

## Information for parents of girls

As caring parents you know that the changes that your daughter is going through are part of her journey towards womanhood. Whilst you see her as a child, her body is making changes inside her body and out. Everyone goes through these changes at different ages and at different rates. The average age is about 13, but some girls can begin puberty as young as 8 or as old as 16 and this is quite normal.



The start of puberty is usually noticed when your daughter suddenly begins to grow taller. The arms and legs grow quicker than her body, so she will seem to be a bit more awkward or clumsy than before. This growth spurt is a sign that her periods will start in about 6 months to a year's time.

Her breasts will also gradually start to develop. First they grow as small bumps, called breast buds, and then continue to develop gradually over the next 2 to 3 years. It is normal for one breast to grow quicker than the other, so your daughter may need to be reassured that this is normal. You may want to start to look at training bras for your daughter, especially if she plays lots of sport. It is important to make sure that she gets a correct fitting bra for both comfort and self-confidence. When your daughter's period begins, it is very important to show your daughter **how to check her breasts each month**. This is good practice for life so that she learns what is normal for her.

6 months after her growth spurt beginning, she will start to go through a stage where she cannot get enough to eat and will start to put on weight, which is normal. 50% of ideal adult body weight is gained in puberty. In girls, the proportion of body weight in fat increases from about 16% to almost 27%. This gain in body fat will make her appear curvier around her hips. This is also a time when she will need to make sure that she gets plenty of calcium for her developing bones and muscles.

During puberty, special hormones from the brain cause the **ovaries** to release an egg, which is called an **ovum**. The ovaries then produce other special hormones called oestrogen and progesterone that cause the eggs in the ovaries to develop so that they are ready to be released.

Each month, one egg leaves one of the ovaries travelling down one of the **fallopian tubes** on its way to the **uterus**. Meanwhile, the uterus, also called the womb, starts to get prepared for the egg by building up a thicker lining of special tissue that is called the **endometrium**. If the egg arrives at the uterus as a **fertilised egg**, one that has been met by **sperm** from the male, it attaches itself to this cushion-like wall, and goes on to use the extra blood and tissue to nourish itself as it slowly develops over 9 months into a baby.

Usually, the egg just passes right through without being fertilised and just dissolves. Since the uterus no longer needs the thicker lining, it sheds this extra blood and tissue through the **vagina**. This loss of tissue is called menstruation or the **period**. This cycle will happen nearly every month until the ovaries stop releasing eggs, usually between the ages of 45 and 55.

The **menstrual cycle** is actually a very special and very complicated process that happens because many parts of the body are working together. The brain, ovaries and other hormone producing glands in the body, all have to work together properly to make this cycle of producing an egg, making the uterus ready for it, and then shedding the special lining work. Not to mention the extra-complicated work that happens if the egg does get fertilised and develops into a baby. Females are truly amazing!

Why not make a visit to the **Natracare Matrix** featured on the Natracare website. Here you and your daughter can go through the many changes that happen in the body during the 28 plus days of the menstrual cycle. It is very important to make sure that your daughter learns how to examine her breasts. Each month, after her period ends, she should check her breasts carefully for any unusual changes.

**It is important to make the correct choice of products for each period and Natracare has developed a natural range to meet these needs.**

### **What's so special about Natracare?**

- Certified organic 100% cotton tampons
- Pads and panty liners made from natural materials
- Non-chlorine bleached
- Biodegradable

Women simply want to use a product that is natural, and Natracare feminine care gives them that choice. Choosing natural means that you are avoiding potential contact with pesticides, herbicides, and dioxin residuals, deodorizes azo dyes, plastics and synthetics.

Natracare tampons and feminine wipes are certified organic 100% cotton, and just like our sanitary pads and panty liners, are made from only natural materials that are totally chlorine-free and have no additives, perfumes or plastics.

### **Why so many women choose Natracare**

Because Natracare tampons and pads are chlorine free, made from organic cotton and natural materials and above all, women want to restrict their contact with synthetic materials, unnecessary chemicals and additives... Natracare is the natural choice for all thinking women because they are:

#### **Chlorine Free**

Dioxin pollution is a serious environmental problem that pollutes our air, water, soil, and plants and is stored in our fat cells forever. It is caused through various natural and industrial processes including pesticide spraying and chlorine bleaching of materials used to produce, amongst other things, paper products such as tissues, sanitary pads and tampons. That's why we make sure that Natracare products are totally chlorine free (TCF).

#### **Made from Organic Cotton**

Pesticide use is widespread in the world and is harmful to humans and the environment. Making organic choices helps reduce environmental pollution and personal exposure to dioxins. That's why we ensure that Natracare tampons and feminine wipes are made using only certified organic 100% cotton.

#### **Made from Natural Materials**

Women suffering from skin allergies, irritation, and soreness and itching may find their symptoms are worse during their period. Many gynaecologists advise such women to change to Natracare all-cotton products in order to avoid synthetics and chemicals common in hygiene products. Many have found relief after using Natracare products because Natracare tampons and feminine wipes are made from organic 100% cotton that is not chlorine bleached and are free from rayon, binders, plastics, surfactants, resins and fragrances. Natracare pads do not contain polyacrylate super absorbents or plastics which, when close to the skin, may cause irritation.

#### **Biodegradable**

Every year, over 45 billion sanitary pads are disposed of somewhere! Placed end to end, they would stretch all the way to the sun, and to bury them would take a hole 300 feet deep and 300 feet wide. Most sanitary pads and feminine wipes are loaded with synthetic materials such as plastic that does not break down in the earth for hundreds of years. So we ensure that Natracare products are between 95% and 100% biodegradable and compostable.

## The Natracare difference...

### Certified organic 100% cotton tampons

- ▶ non-chlorine bleached
- ▶ certified organic cotton
- ▶ with or without applicator.
- ▶ available in regular, super and super plus sizes

### Non-chlorine bleached

- ▶ Totally Chlorine-Free to reduce pollution and to protect you and the environment.

### Pads and panty liners made from natural materials

- ▶ natural biodegradable materials
- ▶ non-chlorine bleached
- ▶ normal or ultra pads in a range of absorbencies with or without wings.
- ▶ panty liners available in breathable, curved and tanga styles.

### Certified organic 100% cotton feminine wipes

- ▶ certified organic cotton
- ▶ with organic essential oils
- ▶ paraben free
- ▶ no harsh chemicals

### Up to 100% Biodegradable

- ▶ pads, tampons and feminine wipes are between 95% and 100% biodegradable and compostable.



Menstrual Calendar - the monthly matrix							KS3
<b>Day 1</b> The lining of the uterus breaks down and passes through the cervix and vagina. The bleed is light at first	<b>Day 2</b> The bleed is getting heavier and the cramps can be worse	<b>Day 3</b> The bleed is getting heavy but the cramps are easing	<b>Day 4</b> The bleed is not so heavy now	<b>Day 5</b> The bleed is reducing now as the top and middle layers of the endometrium are almost shed	<b>Day 6</b> Most girls stop bleeding now, but some may continue for a few more days	<b>Day 7</b>	
<b>Day 8</b> Today is the best day to examine your breasts	<b>Day 9</b>	<b>Day 10</b> Cervical mucus is being produced and is perfectly normal. It is stretchy, clear material you get 3-9 days before ovulation	<b>Day 11</b> The Follicle (egg) is developing	<b>Day 12</b> The feel-good, baby making oestrogens and peaking, sex-driving testosterone hormones are high	<b>Day 13</b> The endometrium is thickening getting ready for a fertilised egg	<b>Day 14</b> The mature follicle ruptures due to high levels of LH and causes the mature egg to be released into fallopian tube	
<b>Day 15</b> Mature egg continues its journey down the fallopian tube on its way to the uterus (Womb)	<b>Day 16</b> Your uterus is using the progesterone to lay down a rich lining called the endometrium that is needed to support an embryo	<b>Day 17</b>	<b>Day 18</b> Oestrogen and progesterone rise and your fat metabolism increases so all extra food eaten this week will be burnt off very quickly	<b>Day 19</b> You have lots of energy and you eat more than usual	<b>Day 20</b> Lots of energy and feeling good	<b>Day 21</b> If you are taking part in sport, you are at your very best	
<b>Day 22</b> Oestrogen and Progesterone have peaked and is dropping rapidly. You will feel grumpy and moody	<b>Day 23</b> The falling hormones will really mess with your head. This is common in over 95% of women	<b>Day 24</b> Eat sensibly and relax	<b>Day 25</b> The falling levels of oestrogen and progesterone this week triggers the release of Prostaglandins	<b>Day 26</b> Progesterone causes the sebaceous (oil) glands to overwork making skin and hair greasy	<b>Day 27</b>	<b>Day 28</b> Bad Hair day! Hormones cause this and things will improve	
<b>Day 29</b> <sup>1</sup> Your follicles are swelling and grow inside an ovary for your next ovulation. First day of your next period	<b>Day 30</b> <sup>2</sup> FSH is rising and will do so until day 14. LH present in small amounts in your blood stream. Feeling tired.	<b>Day 31</b> <sup>3</sup> Oestrogen is still very low but FSH is rising. You feel tired and yukky!	<b>Day 4</b> The bleed is not so heavy now. FSH and LH increasing	<b>Day 5</b> The follicles swell which allows oestrogen to increase again	<b>Day 6</b> Bleeding has almost stopped. Use a panty liner to protect your underwear	<b>Day 7</b> FSH Falls Follicle risen to the surface of an ovary making oestrogen make the endometrium grow again	