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# EVERY DAY.



SVENSKA  
SPEL



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PARTNER

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**COURSE ABOUT  
MENSTRUATION**

OLDER PLAYERS

# FOR COURSE EDUCATORS

**Through the Every Day course we want to raise the issue of menstruation in football in order to increase knowledge among coaches, educators and players and make it easier to talk about the topic. The course helps ensure that girls, women and female coaches are better placed to play and continue with football. Every Day is an initiative from the Swedish Football Association in cooperation with UEFA.**






## **RUNNING THE COURSE**

This tutorial should aid the educator in managing the course's content and timings in an efficient and educational manner.

The content is presented via a slideshow which deals with the various sections. Each section opens with an introductory slide which is then followed by graphics that give participants some input. The slideshow provides information and material for group discussion and reflection. It is important that you as an educator explain the slides as clearly and simply as possible. Aim to give plenty of time for discussion and reflection.

Each participant should feel that they have benefitted from the training. As an educator, you are responsible for making sure everyone's voice is heard. Aim to create a friendly atmosphere that will make everyone feel comfortable to talk about the topic.

## **THE COURSE CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS:**

-  Insights
-  Facts
-  The menstrual cycle
-  Missed periods
-  Training and the menstrual cycle

As an educator, you need to be very familiar with the material and have read the tutorial. Use the tutorial and comments found in the slideshow. We recommend you carry out the course in a space that makes it possible for the participants to sit in small groups. It is possible and potentially beneficial to divide the course into different sessions and carry out discussion and reflection in a different location. Feel free to share the material with coaching colleagues and players after completing the course.

The recommended age for this course is 15 years and older.








*Good luck in your role of educator!*

# PLANNING SUGGESTIONS

Below you will find timing suggestions for the course.

Regarding course timings: Note that the times specified for each section are approximate. Be prepared to spend more time on questions which feel important, if there are a lot of questions and good discussions.

## TIMINGS:

 Introduction	5 min
 Insights	10 min
 Facts	20 min
 The menstrual cycle	20 min
 Missed periods	5 min
 Training and the menstrual cycle	5 min
 Summary and feedback	15 min

# TUTORIAL

## 1. INTRODUCTION (CA. 5 MIN)

### Slide 1. Every Day

Welcome the participants, present yourself and tell them they are going to complete a course about menstruation.

### Slide 2. Today's plan

Present the course schedule.

### Slide 3. Introduction

Introductory slide "Introduction".

### Slide 4. Objectives and purpose of the course

Read the points out loud and explain the objectives and purpose of the course. Explain the meaning of the points as necessary.

- ◆ Break taboos and get more people talking about the menstrual cycle
- ◆ Inform where to get support
- ◆ It should be normal to talk to coaches and teammates about periods
- ◆ Get more people to keep playing football

### Slide 5. We need to be better at...

Read the points out loud and answer any questions.

- ◆ Talking about the menstrual cycle in an open and normalised way
- ◆ Increasing awareness through education
- ◆ Understanding that different people may have different symptoms
- ◆ Understanding and putting our needs into words
- ◆ Talk to an adult you feel safe with
- ◆ Detecting irregularities in the menstrual cycle

Seek help at the youth clinic, gynaecologist, school nurse, health center if menstruation prevents you from training and matches.

## 2. INSIGHT (CA. 10 MIN)

### Slide 6. Insights

Introductory slide "Insights".

### Slide 7. Quote

Read the quote from the slide out loud and make sure everyone understands the fact that many players feel this way. We want to change this feeling and ensure more people feel able to talk openly about periods. Half of the population menstruates at some point in their lives.

*Quote: "I'm not feeling my best today, but I don't want to say anything..."*

If players feel that they have problems that limit them, it is important to get help. Help is available via the youth clinic, gynecologist/midwife.

### Slide 8. What does reality look like?

Discuss what reality looks like:

- ◆ We know too little about how the menstrual cycle affect the body, and there's too little research on the impact of menstruation on football
- ◆ We know too little about how players deal with the combination of the menstrual cycle and football
- ◆ We need to reach out to players in order to best understand how we provide support and help
- ◆ All people must be given the same opportunity to play football every day, nobody should be restricted based on their menstruation

### Slide 9. Discuss and reflect

Conversations in small groups (in threes): let participants discuss the questions and share experiences with each other.

- ◆ Do you know anyone you can speak openly with about your period?
- ◆ Can you talk openly about your period in your team?

### 3. FACTS (CA. 20 MIN)

#### Slide 10. Facts

Introductory slide “Facts”.

#### Slide 11. Survey

In 2021, a survey was carried out by the Swedish Football Association, which wanted to find out in what ways periods affected female players. 462 players and 200 coaches answered the questionnaire.

- ◆ 50% of the female players who responded feel that their period/menstrual pain affects their football training
- ◆ 50% of the female players who responded feel talking about periods is a taboo
- ◆ 21% of female players who responded have not played football due to their period

On the Swedish Football Association's website, you see the survey in full:

[We break taboos and broaden knowledge of periods! Organisation and Community \(svenskfotball.se\)](https://www.svenskfotball.se)

#### Slide 12. Discuss and reflect

Conversations in small groups (in threes): let participants discuss the questions and share experiences with each other.

- ◆ In what way do you think periods are taboo?
- ◆ Why do you think players have stated that their periods have affected their football training?

#### Slide 13. Symptoms

This study involved active women documenting various symptoms of their periods. This slide helps us understand how different women can experience their period. Understanding their symptoms gives players an explanation of why they feel the way they do.

- ◆ 90 % experience symptoms/discomfort during their cycle
- ◆ 87 % experience fatigue
- ◆ 83 % find that they get sore breasts
- ◆ 75 % experience mood swings/anxiety
- ◆ 70 % experience migraines
- ◆ 65 % experience increased cravings/hunger
- ◆ 57 % experience diarrhoea
- ◆ 35 % experience nausea

#### Slide 14. The survey in full

Supplementary slide for 13:

The same survey from the previous slide with all the symptoms listed in the survey. Every symptom can affect performance ability. The symptoms higher up in the table are ones which may require you to seek care.

This study involved active women documenting various symptoms of their menstrual cycle. This slide helps us understand how different women can experience their menstrual cycle. Understanding their symptoms gives players an explanation for why they feel the way they do.

#### **Slide 15. Discuss and reflect**

Conversations in small groups (in threes): let participants discuss the questions and share experiences with each other.

- ◆ Have you experienced any symptoms associated with your period?
- ◆ Have you ever skipped training/a match/a sports lesson due to your menstrual symptoms?

We hope that by talking about their symptoms and reflecting on what makes them worse and what makes them better will make players able to ask for and receive help as needed.

## **4. THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE (CA. 20 MIN)**

#### **Slide 16. The menstrual cycle**

Introductory slide “The menstrual cycle”.

#### **Slide 17. Why do we get our period?**

Explain why we get our period:

1. Roughly once a month, an egg leaves the ovaries and is picked up by one of the fallopian tubes
2. The egg travels towards the uterus via the fallopian tube. While the egg is in the fallopian tube, it can be fertilised
3. At the same time as the egg is beginning to mature, mucous membrane builds up on the walls of the uterus. This is needed for the egg to attach to the uterus, if it is fertilised
4. An unfertilised egg does not attach to the mucous membrane of the uterus. Instead, the mucous membrane detaches and comes out through the vagina. This is your period.

#### **Slide 18. The menstrual cycle**

This is an overview of the phases of the menstrual cycle, it is controlled by hormones.

The menstrual cycle begins on the first day of bleeding. It varies how long you bleed. Some get menstrual problems, for example heavy periods and period pains. Then (during the follicular phase) an egg begins to mature. Ovulation occurs 14 days before the next period. But there is a risk/chance of getting pregnant six days into the cycle. After ovulation (during the luteal phase), some people experience PMS symptoms. The mucous membrane is being prepared for a pregnancy. If fertilization does not occur, the mucous membrane is expelled as a period and the cycle begins again.

#### **Slide 19. Menstrual bleeding**

Explain that menstrual bleeding can have many different colours and can change colour from day to day. Menstrual blood can be thin, and sometimes it can be more slimy. This is due to the fact that it is not only blood flowing out, but also the mucous membrane.

### Slide 20. PMS

- ◆ PMS stands for Premenstrual Syndrome
- ◆ PMS is common but the exact problems you experience may vary between people
- ◆ Many people get PMS, but not all
- ◆ Some people may feel extra angry, sad or tired in the days before their period
- ◆ Some may also have sore breasts or have a stomach ache
- ◆ It can be helpful to understand why and when you feel that way
- ◆ It's a good idea to write a diary about how you feel and make a note of when your period starts, to understand how you're feeling
- ◆ It's a good idea to write a diary to map out your symptoms to see possible patterns in your cycle

### Slide 21. Get to know your menstrual cycle

- ◆ As a player, before working with your menstrual cycle and working through the steps we discussed previously, you first need to get to know it
- ◆ Track and monitor your symptoms so you can see any patterns in your menstrual cycle
- ◆ Track your menstrual cycle provides a basis for discussions with your doctor or coach

### Tips for your diary:

- ◆ Mark the first day of bleeding
- ◆ Make a note of any symptoms you get and which symptoms they are
- ◆ Compare the cycles over time, make a note of any patterns you find

### Slide 22. Quote: Lotta Schelin

Quote by Lotta Schelin, former women's national team player. Read the quote out loud.

*Quote: "We elite athletes are charted using everything from heart examinations to blood tests. But not once has anyone charted my period and how it affects me."*

### Slide 23. Discuss and reflect

Conversations in small groups (in threes): let the participants discuss and share their thoughts and ideas with each other.

- ◆ Do you feel your period is an obstacle for training and playing matches?
- ◆ How can training be optimised in the best way during your menstrual cycle?
- ◆ How do we break the taboo around periods and how can we feel safe to talk about periods?

Highlight good examples from the discussions for the whole group.



## 5. MISSING PERIODS (CA. 5 MIN)

### Slide 24. Missed period

Introductory slide: Missing Periods.

### Slide 25. Has your period stopped?

It's important to realise that this can be the start of a bigger problem, especially if a player's period stops for three or more months.

Missing your period has been normalised and is not seen to be such a big deal: it's almost normal for athletes to miss their period. *This is wrong.*

### Slide 26. Missed periods - causes and risks

- ◆ An athlete might be at a healthy weight but still have an energy deficit due to intensive training
- ◆ Many female players don't realise how much they actually need to eat
- ◆ Missing a period without ongoing hormonal treatment is called amenorrhoea, it can be serious

It is important not to hide this problem. Many are hesitant to ask for help with this problem. In the case of a missing period, it is important to seek help.

### Slide 27. Missed periods - checklist

Here's a checklist for players. If a player has addressed the items on the checklist without results, it's time to speak to a doctor to see if there's another underlying problem.

A good way to pick up on a missing period is to chart your menstrual cycle by keeping a diary or using an app.

## 6. TRAINING AND THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE (CA. 5 MIN)

### Slide 28. Training and the menstrual cycle

Introductory slide "Training and the menstrual cycle".

### Slide 29. Training and your the menstrual cycle

- ◆ Research has observed a difference in ligament laxity between different phases of the cycle, but there is still no evidence that the risk of injury is greater
- ◆ The recommendation right now is regular strength training throughout the menstrual cycle to prevent injuries
- ◆ By understanding your own individual experience during the menstrual cycle you can make sure you give yourself the best support
- ◆ More research is needed

## 7. SUMMARY AND FEEDBACK (CA. 15 MIN)

### Slide 30. Summary and feedback

Introductory slide “Summary and Feedback”.

### Slide 31. Checklist - Players

This is a checklist for players with actions they can take after completing the course.

### Slide 32. Where can I get help?

This is a list for players of where to get help if they have problems with their menstrual cycle.

### Slide 33. Checklist - Club

This is a checklist for your club.

### Slide 34. Reymersholms IK

This is a good example from one club, Reymersholms IK.

### Slide 35. Summary and feedback

Discussions in small groups (in threes): let participants discuss and share their experiences with each other. Then summarise everything with the whole group.

- ♦ Have you had the opportunity to discuss what you think is important?
- ♦ Is there something you think is missing from the course?
- ♦ Have you learned anything new during the course?
- ♦ Is there anything you're going to do right after the course which you haven't done before?

#### *Recommendation:*

- ♦ Follow this up after a few months with the players in a group. Have they done anything differently and changed any of their behaviour after the course?
- ♦ The educator and players should then use the QR code to complete the evaluation of the course, it should take 1-5 minutes

### Slide 36. Thanks

Closing slide - thank the participants for their participation.