



Preparing Her

FOR HER FIRST CYCLE

What to watch for, and how to walk with her through it — a guide for parents

Her body starts getting ready months before her first period ever arrives — new growth, new secretions, new moods. This is your window to prepare quietly, together, so Day 1 finds you both ready instead of caught off guard.

P.S. — her body isn't the only thing changing. You're stepping into a new season with her, too.

SIGNS SHE'S GETTING CLOSE

- Breast budding — usually the first visible sign. Her first period often follows about two to two and a half years later.
- A growth spurt, often the fastest of her life so far.
- Pubic and underarm hair.
- Secretions in her underwear, typically 6–12 months before her first period.
- Mood swings and new self-consciousness — hormones are active well before bleeding starts.

HOW TO HELP AT HOME

- Keep pads visible and normal in the bathroom, not hidden away — familiarity now means no scramble later.
- Talk about it in small, ordinary moments, not one big “talk.” Car rides and folding laundry work better than a sit-down.
- Let her hear you speak about your own body plainly and without shame — she's watching how you talk about it more than what you say.
- Name it as good. Her body is doing exactly what it was made to do.

BEFORE DAY 1

- Put together a small kit for her backpack together: a pad, spare underwear, wipes.
- Show her how to use a pad before she needs one — practice removes panic.
- Talk through her plan for school: who she'd go to, where the nurse's office is.
- Decide together how you'll mark the day when it comes — even something small.

WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR

- No breast development by age 13, or no period by age 15 (or three years after breast budding starts).
- Periods that are extremely heavy, painful enough to miss school, or still irregular months after starting.
- Any of this is worth a conversation with her pediatrician or OB/GYN — not something to wait out alone.