

**GENDER EQUITY FOR ALL**  
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# PERIODS

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# PERIODS BY SOFIE HANSEN



## THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR PERIOD.

Anyone can have one, so here's what you need to know about them.

## PERIOD EDUCATION

Periods are a part of over 50% of the population's life, so why are they so stigmatized? By the age of twelve, a majority of menstruators will have gotten their periods. Every month for at least 2-7 days, most menstruators have their period, and yet it continues to be considered shameful by the general public—an issue which is certainly not helped by the lack of period education in schools.

Every month, the uterus prepares itself for an egg by thickening the tissues around the uterus, forming a uterine lining, but when there is no egg, the uterus sheds the tissue from the uterine wall. Every menstrual cycle is different, with some experiencing heavy amounts of pain and others not, as well as long cycles but short periods and vice versa. Many menstruators utilize tools like pads, tampons, and painkillers like Midol to deal with the pain and discharge.

## "MENSTRUATION IS A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE" - DR. NATALIE KANEM

Recently, periods have taken up a big spot in the news and government as activists fight to get rid of the tampon tax in some states. The "tampon tax" describes a situation in which menstrual products are classified as non-essential, and thus are taxed in ways that increase the prices consumers pay to purchase period products. According to a study done by the National Organization for Women, the average menstruator will spend \$20 per cycle on menstrual products. This introduces the issue of period poverty, which affects low-income menstruators who cannot afford to pay an extra \$20 per month.

Period poverty is a direct result of non-menstruators creating bills and laws that directly affect menstruators despite them having never experienced it. However, not all news regarding period-related bills is negative: some states, including Alaska, California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, and Massachusetts, have eliminated the tampon tax. Scotland has also signed a bill that makes period products free for everyone, making it the first country to do so. Since then, many countries have abolished tampon taxes and provided hope for an end to the epidemic that is period poverty. Having access to essential items like menstrual products is a basic human right.

## THE EFFECT OF PERIOD POVERTY

“I am unable to go to school when I’m on my period because I cannot access menstrual products” said one Florida student (age 16). This is many menstruators' issue when there are no available menstrual products. Missing school causes grades to drop, and students don’t get the education they deserve. Some brands like “It's August” pay the tampon tax on their products; however, a majority do not.

If you or someone you know is having difficulty accessing menstrual products, organizations like the Alliance for Period Supplies and Happy Period provide free menstrual products for low-income menstruators.