Neu Woman with Lillian

My Cycle Tracker

Three months to understand your body

How to count your cycle

Three monthly log pages

How to read your three months

When to see a doctor

How to use a period app safely

Understanding your body changes everything.

Neu Woman with Lillian | @neu_woman

Why track your cycle?

Doctors treat your menstrual cycle like a vital sign, the same way they treat your pulse or blood pressure. Your period dates and patterns help them spot changes early.

Most of us were never taught to write anything down. So when a nurse asks, "When was your last period?", our minds go blank. This tracker fixes that, one month at a time.

How to count your cycle

- **Day 1** is the first day of real bleeding, not spotting.
- **Your cycle length** is the number of days from Day 1 of one period to the day before your next period starts.
- **Example:** your period starts on 3 March, and the next one starts on 31 March. Count 3 March to 30 March. That is a 28 day cycle.

What is usually normal

What	The usual range
Cycle length	21 to 35 days. 28 days is an average, not a rule.
Days of bleeding	About 5 days, but 2 to 7 days is common.
Ovulation	Usually about 10 to 16 days before your next period, so not always day 14.
Period pain	Mild cramps are common. Pain that stops your day is not something to just endure.

Source: NHS periods, irregular periods and fertility pages.

How to fill in your log

Column	What to write
Date and cycle day	The date, and which day of your cycle it is. Day 1 is the first day of bleeding.
Flow	None, spotting, light, medium or heavy.
Pads	How many pads or tampons you changed that day.
Pain	0 means no pain. 10 means the worst pain you can imagine. 7 or more means pain that stops your day.
Mood and energy	A word or a number from 1 to 5. Low, okay, good. Tired, fine, strong.
Notes	Discharge changes, bloating, headaches, skin, sleep, stress, travel, any medicine or supplement you took.

> **Tip:** you do not need to write every day when nothing is happening. Write every day you bleed, and any day you feel different.

Month 1 log

Month: _____ Day 1 date: _____

Date	Cycle day	Flow	Pads	Pain 0 to 10	Mood	Energy	Notes
	1						
	2						
	3						
	4						
	5						
	6						
	7						
	8						
	9						
	10						
	11						
	12						
	13						
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	25						
	26						
	27						
	28						
	29						
	30						
	31						

Days past 31? Keep writing in the notes column of next month's page.

Month 2 log

Month: _____ Day 1 date: _____

Date	Cycle day	Flow	Pads	Pain 0 to 10	Mood	Energy	Notes
	1						
	2						
	3						
	4						
	5						
	6						
	7						
	8						
	9						
	10						
	11						
	12						
	13						
	14						
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	27						
	28						
	29						
	30						
	31						

Days past 31? Keep writing in the notes column of next month's page.

Month 3 log

Month: _____ Day 1 date: _____

Date	Cycle day	Flow	Pads	Pain 0 to 10	Mood	Energy	Notes
	1						
	2						
	3						
	4						
	5						
	6						
	7						
	8						
	9						
	10						
	11						
	12						
	13						
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	27						
	28						
	29						
	30						
	31						

Days past 31? Keep writing in the notes column of next month's page.

Reading your three months

After three cycles, fill in this table. Then answer the questions below it.

	Day 1 date	Cycle length	Days bleeding	Most pads in a day	Worst pain
Cycle 1					
Cycle 2					
Cycle 3					

Ask yourself

- Are my cycles between 21 and 35 days?
- Do I bleed for 7 days or fewer?
- Is my pain mild, or does it stop my day?
- Do my mood, energy, skin or bloating follow a pattern, like the week before my period?
- Did anything big happen in a month my period came late? Stress, travel, illness, a new medicine, weight change?

When to see a doctor

Please book a visit if you notice any of these. You do not have to guess.

- Gaps between periods shorter than 21 days or longer than 35 days.
- Bleeding for more than 7 days, or changing a pad every 1 to 2 hours, or passing large clots.
- No period for 3 months, with a negative pregnancy test.
- Bleeding between periods, or after sex.
- Pain that stops your daily life, or keeps getting worse.
- Pain during sex, or when you pee or poo.
- A swollen tummy, loss of appetite or weight loss you cannot explain.

> **Go to a hospital now** for very heavy bleeding, like soaking a pad every hour for 2 hours or more, fainting, fever with belly pain, or sudden sharp pain on one side of your lower belly.

Sources: NHS period pain, heavy periods, irregular periods; MedlinePlus painful periods.

Take this tracker to your doctor

Three months of notes makes a clinic visit far more useful. Your doctor can see your pattern in minutes, instead of guessing from memory.

Paper, phone note or app?

Start free and private

This printed tracker, a notebook, your phone calendar or a phone note called My Cycle all work well. Nobody else sees them.

If you prefer an app

Apps such as Clue and Flo are popular, and they are fine to use. Before you sign up, read what the app shares, and switch off any sharing you do not want.

Why this matters: in January 2021, the US Federal Trade Commission settled with Flo Health over claims that it shared users' health information, such as period and pregnancy details, with marketing and analytics companies, after promising to keep it private.

Source: TechCrunch report on the FTC settlement, 13 January 2021.

One important warning

> Apps and calendars give estimates. Your fertile days come before ovulation, and they can move from month to month, even when your cycle is regular. Please do not use counting days, a calendar or an app as birth control. If you want to avoid pregnancy, a doctor can show you something reliable.

A note from me

When I was in boarding school, some girls bled for 2 days and some for 7, and I thought one of us must be sick. I did not know how to count my cycle, so my period always came at the worst time.

I wish someone had given me this page back then. So I am giving it to you.

If you want help making sense of your three months, or you want to talk about food, habits or supplements, send me a message with the word CHECKIN. I am here to help and support you, not to diagnose or treat.

With love, Lillian