TIPS TO BE READY FOR YOUR PERIOD

Sometimes you can start your period when you're not expecting to, so it's always a good idea to plan ahead. You could try to:

* keep sanitary products in a bag, drawer or locker
* have a plan in case you do start your period - like a change of underwear and sanitary pads or tampons
* if you're at school or on a trip tell the teachers so they know you might need to go to the toilet to change
* ask an adult like your parent, carer or school nurse about things to help with any pain or discomfort, like a hot water bottles, microwave wheat bag or pain relief tablets
* gentle exercise can help relieve pain and bloating - try yoga, stretching or walking
* keep a diary, calendar or notes to keep track of what’s normal for you so you can notice any changes as periods can be irregular when they first start.

PERIOD PAIN AND MOOD CHANGES

Throughout your period you have different levels of hormones in your body. It's natural to have some side effects from this.

Premenstrual tension (or PMT, Premenstrual Syndrome or PMS) is the name for the feeling you might get a few days before a period. Most women and girls get PMT and the symptoms can be mild or severe.

Common symptoms of PMT:

* mood swings and getting easily annoyed
* crying or feeling sad all of a sudden
* not being able to concentrate
* feeling really tired
* your breasts feeling softer than normal
* your stomach feeling really full or bloated
* cramping in the stomach area
* temporary weight gain
* headaches.