

# MENSTRUAL CYCLE

## MANAGING SYMPTOMS

### Period pain

- Take a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory, like ibuprofen
- Warm baths or apply heat to your abdomen
- Low intensity (aerobic) exercise, yoga
- Consider magnesium, zinc, calcium and vitamin D – all have been shown to help period pain when taken consistently
- Try to notice if your diet makes pain worse and cut down / out problem items (e.g. alcohol, caffeine, processed food)

### Heavy periods

- Ibuprofen can reduce menstrual flow by up to 50%
- Omega-3 and turmeric may help
- Try avoiding cow's dairy
- Hormonal contraceptives can lighten or eliminate bleeding
- GP can test iron levels if symptoms suggest low iron

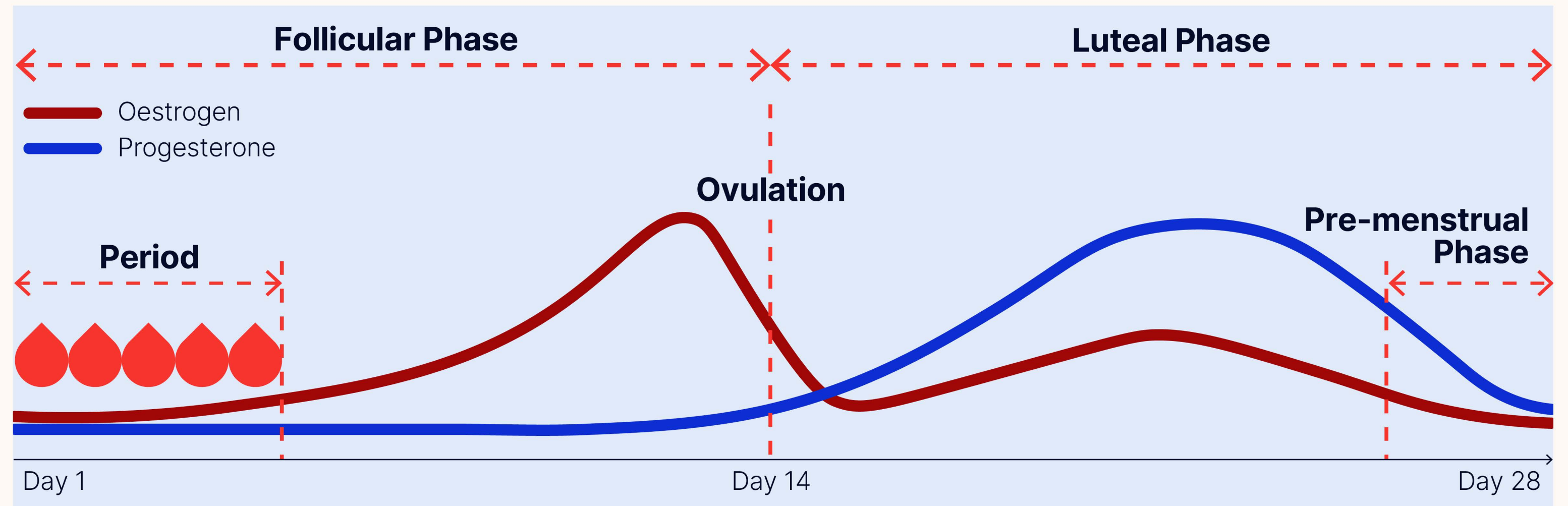
### Headaches

- Hydrate
- Avoid excessive caffeine
- Regular meals and snacks to stabilise blood sugar levels

### Bloating

- Eat little & often, avoid large meals, chew food well
- Eat one portion of fruit at a time, avoid fruit juices / smoothies
- Reduce salty and processed foods
- Stay hydrated
- Low intensity exercise (e.g. yoga)

Every female experiences her cycle differently. Although the chart on this graphic shows the typical hormone pattern, the timing, peaks, troughs and levels that hormones can reach may be markedly different from one woman to another.



## LATE FOLLICULAR PHASE

### Oestrogen is awesome

- Increased confidence
- More energy
- Greater motivation to train
- Quicker / more efficient recovery
- Improved muscle adaptation
- Extra capacity for high intensity exercise
- Better visual / spatial awareness
- Resistant to illness
- More willingness to take on feedback
- More inclined to take risks

## MID-LUTEAL PHASE

### Hormones in flight

- Altered appetite and food cravings
- Better sleep
- Digestion slows
- Water retention
- Calmness
- Reduced anxiety
- Less pain
- Impaired coordination / clumsiness
- Less appetite for risk
- Increased body temperature
- Harder to build muscle

## PRE-MENSTRUAL PHASE

### (often) The challenging bit

- Pre-menstrual symptoms (headaches, fatigue, reduced motivation to train)
- Stress, lack of sleep and what we eat can make symptoms more severe
- Breast swelling / pain
- More susceptible to illness
- Emotionally fragile

### PMS solutions include

- Low intensity exercise (e.g. yoga)
- Magnesium, zinc, calcium, vitamin D
- Avoid dietary triggers
- Allow more recovery time