

Unlock Your Cycle: Menstrual Mastery In Minutes



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Hey, we are your co-hosts of the Beyond Infertility Summit.

Carrie Jones, ND, FABNE, MPH

Dr. Carrie.

Aumatma Simmons, ND, FABNE, MS

And Dr. Aumatma. And we have an incredible lineup of speakers for you.

Carrie Jones, ND, FABNE, MPH

In addition, Dr. Aumatma and I have created a mini crash course for you.

Aumatma Simmons, ND, FABNE, MS

So every day you can expect a mini lecture from us covering foundational content, helping you gain context and insight before deep diving into the day's interviews.

Carrie Jones, ND, FABNE, MPH

We hope that this will serve as a helpful context to get a deeper understanding through the day's interviews.

Hi, I'm your co-host, Dr. Carrie Jones, and today we are going to talk about all things menstrual cycle ovulation 101. And this is going to be quick because I really want you to understand the basics of how your menstrual cycle works. So you maybe have noticed in social media or online education that the menstrual cycle is often divided up into two parts, sometimes four parts. So let's walk through how that goes. So the main part is your period. This is in the follicular phase leading up to ovulation, still in the follicular phase. Then you ovulate, which is where you release the egg. Now that puts you in the luteal phase all the way up to when you get your period again. So let's pretend you have a 28-day cycle the first day that you get full bleeding, not the

pre-spotting but like oh my periods here bleeding that's considered day one. Then all the way up to ovulation if you ovulate is the follicular phase. This is where we have follicles on our ovaries and the follicles are what our producing hormones, particularly estrogen.

So it's producing estradiol and estriol, but estradiol E2 is our big potent one. It's what's doing all the heavy lifting. So then we get this big rise in estrogen we're supposed to, and then it starts to fall and then we get a big rise in this other hormone called luteinizing hormone or LH. That's why maybe, if you use the ovulation predictor kits or the LH strips because when that goes up, coupled with the estrogen up and down, we get release of the egg, we get ovulation. And when we kick out the egg, the cells on the follicle that have been pumping out your hormones magically turn into this new thing called corpus luteum. That's why I refer to it as the second half of the luteal phase. So cells in the beginning are making lots of estrogen and cells in the second half make lots of progesterone. They still make estrogen, of course, but progesterone is the big gun there. So now we have the corpus luteum and that's pumping out all of your progesterone and you should be making milligrams worth of progesterone. It's like climbing a super-high mountain. That's how much progesterone you should make relative to estrogen at that time.

If you are not pregnant then all the hormones start to come over the other side of the mountain and go down that triggers the onset of your next cycle. So the first stage is a follicular phase. The second stage is the luteal phase. You will commonly see it, maybe divide it up into four sections because there are some educators will take the period, like when you bleed separate from the section leading up to ovulation and then ovulation and then after ovulation. So they will break it up into those four sections to just really help people understand what are your hormones doing traditionally. Traditionally, we just call it two things. You're either in your follicular phase, which includes your period, or you're in your luteal phase, which is after ovulation. And so when you can understand this, you can understand how the hormones are shifting depending on which phase you're in. So if you're feeling like a more go-getter, more motivated, more ready to lift heavy, more ready to run further, more ready to get things done, and you're in your follicular phase. The first part makes sense, estrogen does that.

In the luteal phase that's your building phase that you're preparing phase. That's your craving more carbs phase and that's your slow-down phase because the potential is that you're pregnant. And so the body doesn't want to do anything to risk that. It's building up the inside of the uterus so that you can be nice and fluffy if implant implantation is to occur. This is why you may feel different depending on where you are in your cycle. It's also why leading up to your period, if you're not pregnant and those hormones come up and over the other side of the mountain, you may feel PMS premenstrual syndrome. It's why you might feel more irritable, which is why you may have water retention, and why your breasts are soaring tender. You know, why maybe when you get your period, it's heavier. You have cramps because those hormones were high and now you've come down the other side and the body is reacting accordingly.

So hopefully understanding this little 1 on 1 will give you an understanding of where you are in your cycle, assuming you're turning your cycle and have a pretty good idea. And then which hormone is more dominant? Estrogens are more dominant in the follicular, and progesterone is more dominant in the luteal. And then of course you get your period and we start all over again. So it's built out into these phases. So thank you so much for listening. Can't wait for you to enjoy the rest of the summit.

