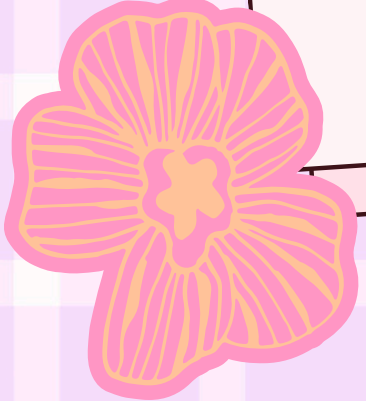

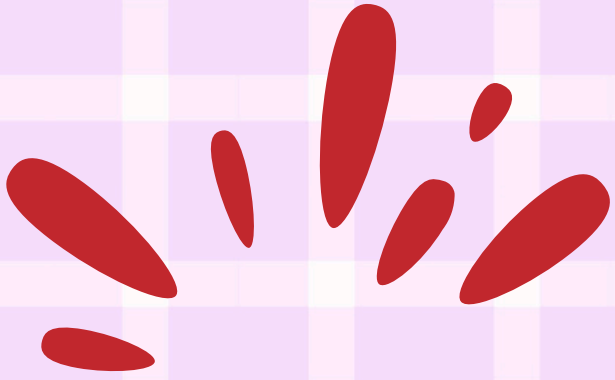


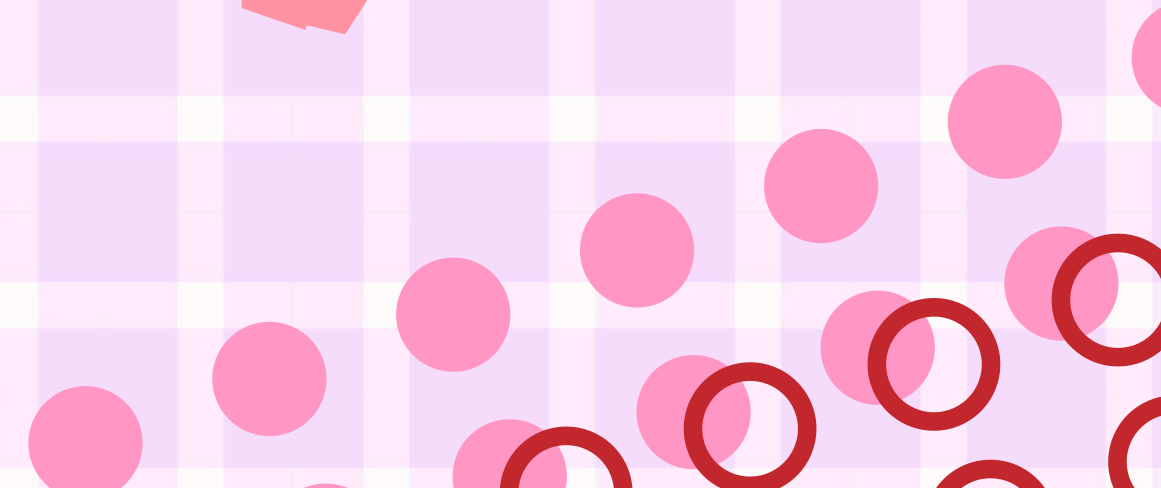
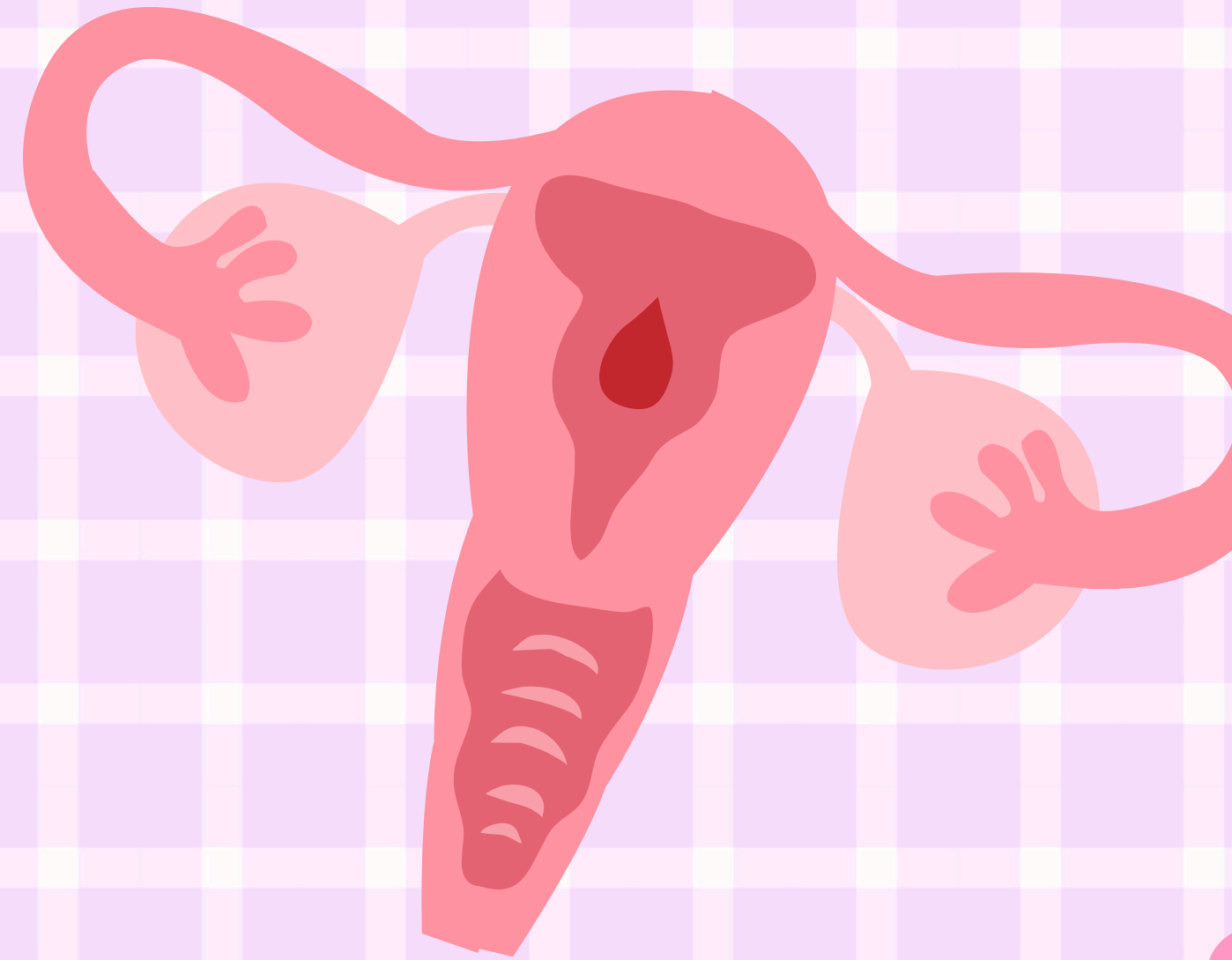
The Menstrual Cycle





What is it?

The menstrual cycle is a cycle which begins at puberty to prepare the body for pregnancy. It lasts around 28 days but can be shorter or longer, especially if a young person has just started having periods.





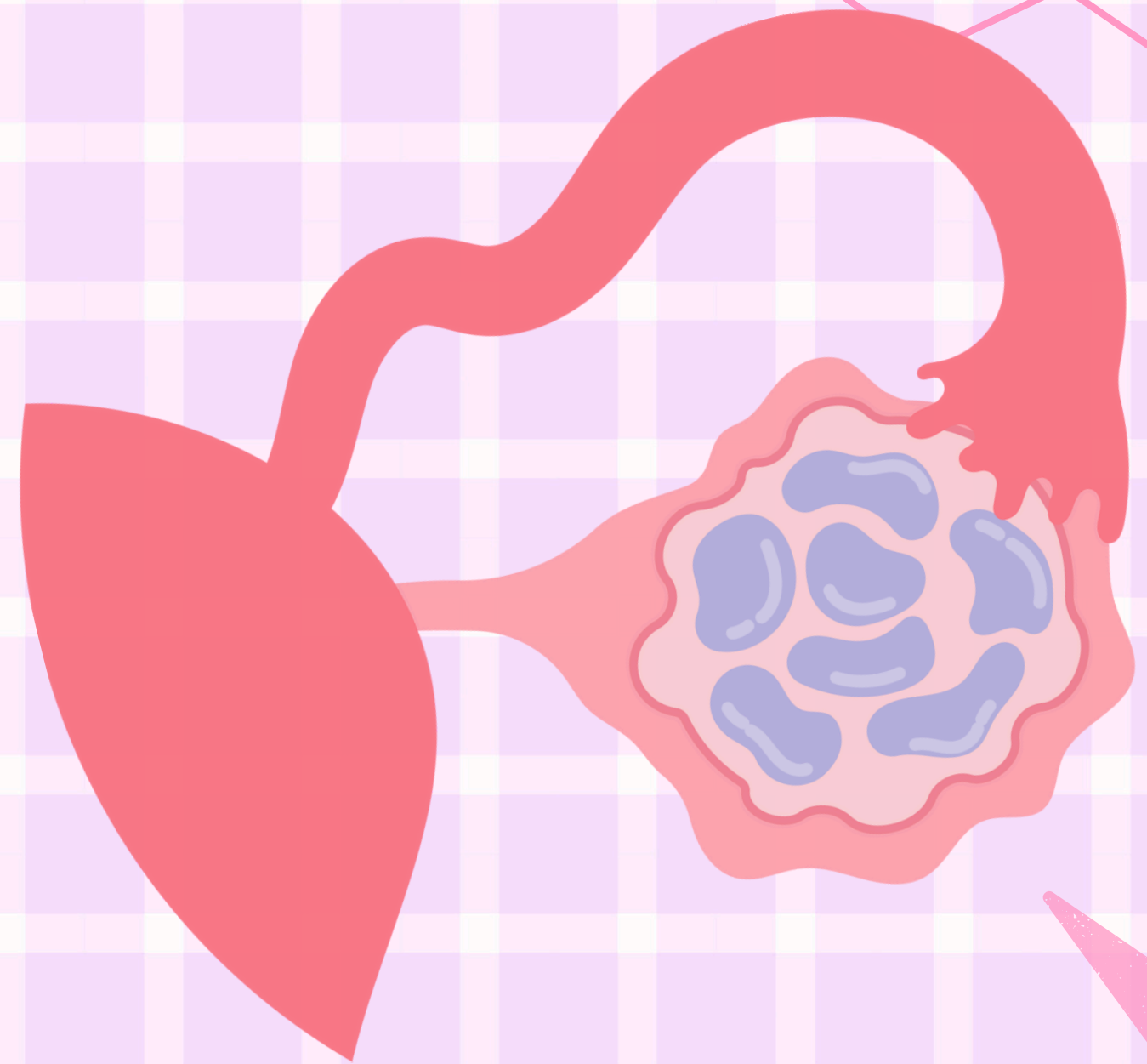
Day 1

Bleeding from the vagina begins. This is known as having a period or menstruation. It is caused by the loss of the lining of the uterus.

A period usually lasts on average about 4 days, however can be longer or shorter depending on the person.

Day 5

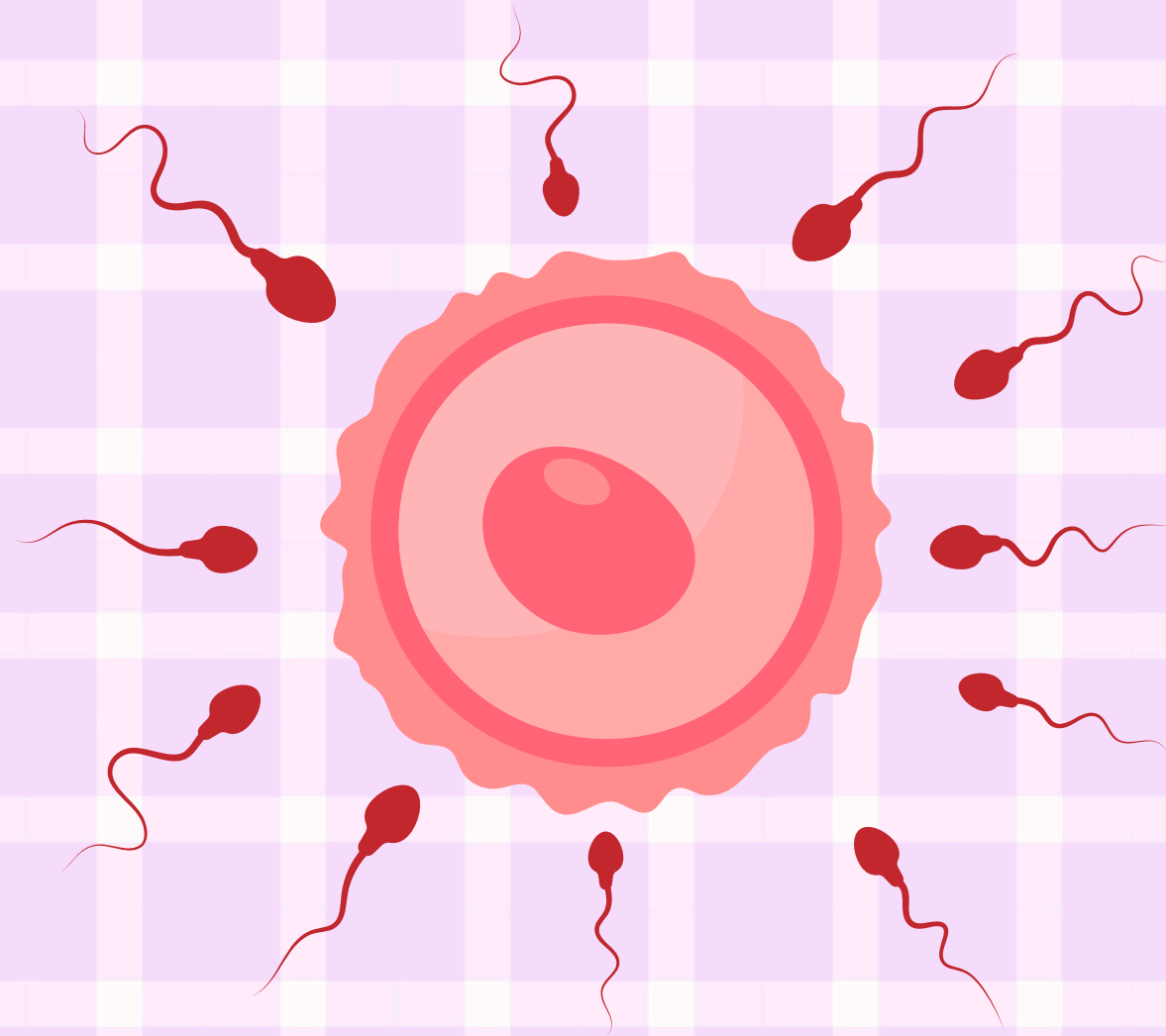
The bleeding stops and an ovum (an egg) starts to mature in one of the ovaries. The lining of the uterus starts to regrow.



Day 14

The mature ovum travels through the oviduct towards the uterus. This process is called ovulation.





Day 28

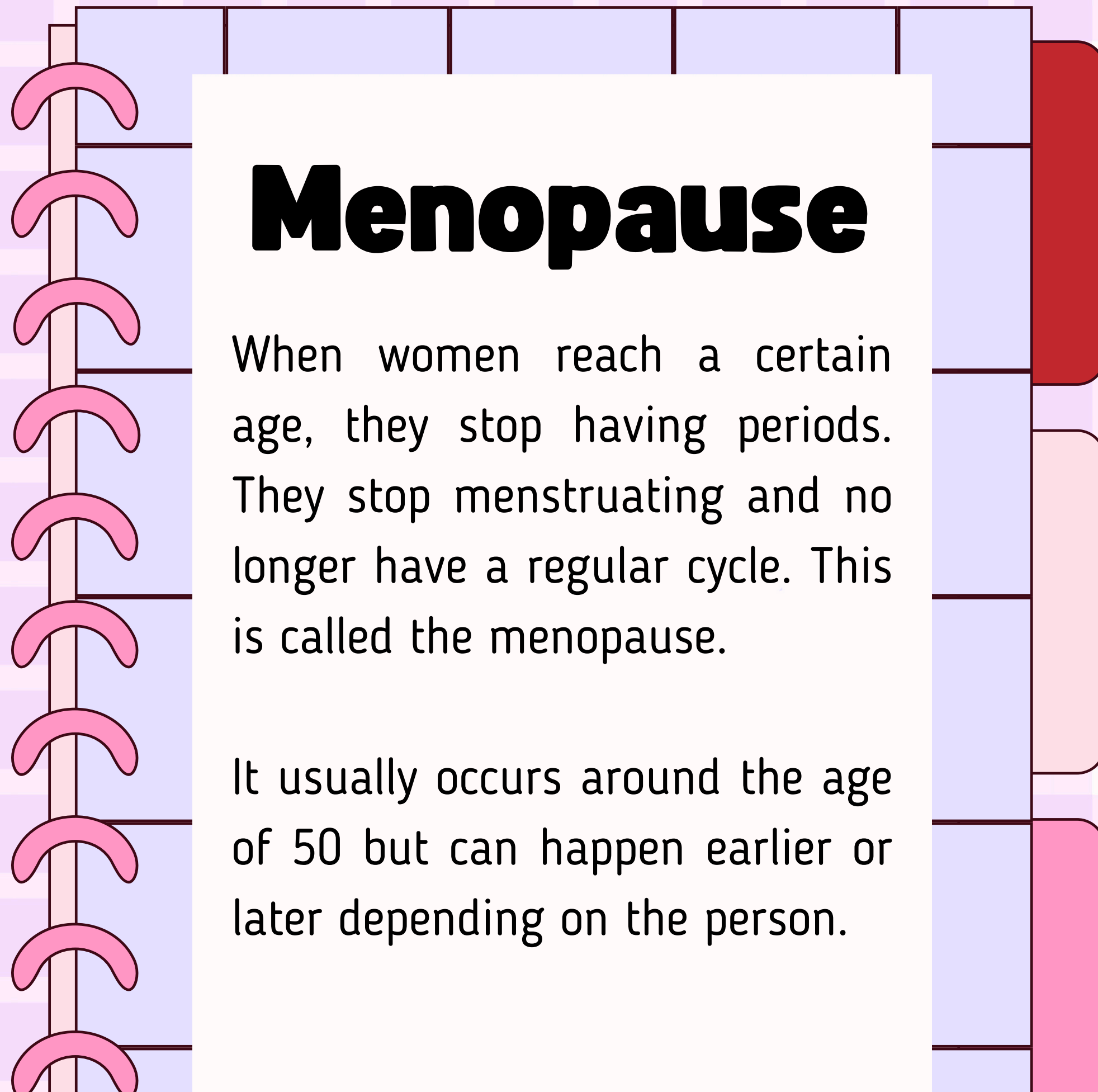
If the ovum has not joined with a sperm cell in the oviduct, the lining of the uterus begins to break down again and the cycle starts again.

Pregnancy

Fertilisation occurs when the sperm and egg join during sex. The fertilised egg implants in the lining of the uterus.

This is the start of pregnancy. During pregnancy, menstruation does not happen, so periods do not occur.





Menopause

When women reach a certain age, they stop having periods. They stop menstruating and no longer have a regular cycle. This is called the menopause.

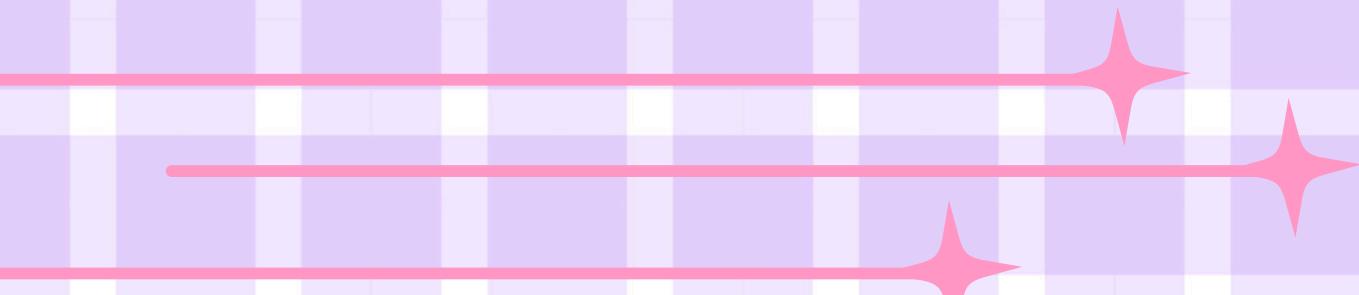
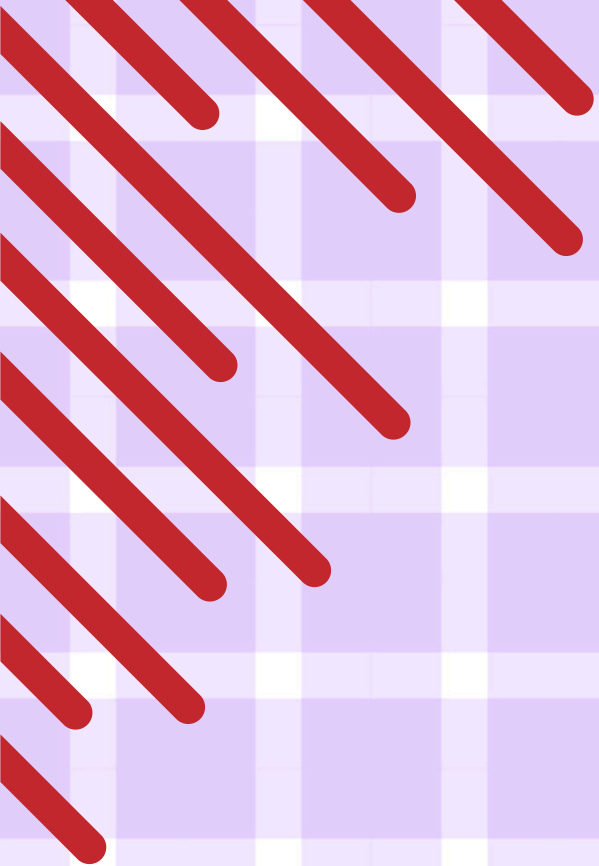
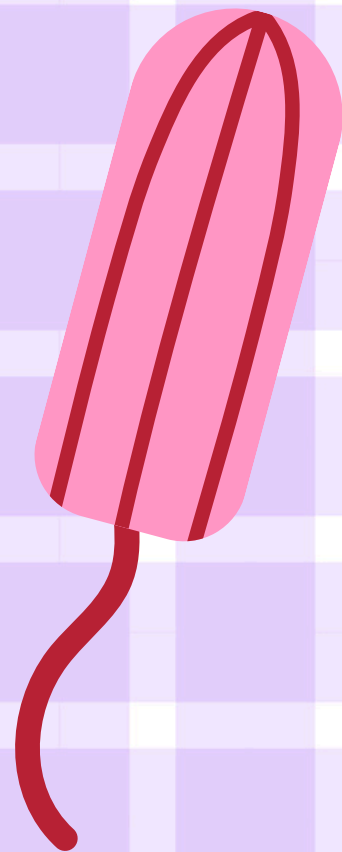
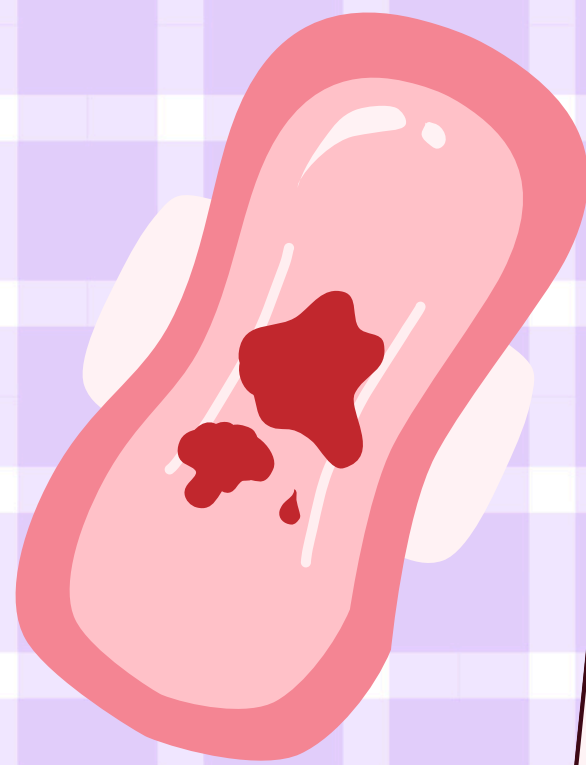
It usually occurs around the age of 50 but can happen earlier or later depending on the person.



Period

There are lots of different ways to help you feel comfortable on your period and make the blood loss more manageable. These include pads, tampons, menstrual cups and more.

You may want to try a few ways before you find your preference.





Hormones

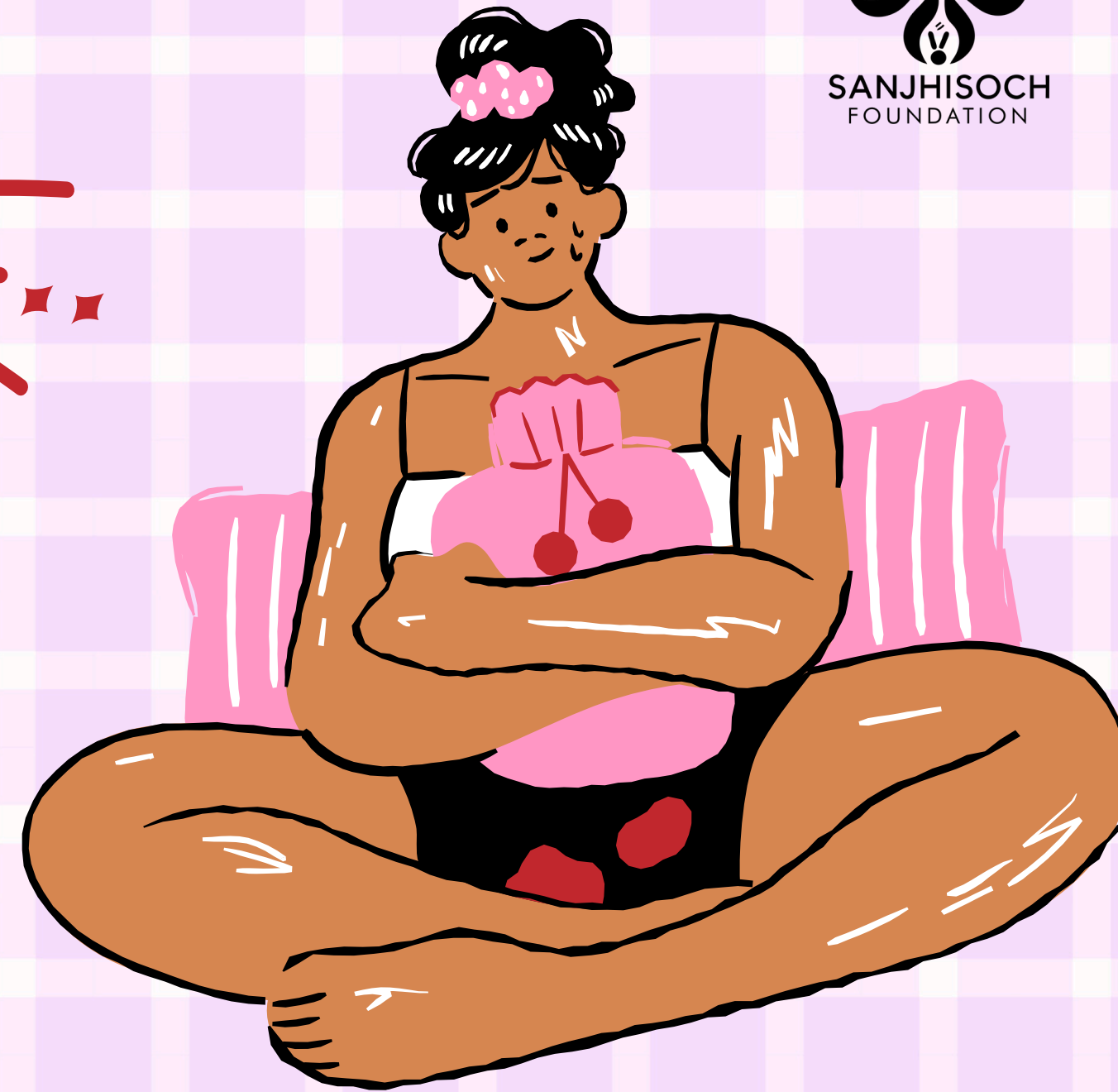
The menstrual cycle is controlled by hormones such as oestrogen and progesterone. These are chemical messengers which are produced in glands and control the cycle.

Changes in hormone levels can also contribute to some menstrual symptoms such as mood changes and spots.



Top Tips

- Remember that we are all different, so periods and menstrual cycles can really vary
- If you are struggling with your periods or feel something is wrong, there is always help and you can ask for some medical advice



The Menstrual Cycle

