



Your Body is like the *Moon*

Self-Care for Each Phase of Your Cycle



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By Meloney Hudson

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Your Phases are Like the Moon's

Some days, do you feel on top of the world and ready to take on anything? And then other days you feel sluggish and weepy? Welcome to your menstrual cycle.

In this Moon & Menstrual Phases Guidebook, we share with you information that will help you begin to understand the mysteries of your body, and why your body, energy and emotions change during the month. We do it by relating the moon to menstruation.

Since the earliest times of humanity, the moon has been associated with a woman's menstrual cycle, as each have a cycle of approximately 28 days (though can vary between 24 and 35 days). Some anthropologists theorize timekeeping began with the tracking of menstrual cycle. In a sense, menstruation inspired the first calendars.

Like the moon, our energy levels wax and wane during the month. This Guidebook explains why and how each phase of our menstrual cycle influences our body and moods. We also offer self-care practices that help you maintain optimal energy every day of the month. By understanding our physical fluctuations during the month and the beset ways treat our body in each phase, we can feel as energetic as possible every day.

Like the moon, your body is a natural, miraculous creation with innate intelligence that knows what to do on its own. All you need to do is appreciate the magic within you and enjoy the ride!

First, what is energy?

Energy is the fuel that gives us life. Energy comes from the foods we eat and the air we breathe. It's also generated internally by our organs and cells to spark the functions of our body and brains.

The level of energy dictates how we feel. High energy feels zesty, alive, clear-minded and optimistic. We can move mountains during the day and dance all night. We glow brightly, light the full moon on a clear night. Low energy feels like fatigue, lack of enthusiasm, mental foggy, and mood swings. Our inner light seems dim, much like a new moon in a misty sky.

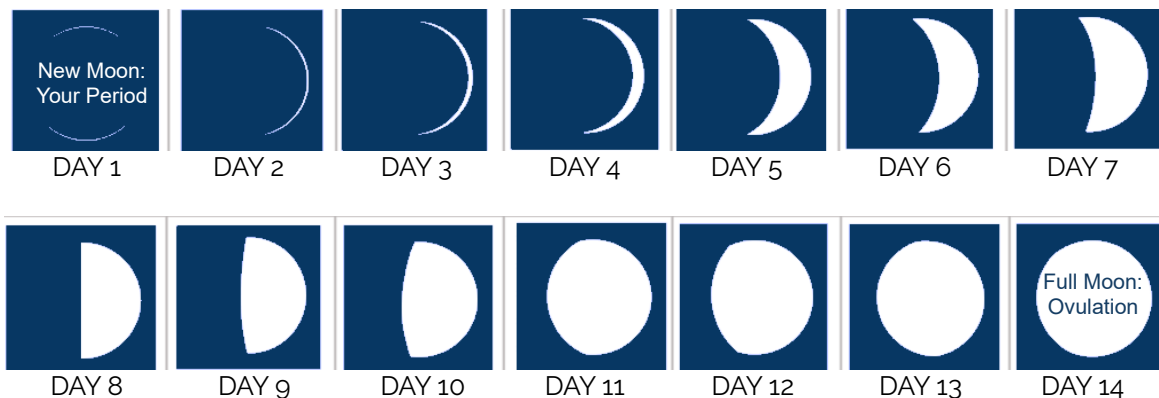
Most of us want optimal energy to be productive and feel good. We can have it by understanding our menstrual cycle and how to care for our body during each phase.

Moon Phases & Your Body's Energy

Throughout your menstrual cycle, your energy levels will wax (increase) and wane (decrease). Imagine your menstrual cycle matches the moon's cycle. Correlating the phases of the waxing and waning moon with your cycle may help you understand the ups and downs of your energy during your cycle.

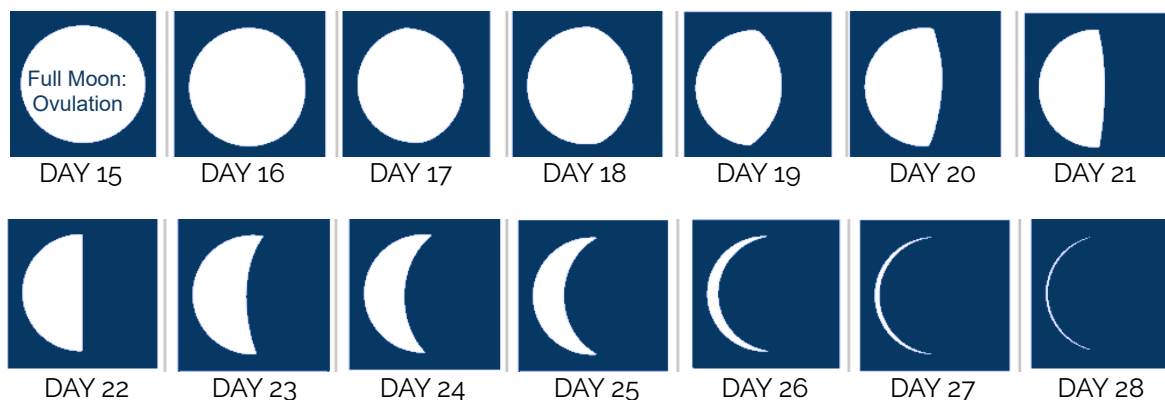
Waxing Moon = Increasing Energy

Consider the first day of your period to be Day 1 of your cycle, your "New Moon." The New Moon is invisible in the sky, and your energy is typically lowest. By day 3, your energy will begin to increase and continue to rise to the halfway point of your cycle, during ovulation (approximately Day 14. Or 15.) Your ovulation day is your "Full Moon."



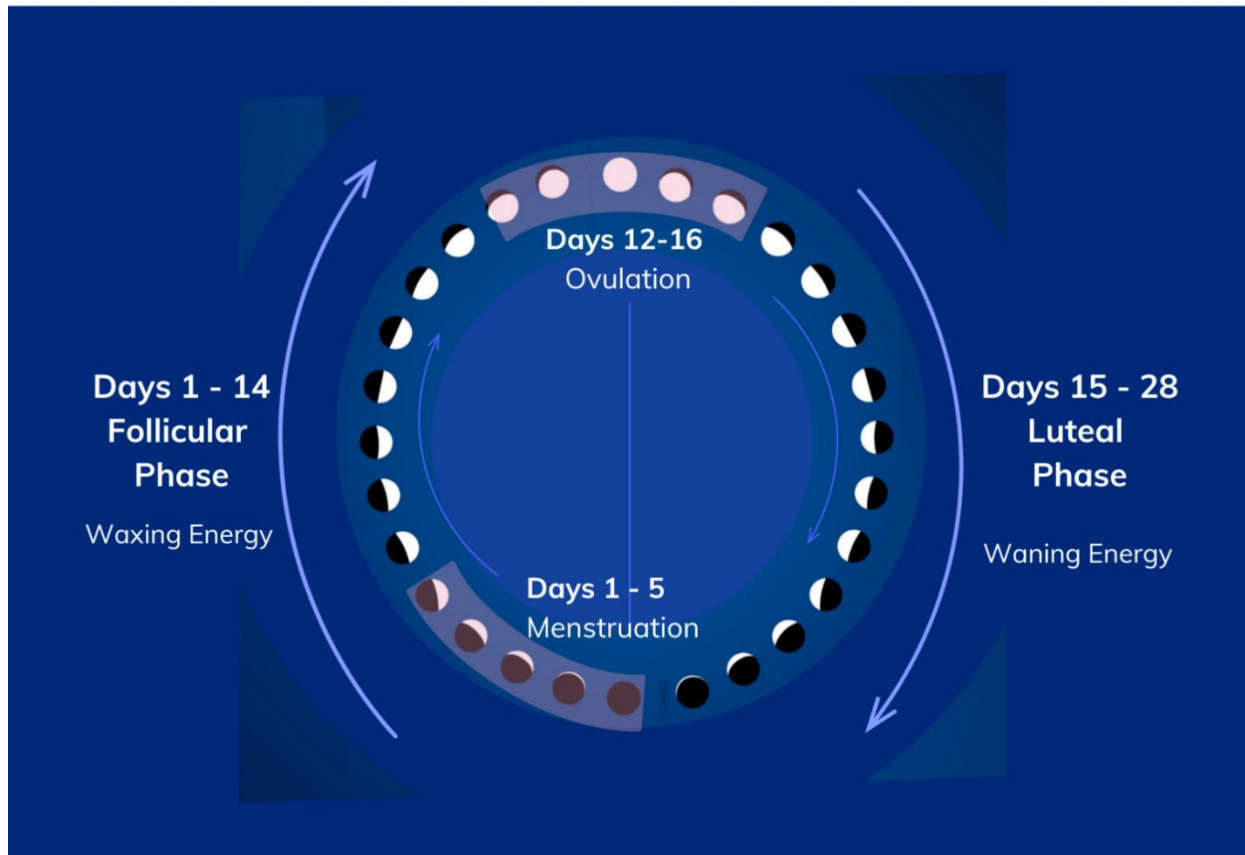
Waning Moon = Decreasing Energy

After ovulation (your "Full Moon"), your energy begins to wane and slowly decrease, just as a waning moon reduces in size. About a week before your period, your energy wanes and you may experience PMS symptoms like headaches, moodiness and cramping until you begin your period. "New Moon."



Menstrual Phases

Menstruation consists of two main phases that can dictate your energy levels. These are the **Follicular Phase** and the **Luteal Phase**. This chart illustrates these two menstrual cycle phases with the phases of the moon



Follicular Phase: Days 1 – 14

From the New Moon (your period)
to the Full Moon (ovulation).

Energy levels wax/increase.

Luteal Phase: Days 15 – 28

From Full Moon (ovulation) to
New Moon (menstruation.)

Energy levels wane/ decrease.

Hormones are the drivers of your cycle and influencers of your energy. Learn how hormones change with each phase of your cycle and how they affect your body throughout the month. Read on!

Hormones:

Your Phase & Energy Influencers

The energy in our feminine body is influenced by two primary hormones: **estrogen** and **progesterone**. They are the guiding force behind menstruation and are components of our health and wellbeing, and affect our overall energy, mood regulation and brain function.

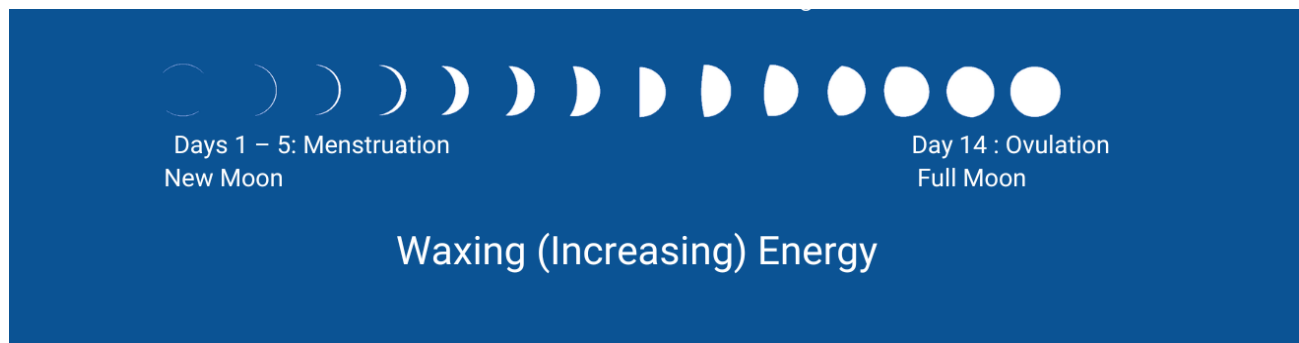
Estrogen drives the menstrual cycle. During the follicular phase, estrogen rises after menstruation and continues to rise as our cycle progresses toward ovulation. Estrogen helps thicken the uterine lining. High levels of estrogen are associated with increased energy, positive mood, and clear brain function.

During the luteal phase of our menstrual cycle, estrogen levels lower and progesterone levels rise as we move toward our period. Progesterone prepares the uterus for potential pregnancy and maintains the uterus during pregnancy if the egg is fertilized. If pregnancy does not occur, progesterone levels drop and trigger the shedding of the uterine lining, which we call our period. This dip in estrogen and rise in progesterone can yield fatigue, moodiness and other PMS symptoms.

Estrogen and progesterone levels rise and fall through the month, and our energy levels follow.

The chart on the next page gives you a glimpse of the phases of our cycle to see how

Follicular Phase: Days 1 – 14 (approximately)



The **Follicular Phase** of your menstrual cycle begins Day 1 of your period. Think of Day 1 as your "New Moon." For the next two weeks, as you move toward ovulation, your energy waxes as you head toward ovulation, or your "Full Moon".

What happens in your body:

Days 1 to 5: Your period. (Some women's typical period is shorter or longer.) The lining of your uterus sheds. Menstrual blood is about 36% blood and 64% mucus and tissue.

Day 6 (approximately): After your period ends, your estrogen increases, and progesterone decreases. Your ovaries begin to develop follicles containing immature eggs. Over the next few days, one will grow into a fully developed egg. The lining of your uterus begins to thicken.

Between Days 12 and 16: Ovulation occurs. Your estrogen peaks at its highest level.

Ovulation is when the developed egg is released from the ovary and travels from the fallopian tube to the uterus. This process lasts for only 12 to 24 hours. After ovulating, the Follicular Phase ends.

Important Note: If sperm is present in the uterus up to 6 days before and after ovulation, it is possible for the egg to be fertilized, and a pregnancy to occur.

How you may feel:

On Days 1 to 5: During your period, you'll experience cramps, bloating, and fatigue. The discomfort will likely subside after three days. Your period is a good time to rest and reflect. Get extra rest and eat as many healthy foods as possible.

Days 6 to 14: After your period ends, your body moves toward ovulation. Estrogen increases, which may boost your energy and motivation. Your moods are brighter, and your concentration is more focused. The left and right sides of the brain communicate more effectively, which can lead to greater creative thinking.

Lower progesterone levels are linked to greater strength, power, and energy, and you may feel happier and more positive. Your creativity increases. This is a good time to brainstorm, start new projects and plan.

You will feel your best and perform at your peak during ovulation (your Full Moon). You may feel slight cramping during ovulation, when the egg travels to your uterus.

Luteal Phase: Days 15 – 28 (approximately)



Your **Luteal Phase** begins during ovulation. (In some systems, ovulation is its own phase.) Think of ovulation as your "Full Moon," when your energy is highest. Your energy may wane as you progress toward your period (considered your "New Moon.")

What happens in your body:

Approximately Day 16, after you ovulate, nature prepares your uterus for a potential pregnancy by thickening the uterus lining. Your progesterone increases to help thicken your uterus lining. Your estrogen decreases.

Around Day 21, your estrogen begins to rise again.

After Day 28, if the egg was not fertilized by sperm near your time of ovulation, your body prepares to release the uterine lining, and your period will begin after Day 28.

If the egg was fertilized and a pregnancy resulted, the lining will not be released from the uterus (you won't start your period). The lining remains in the body where the fertilized egg will grow.

How you may feel:

During ovulation and for about five days after, your energy will remain high with abundant productivity, creativity and focus.

Around Day 21 (a week before your period), progesterone and estrogen begin to increase, and Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) symptoms arise.

The physical symptoms of PMS can include abdominal bloating and weight gain; breast swelling and tenderness; increased appetite; stomach cramps, diarrhea, and/or constipation; acne; headaches; fatigue and low energy.

The emotional and behavioral symptoms of PMS can include depression or anxiety; insomnia or oversleeping; irritability; mood swings; crying spells; poor concentration.

During the luteal phase, acknowledge your reduced energy and honor your body with self-care. Caring for your body before your period will help your period days smoother and more comfortable.

Your “Inner Moon” Energy Phases & Self-Care

One day you feel great and can take on the world! A few days later, you drag through the day, counting every minute before you can go to bed. Is there something wrong with you? Not at all. This is life with a menstrual cycle.

During our monthly cycle, hormonal levels rise and fall and our energy changes with it, much like the waxing and waning glow of the moon's phases. These rhythmic fluctuations influence the way we feel emotionally and physically during the month, and affect how we perform, socialize, and experience the world. Many of us are fortunate to ride the highs and lows with ease and grace, while others suffer with intense physical and emotional discomfort.

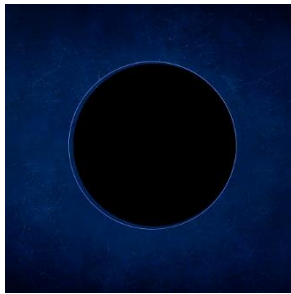


Full Cycle Self-Care

For each phase, we offer “Energy Eating” and “Exercise & Self Care” practices that will support your body and energy through every phase of the month.

A robust daily eating lifestyle, filled with high-nutrition foods, contributes to greater energy throughout every phase of the month. Exercise generates more energy, which helps us feel more alive, healthy, and motivated. Bonus: physical activity levels out our hormones and emotions. Exercise helps your body feel better every day!

In the next section, we'll explore our “Inner-Moon” energy phases and how to treat your body during each phase, so that your periods are easier and your energy and health are optimal all month long.



Day 1 **NEW MOON**

Day one of your period

Day one of the Follicular Phase

Hormones & Energy Level: Estrogen and progesterone levels are at their lowest, which contribute to your fatigue and moodiness. Your energy is dim. You may experience cramps, bloating, constipation or diarrhea. You're not sick, this is your period.

"New Moon" Energy Foods

During menstruation, nurture your body with healthy comfort foods that make the body feel better and support its functions. Try these:

- Warm soups made with beans, lentils, veggies and broths. They help you feel calmer, warmer, and nurtured.
- Amp up your Omega 3s by adding salmon, flaxseed, and nuts, to help reduce inflammation and cramping.
- Eat plenty of iron-rich foods to replace iron you lose during bleeding. Iron is essential for red blood cell production. Dark green, leafy vegetables, such as kale and spinach are abundant in iron, as are lentils and other beans. Consider eating liver or red meat to supplement your iron. A 3-ounce serving of [beef liver](#) contains approximately 5 milligrams of iron, which is about 28% of the recommended daily value.
- Sip on ginger tea to help reduce nausea and cramping.
- Drink plenty of water. A [study](#) shows that drinking plenty of water can help reduce menstrual pain intensity.
- If you crave sweets, nibble on dark chocolate of 85%, which is low in sugar. Its anti-inflammatory properties help reduce bloating and its magnesium content helps calm cramps.

"New Moon" Exercise & Self Care

During your New Moon phase, rest and pamper yourself. If you are the ambitious type, give yourself a break and resist pushing through your projects, if you're able. If your social

calendar is booked, and you just aren't up for it, it's OK to cancel. Good friends will understand.

- Relaxing will help calm cramps and mood. Write in your journal, read a book or watch a movie. Sleep.
- Pass on strenuous sports, and engage in more gentle movement, such as gentle yoga or walking, which can help relax abdominal cramps.
- Perform self-massage with lavender essential oil (diluted in a carrier oil, such as almond, grapeseed, coconut or other oil.)



Days 3-5

WAXING CRESCENT MOON

Follicular Phase

Energy levels: As your estrogen increases and your menstrual flow decreases, you'll begin to feel lighter and more energetic. Your body is still losing blood, so continue to follow your body's needs.

"Waxing Crescent Moon" Energy Eating

Maintain your healthy food choices and continue eating period-supporting foods for the first two days of your period. Add hearty salads with veggies, beans, and seeds, like sesame seeds, which are rich in iron and lignans that help balance estrogen. Continue to avoid sugary, salty, and fatty foods. (As a rule of thumb, avoid this every day!)

"Waxing Crescent Moon" Exercise and Self-Care

Your estrogen and energy may begin to rise, and you're ready to return to your groove. As you take on more work and accept social invitations, continue to pamper your body and listen to its signals. Engage in gentle exercise, such as walking, hiking, biking and swimming.



Days 6-13

WAXING QUARTER MOON

**Follicular Phase continues,
progressing toward ovulation**

Hormones & Energy Level: Your estrogen level continues to elevate as it approaches ovulation. Your energy increases and luminous radiance strengthen. Your mood is optimistic.

During this phase of your cycle, your body is its most powerful; your brain and body are sharpest and strongest. Your inspirations steadily flow, and you may solve the problem you've been facing for a week. You feel unstoppable! This is the time to push ahead in your enterprises, and to focus on the projects you've been putting off.

"Waxing Quarter Moon" Energy Eating

During your Waxing Phase, load up your body with healthy foods to fuel your body and brain to sustain your energy. Nutritious eating not only fuels the body for today's activities, it also increases vitality and strength for the days to come. Think futuristically; the more nutritious you eat today the better you will feel tomorrow - and in two weeks during your next period.

Enjoy a wide range of healthy, whole foods with meals loaded with a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains and legumes. Vegetables and fruits contain vitamins and minerals that support cellular and organ function. They help reduce inflammation and detoxify the body.

Legumes, including lentils, garbanzo beans, black beans and others, provide iron and essential amino acids when combined with grains, nuts and seeds.

Smoothies help sustain high energy without weighing you down. Blend fruits, coconut water and chia seeds into delicious, nutritious and satisfying treats.

While you're in "Go Mode" and possibly over-scheduled, resist temptation to grab fast foods, sugary sodas, junk foods, and overly processed items, like instant noodles and microwavable meals. These foods contain very little nutrition and harm the body, rather than

support it. You may feel an energetic slump right after eating them and they will continue to sap your energy as they are digested. Remember, think futuristically and eat nutritious foods.

“Waxing Quarter Moon” Exercise and Self Care

During this powerful time, take advantage of your energy to increase endurance and strength. Engage in high-intensity workouts. Run on the treadmill for an extra five minutes. Increase your reps while lifting weights. Take two Zumba classes a week. Try bootcamps, spinning, or kickboxing.

While you may feel unstoppable at this time, be sure to get ample sleep to rejuvenate the body, ideally 6 to 8 hours. Less than 6 hours may interfere with your productivity and chip away at your vitality.



Days 12- 14

FULL MOON

Ovulation

Hormones & Energy Level: A surge of the luteinizing hormone triggers the release of the egg. Your testosterone and estrogen peak, and your energy is highest. You're positively luminous. You may feel more optimistic – or more easily irritated. It's party time! Enjoy your stamina at work and in your social life.

From two days before ovulation until this day a body is most able to become pregnant. You may experience a twinge of pain in one side of your abdomen, from the release of the egg. Your libido becomes more potent.

“Full Moon” Energy Eating

During ovulation, eat to support your energy and hormone balance. Hormone-balancing foods, including:

- Lean proteins, like lentils, eggs, yogurt, nuts, and tofu.
- Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli and cauliflower, which can help metabolize excess estrogen.
- Healthy fats, including avocados, flaxseeds and pumpkin seeds. They serve as building blocks for hormone production and support overall cellular health.
- Dark, leafy greens, like kale, spinach, collared greens, and arugula help reduce inflammation and help eliminate excess hormones.
- Healthy carbs, such as brown rice, whole wheat and quinoa, fuel your activities and sustain your energy through the day.

“Full Moon” Exercise & Self Care

Engage in high-intensity workouts, like boot camps, weightlifting, and running. Dancing is a powerful exercise and a fun way to express your sexy self. Consider belly dancing to show off your sexy radiance!

Adults - a note about alcohol: While in this Party Girl phase, be prudent when it comes to wine and cocktails. Alcohol damages the liver, the primary organ for metabolizing and eliminating hormones, including estrogen. When the liver is overburdened by alcohol or any intoxicant, it may not efficiently process your hormones, leading to imbalances that can worsen PMS symptoms. Use alcohol wisely.



Days 15 – 25

WANING QUARTER MOON

**Post Ovulation
Entering Luteal Phase**

Hormones & Energy Level: Immediately after ovulation, you move into the Luteal Phase of menstruation. If the egg isn't fertilized, estrogen drops dramatically and the uterus prepares to shed its lining. Clunk! Your energy may begin to diminish and will continue waning through your luteal phase.

At around day 21, estrogen rises slightly, but progesterone increases dramatically. This fluctuation of hormones is preparing the uterus to shed the unfertilized egg and lining. As progesterone increases, your energy further decreases. PMS symptoms begin to appear; moodiness, bloating, tender breasts, and fatigue dim your radiance. You may become more emotional, and you may begin to crave sweets and salty foods.

The nutrition you consumed before ovulating will impact your luteal phase. Nutritious eating and exercise during your follicular phase will contribute to a more energetic luteal phase. So, if you've been eating well and exercising, your energy and body may experience fewer PMS symptoms.

“Waning Quarter Moon” Energy Eating

As you move through the luteal phase, proactively prepare for your period by eating super-healthy meals. Continue to eat nutrition-dense fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and proteins. Increase foods rich in iron, such as dark leafy greens, like kale and spinach, eggs, poultry or some red meat.

Add tofu to your meals. Tofu and other soy foods have been found to reduce PMS symptoms, such as breast tenderness, bloating and moodiness. It's also a good source of protein that helps satisfy cravings.

Combat your cravings for salty, sugary or high-carb foods with high-nutrition alternatives.

Instead of sweets like cookies and candy, eat nuts with raisins, or a banana. High sugar intake can lead to elevated estrogen levels, which can worsen PMS symptoms. Sugar also contributes to inflammation, which can increase cramp pain. Skip high-sodium foods like chips and fast-foods, and instead reach for low-salt popcorn, almonds, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds. Too much salt can increase bloating and fluid retention.

It's time to focus on the iron-rich foods again, such as leafy green veggies, nuts and lentils.

Complex carbohydrates help curb hunger and boost your energy. They include:

- Whole grains, like brown rice, quinoa, whole grain breads, and oats.
- Starchy veggies, such as sweet potatoes, corn and peas
- Fruits, such as apples, bananas, oranges, pears

Fruits and veggies contain fiber that help digestion and prevent constipation. If constipation is a symptom during your period, eat plenty of fiber foods now.

"Waning Quarter Moon" Exercise and Self Care

During your early luteal (waning) stage, your energy may feel ample enough to maintain your intense workouts, but as you get closer to your period, and your energy drags, you to pull back a bit. Listen to your body. Continue to exercise but opt for low-impact, gentle practices that focus on reducing stress and improving mood. Yoga, Pilates, and walking are great choices.

Six days before your period, begin massaging your abdomen and lower back. [Click here](#) to watch our Cramp-Reducing Self-Massage video. Studies show that massaging in advance of your period may help reduce cramping.



Days 26-28

WANING CRESCENT MOON

Luteal Phase, Pre-Menstruation

Energy Level: Estrogen and progesterone levels drop to prepare the body to release the unneeded uterine lining. This dip in hormones equals sluggish and dull energy. PMS symptoms are most noticeable, and breast tenderness and bloating are at their peak. You mentally prepare for your upcoming period.

“Waning Crescent Moon” Energy Eating

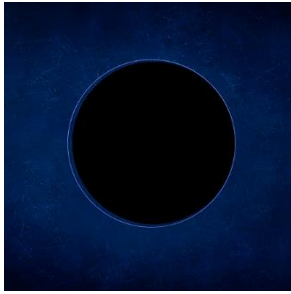
Eat the highest-quality, nutrition-dense vegetables, fruits and legumes as possible. Refer to the recommendations offered in the New Moon phase. Remember, food is medicine and helps the body feel optimally during your period.

Reduce caffeine intake. Coffee and tea can be dehydrating, which contributes to bloating and headaches.

“Waning Crescent Moon” Exercise and Self-care

Avoid high-intensity workouts, if possible, as they may drain you. At this time, you need to maintain your energy reserves for menstruation. Walking, gentle yoga, easy workouts with light weights can keep your system moving without strain.

Become body-conscious and communicate with your beautiful self. Take a moment to be still and thank your body for all that it does. You are heading to your period. It's nothing to dread. Menstruation is not a sickness; it's a miraculous function of the feminine body. And because you treated your body well throughout the month, you're confident you'll glide into and through your period.



Day 1
NEW MOON

The first day of menstruation
End luteal phase

Your cycle starts all over again.

You have more control over your body and its health than you know.

Honoring your body's natural phases and supporting it with positive lifestyle practices will help you live your fullest life.

Honor your body and treat it like a temple, for it is a miracle!

Tracking Your Cycle



Tracking your cycle is a valuable practice that can help familiar with your body and its changes throughout the month.

Once you discover the normal length of your own cycle, you're able to predict upcoming periods, ovulations, and energy levels. This can help you plan and prepare in advance for your period and for your high and low energy days.

The typical menstrual cycle is about 28 days; however, some women's natural cycles are between 24 and 38 days. You may experience erratic, unpredictable, especially for the first year of your period, and this is natural. Tracking your cycle can still be helpful. However, if you experience several months of erratic periods with heavy bleeding and bleeding in between periods, see your gynecologist, as there may be an underlying issue that needs attention.

How to Start Tracking Your Periods

Use your own calendar, or print the blank calendars provided. During the month, record:

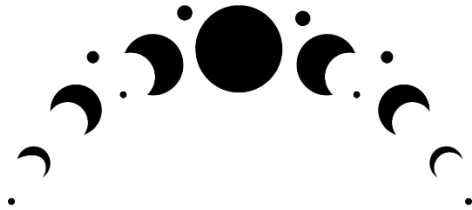
- Each day of your period.
- Energy levels during the month. Use an UP arrow ↑ to indicate high energy and good moods, and a DOWN arrow ↓ to show low energy and PMS symptoms.
- Your ovulation day(s). You may experience slight cramping mid-month, which may indicate ovulation. Mark it on your calendar.
- For fun, add the phase of the moon that corresponds with your cycle.
- The dates you think your next period will occur.

Moon Phase Fun

For most of us, Day 1 of our period does not occur on the New Moon. But your period may start on the same moon phase every month. For fun, track your periods and moon cycles to see if they are consistent. Simply go outside at night and notice the moon's shape (and enjoy the moon while you're out there.) Draw the shape or phase of the moon on your calendar.

After three months, you may notice energetic patterns influenced by the moon. You may also find your period falls on the same moon phase every month.

Also notice what days of your cycle the new moon and full moon appear in the sky. Many people report that the moon itself can influence their energy, inspiring a boost during a full moon and lowering energy during a new moon. You may become aware of some influences the moon may have on your energy. Journal what you discover. Have fun with it!



MONTH -----

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

MONTH -----

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

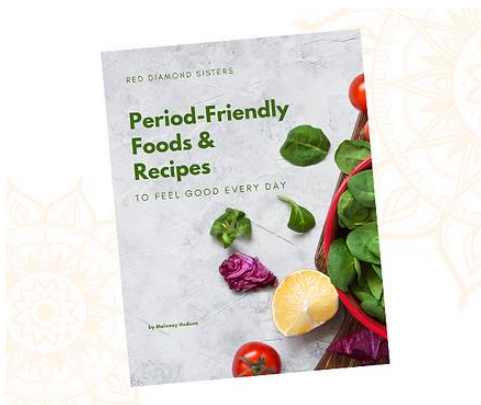
Love Your Body, Appreciate Your Period



Red Diamond Sisters encourage "body awareness" for a high-quality and healthy life, and for the joy of exploring the magic of our nature.

We hope you learned a little about your amazing body and find value in tracking your cycles.

Your health, well-being and period comfort are in your hands. You can create a life of easier, more comfortable periods through positive lifestyle habits that contribute to your health.



Our *Period-Friend Foods & Recipes Guide* is packed with information, food recommendations and recipes that support the functions of your organs and cells, so that your energy is high and you feel great during your periods and through the month. Order your copy today at RedDiamondSisters.com.

If you have any questions or need support, contact us at info@RedDiamondSisters.com

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