

Bright Families

How to Talk with your Daughter about her Cycle



Hello, Mom!

Congratulations on your growing daughter. Watching her change through puberty can bring up a lot of concerns, memories, and feelings from your own adolescence.

Even if you had a smooth transition, your daughter could feel shy and awkward talking about it.

How do you tell her what she needs to know?

What can you say that's true and helpful, that still acknowledges her challenges?

What should you share from your experience?

Is there any way to make it fun and sweet?

Take a few minutes to get comfortable. It's gonna be fine. Use this as a tool to brainstorm and prepare.

This guide covers reflection on your experience, key talking points with sample phrases to use, and questions you might be answering, such as:

- The purpose of a period
- Why being irregular is ok
- Energy and mood changes
- Managing Cramps
- Food and Hydration
- The Role of Exercise
- Respect and Care for the Body



Reflect and Prepare

Recognizing my own history and seeing the truth. We often carry shame and awkwardness into these conversations.

As you think about having these conversations with your daughter, you probably have memories of conversations you had when you were a teen. What comes up for you?

What did I know before getting my period? Do I wish I had known more? less?

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What factors made the experience better or worse?

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What can I share with my daughter IF she is curious about my experience?

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General Body Care

How do you currently care for your own body? How are your daughter's general care and respect for her body? What specifically do you think she needs to do?

How can you model and support her to build the habits she needs?

Morning - skin care, hydration, movement, journaling, prayer, food

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Mid-day - hydration, lunch, mental boost, time to recharge

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Afternoon - reading, exercise, sports, chores, hobbies, snack

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Evening - Tidy up, prepare for tomorrow, relax, reflect, sleep

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Conversations about Body Care

Sample phrases you can use and adapt to help your daughter care for her body through her changing hormones and energy levels.

Think about her love language and whether affection, time, acts of service, affirming words, or gifts are good ways to reach out.

"How are you feeling?"

"Can I make you some tea?"

"Can I make you a smoothie?"

"I'm going for a walk, want to come?"

"Let's pick out some hair stuff at the store."

"I really appreciate your help with this."

"Nice outfit!"

"You're really good at...."

"Here's a snack tray"

"You make me laugh"

"Would you like to take a long shower?"

"You seem tired, how about you take a break and read?"

"It's been a long day, let's wind down early"

"What would you like me to get at the grocery store?"

"You're growing; let's go shopping for a few things"

"What foods help you feel your best?"

"It's normal to need extra rest when you're growing fast"

"Why do Women Have periods?"

Your daughter may have asked you as a child when she saw pads in the bathroom or blood in the toilet. At this point, you may have told her you would explain when she's older, or simply "it's a mom thing". That's a good start!

An older teen wants more explanation. Here are a few talking points for you to know. If you're preparing for a conversation, make sure you are fed, hydrated, and calm.

When you're talking with your daughter, **slow down and make pauses for her to digest and think of her next question, if she has one.** Some girls like to hear a lot at once, but most prefer a bit or two of information at a time. You know the big picture and can address each question as it comes up.

"The blood that comes out is the lining that was made to allow an egg to grow IF you were going to have a baby, which you're not because you're not married." (If you haven't had The Talk yet, you can just say that her body needs to start the process now even though she won't be married for a while.)

"The hormones that start and run your cycle are also allowing you to **grow to your full height, build strong bones, put on muscle, develop physically to look like a woman, thicken your hair, strengthen your immune system, and mature your brain to make bigger decisions as an adult.**"

She may say "It's gross!" "I don't want to deal with this!" or "Why?"

And you can say "Yes, it seems a little gross at first. I remember feeling that way.

Fortunately, it's only a few days a month and you'll get the hang of it."

Or "It's ok to feel not ready. It's ok to feel nervous. You'll figure it out and I'm here to help."

And "This is the way women are designed to grow and mature into adults."

Some kids don't want to grow up, and some can't wait. Some think they want to grow up until it starts to happen. There's a wide range of normal experiences and it's a confusing time with new thoughts and feelings. It's not a reflection of your parenting, it's her own experience that you are supporting her through as a loving mother.

More Questions about Periods

"I thought periods came every month, but mine isn't. Is that ok?"

"Yes, it's totally fine. In the first year or two that you have your period, your body is still getting the hang of it, so we'll carry supplies in the car, and you might want to carry a pad in your purse for when you're out. You can always use toilet paper if you need to!"

"Should I track my period?"

"Sure, if you want. It can be helpful to see if there's a pattern, and if it's regular you can prepare with the right stuff for trips, etc,... Most women track their periods. But you don't have to, it's up to you." (You might share how you track your period, and explain how day 1 is the first day of bleeding.)

"How much blood am I losing? How much is too much?"

"The average period is only a few tablespoons of real blood, but along with other fluids which makes it look like more. Some girls do have very heavy periods; for instance, they soak a pad every hour for a whole day or more. It can happen in your early cycles because you might make an extra-thick lining during some months. If your bleeding is heavy, we'll make sure you have extra supplements and nutritious food, and we can look at other things to make them less heavy over time."

"Why do I see mucus sometimes? Is it ok?"

"Yes, that's totally normal. It's a healthy way that your body keeps bacteria out and it shows that your body is making hormones just as it should. You can wear a pantiliner if you want, or change your underwear during the day."

"Sometimes I get cramps when I'm not bleeding. What's happening?"

"Girls can get cramps when they ovulate, which is when the egg comes out of the ovary and starts to go down the tube into your uterus. Sometimes you can cramp a day or two before your period also. Let me know when it happens and we'll help you get more comfortable."

Managing Cramps

Cramps happen because of inflammation and hormone excess, which can be handled with a nutritious diet, exercise, fiber, hydration, and other simple choices. If those don't resolve cramps, there are further options like removing dairy and adding food herbs like turmeric and ginger.

Immediate Relief

- Stretching and walking
- Heating pad, hot tea or coffee
- Rest and read
- Deep breathing
- KT tape and massage

Stress Management

- Write down good events
- Listen to favorite music
- Connect with a friend
- Laugh at something
- Play with babies and pets

Your daughter may ask "Will it hurt?" or mention that her friends get cramps.

Perhaps she's getting cramps each month and fearing her period. You can tell her "Some people get cramps and others don't; there are lots of options, and I will help you figure it out step by step." You could use this list yourself or look at it together to strategize the next steps. Choose what is most doable or what you sense will be most impactful.

Long-term Strategies

- Exercise 7-10 days before periods
- Eat more vegetables and fruit
- Drink more water, tea, and broth
- Limit or remove dairy foods
- Sleep longer each night
- Plan to rest during periods
- Adjust school and schedule
- Add food herbs like ginger, turmeric, dill, garlic, cayenne
- Supplement with a multivitamin
- Lower sugar consumption

notes

A series of 20 horizontal dotted lines for writing notes.