

Menstrual Cycle - FAQ

1. What does menstrual cycle tracking mean?

Tracking your cycle starts with noting when your period starts and finishes and any symptoms you may experience. Everyone has a different experience of the menstrual cycle, and tracking yours is the first step towards working with and understanding your cycle. Read more [here](#). Things that are helpful to track:

- Day one of your period (day one of your menstrual cycle)
- Length of period (number of days bleeding)
- Flow details (light, medium, heavy)
- Symptoms across your cycle
- How you feel

2. Does my cycle impact my performance?

Yes and no. Girls and women have the same physical ability to perform to their best on any given day of the menstrual cycle. However, your experience of symptoms (especially challenging ones) can affect your ability to train and perform. In good news, symptoms are things that we can work on and manage!

3. Things that can help with symptoms:

These strategies work best when you can plan ahead (tracking can help with this). If you want to read more check out this [infographic](#).

- Heat: warm baths, heat pack or hot water bottle
- Low intensity aerobic exercise, yoga
- Consider magnesium, zinc, calcium and vitamin D
- Try to notice if your diet makes pain worse and cut down/out problem items (e.g caffeine, processed foods)
- Talk with your GP about medication that can help, like ibuprofen





4. Can I train on my period the same as any other time?

Yes you can! You may have noticed that there can sometimes be a reluctance for some players to train on their period, however, as we mentioned earlier, you can perform to your best on any given day of the menstrual cycle, especially if you feel comfortable managing your cycle. Here are some suggestions that might help you:

- Have a caught short kit in your training bag (with pads, tampons, period pants, menstrual cups, snacks, change of bottoms, pain relief etc) so you always have the products you need.
- Track your cycle and know what symptoms to expect.
- If your symptoms are not mild and manageable, it's a good idea to make an appointment with your GP.

5. Are there any signs or symptoms I should talk to my GP about?

Yes! If you are ever worried about anything related to your menstrual cycle it's important to get support with them as soon as possible. Important things to look out for are:

- Irregular menstrual cycles (shorter, longer, lighter, gone)
- Heavy periods
- Recurrent infection or illness
- Feeling colder
- Weight loss
- Anxiety around food and training
- Tiredness
- Injury
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Lowered performance
- Low mood
- Anxiety / Depression



6. Is this information relevant to me if I'm on hormonal contraception? Do I still need to track?

If you are using hormonal contraception you are no longer having a natural cycle. Even if you have a monthly bleed, it is not considered a period, but in fact called a 'withdrawal bleed', which happens as a consequence of the pattern and formulation of The Pill. However, even if you're not having a period because you're using hormonal contraceptives, it's a good idea to track your mood, energy levels, motivation to train, performance, and anything else that is meaningful to you. Just like tracking your menstrual cycle, tracking these insights will help you to get the most from your training. It can also alert you to any symptoms that start as a result of you starting or changing hormonal contraception - in which case you'll be able to decide if you've found what's right for you and will also give you lots of information to share with your doctor if you haven't. Read more about [hormonal contraception](#).

** If you are unsure of any of the information above make sure to check out the menstrual cycle resources [here](#).*

