
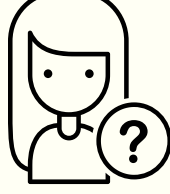


# Menstrual Cycle

## Top Tips for Parents of athletes

Enabling female athletes to have the confidence & comfort talking about their menstrual cycle when they need to

	<b>01</b>	<b>Considerations for adolescent female athletes</b>	
	Girls may need support navigating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being an athlete</li> <li>• Managing their periods</li> <li>• Puberty</li> <li>• School work</li> <li>• Friendships</li> </ul> Below are some tips for supporting girls with their periods whilst being an athlete		

**True**



**False**



VS

### Health

Hormones affect sleep, mental health, weight, bone density & heart health

Diet, age, exercise, sleep, stress & travel can affect regularity of periods

The average age to start periods is 10-16yrs old

You should seek medical advice if periods have not started by age 15-16

Absence of periods during adolescence in particular, can have long term implications for bone development & health

It's expected to not have a period due to high volume of training

It's normal to use double menstrual products & change hourly due to heavy bleeding

It's normal to miss 3+ months of periods due to training

Periods will be regular as soon as you start your first period

It's normal to experience severe cramps which aren't relieved by over the counter pain killers

### Training

It's OK to wear your regular training kit during your period such as shorts & leotards

Coaches find it helpful if they know when girls have started their period - talk to coaches

There is no minimum age to start using tampons, it's down to individual preference

It's helpful to let coaches know symptoms such as stomach cramps, tiredness or bad moods associated with periods

There are strategies to manage symptoms of periods

Periods should be a secret and not talked about

Periods are not going to impact training or performance

Periods are an excuse to miss training

You cannot train whilst on your period

**02**

## Support & communication

- Encourage girls to be aware & make their own decisions
- Do not assume daughters will experience the same symptoms as mothers
- Support the coach and information the coaches provide in relation to training & competition
- Talk & listen if periods are having an impact - Avoid language such as 'stop acting like a baby', 'were you even trying today' -

Inform coaches when periods first start

Talk openly about symptoms & impact on training with the coach. Encourage open conversations, its not a secret!

Look for solutions to prevent periods stopping training & performing



**03**

## Relative Energy Deficiency in Sport - RED-S

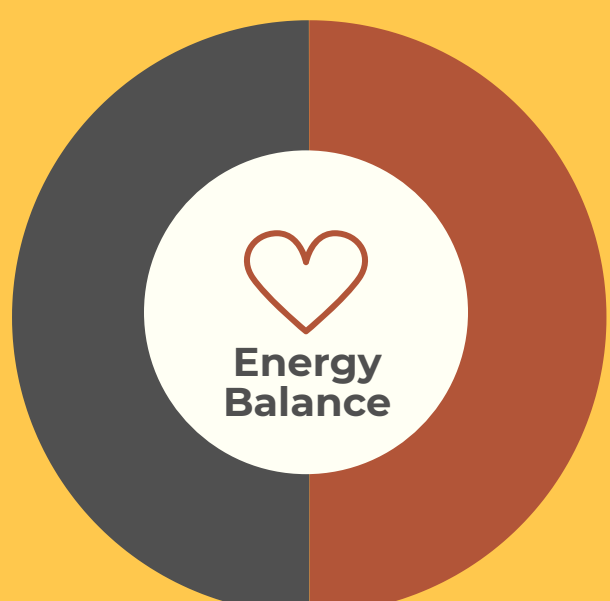
Low energy availability - nutritional intake is insufficient to cover the energy demands of both exercise training & bodily processes or excessive training load reducing energy available to support life.

**'Having a menstrual cycle is like having an extra vital sign - like your pulse or body temperature'**

An imbalance between energy intake & energy expenditure can cause periods to stop

In the initial phase of energy deficiency you may see a performance improvement from being lighter but this isn't sustainable & has negative long term implications

RED-S can cause:  
Impaired growth & development  
Negative impact on performance



**If periods stop seek medical advice**

Useful resources:

<http://health4performance.co.uk>    <https://www.heygirls.co.uk/pads-for-dads/>

Dr Natalie Brown  
Natalie.brown@sport.wales

sport.wales  
chwaraeon ymwr

WELSH INSTITUTE  
OF PERFORMANCE SCIENCE  
SEFYDLIAD GWYBODAETHU  
PERFFORMIO CYMRU