Menstrual Cycle

The menstrual cycle is a series of changes a woman’s body goes through over a month’s time to prepare for a possible pregnancy. Most women start having this cycle between ages 11 and 14. Some women have cycles that are longer or shorter. Women usually stop having this cycle after age 50, called menopause.

1. Uterine lining is prepared for the fertilized egg.

2. At mid-cycle, the egg leaves the ovary and goes into the fallopian tube.

3. The egg travels through the fallopian tube to the uterine lining. If the egg and sperm meet, conception can take place.

4. If the egg and sperm do not meet, the egg dissolves and is part of the menstrual flow that begins, also called having a period.

Cycles can range anywhere from 21 to 35 days in adults and from 21 to 45 days in young teens.

Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or e-mail health-info@osu.edu.

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