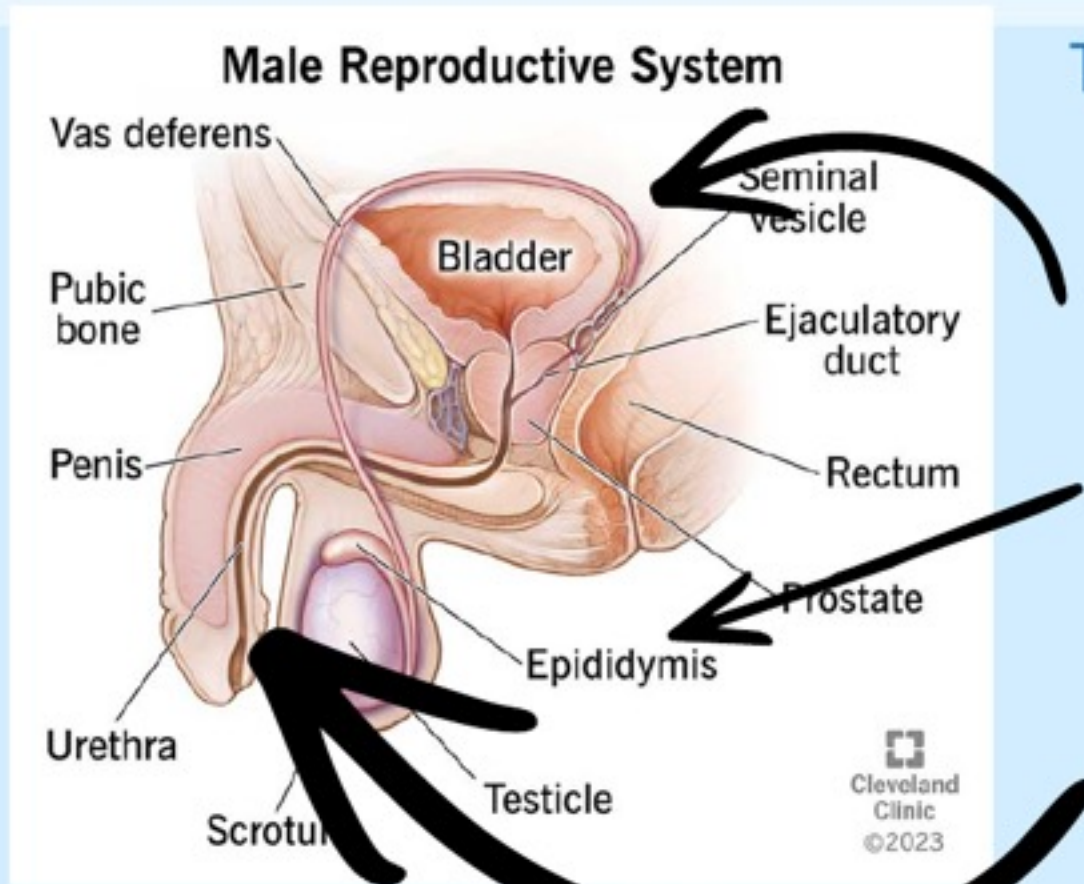
BASIC ANATOMY (PEOPLE WITH OVARIES)



The key players:

- Ovaries: produce eggs + hormones (estrogen, progesterone)
- Fallopian tubes: carry eggs from ovary to uterus
- Uterus: where a pregnancy develops; sheds its lining monthly
- Cervix: lower opening of uterus
- Vagina: muscular canal connecting uterus to outside

BASIC ANATOMY (PEOPLE WITH TESTES)



The key players:

- Testes: produce sperm + testosterone
- Vas deferens: tube that carries sperm
- Epididymis: where sperm matures (takes ~64 days)
- Urethra: shared path for urine and semen (not at the same time)



THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE

Hormones fluctuate throughout the cycle, triggering different phases. Estrogen and progesterone levels rise and fall to regulate the reproductive process.

During ovulation, a mature egg is released from the ovary. This typically occurs mid-cycle and is the time when fertilization is most likely to happen.

The uterus prepares for pregnancy by thickening its lining. If no fertilization occurs, menstruation happens as the lining sheds.

PUBERTY & HORMONES

Key hormones:

- Estrogen: breast development, bone density, cycle regulation
- Progesterone: prepares uterus for pregnancy, affects mood
- Testosterone: present in all bodies; affects muscle mass, libido, energy
- FSH & LH: regulate egg development and ovulation



Puberty may include growth spurts as your body rapidly develops, acne due to hormonal changes affecting your skin, and mood changes as your brain adjusts to new hormone levels.



Other common changes include body hair appearing in new places, voice changes (especially deepening in males), and changes in body shape. Everyone develops at their own pace.

WHAT'S NORMAL AND WHAT'S NOT

NORMAL:

- 1.Cycles varying 21–35 days
- 2.Light to moderate cramping
- 3.Mood changes before your period (PMS)
- 4.Some clotting

NOT NORMAL:

- 1.Periods lasting more than 7 days
- 2.Severe pain that stops you functioning
- 3.No period for 3+ months (and not pregnant)
- 4.Extremely heavy bleeding (soaking a pad/tampon every hour)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Anatomy is just anatomy; knowing it helps you take care of yourself.
2. Cycles vary. 28 days is an average, not a requirement.
3. Severe period pain is NOT normal. Talk to a doctor.
4. Hormones affect your whole body, not just reproduction.
5. Track your cycle as it's useful health data.

