

Paused or missed periods



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Paused periods are also known as 'secondary amenorrhoea'.

Ammenorrhoea is said as 'ah-men-or-ee-ah'.

If you have not had a period for over 3 months and you know you are not pregnant, this is known as paused or missed periods.



If you are having sex you should take a pregnancy test to make sure you are not pregnant.

If you have paused or missed periods speak to your doctor.

They will talk to you about different things that might affect your periods including:



- your **medical history** - what illnesses and health conditions you have had in the past
- your family's medical history
- your physical and mental health
- any other changes in your life



Speak to your doctor if you do not have a period for more than 3 months and you have any of these symptoms:

- pelvic pain - your pelvis is the area between your hip bones



- headache



- feeling sick

- changes in your vision



- losing hair from your head



- hair on your face



- discharge from your breasts



- acne - very bad spots

Causes



It is normal to not have a period:

- before puberty
- when you are pregnant
- when you are breastfeeding
- after the menopause
- if you are using a hormonal contraception that stops you bleeding



Other reasons periods can stop include:

- if people in your family have had [premature menopause](#)
- having a health condition that affects your genes or chromosomes



Lifestyle factors can include:

- being very overweight or very underweight
- [stress](#)
- doing extreme amounts of exercise



Hormonal factors that affect your period can include:

- [polycystic ovary syndrome](#)
- [thyroid problems](#)
- [premature menopause](#)

Some medications can cause changes in the balance of your hormones including:



- medical treatments such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy
- some anti-psychotic medications
- some anti-depressants
- medication for high blood pressure
- some allergy medications

Diagnosis - how they decide what your illness is



Your doctor will start by asking you to take a pregnancy test to check you are not pregnant.

They might advise you to wait a little longer to see if your periods return or they might think you need treatment.



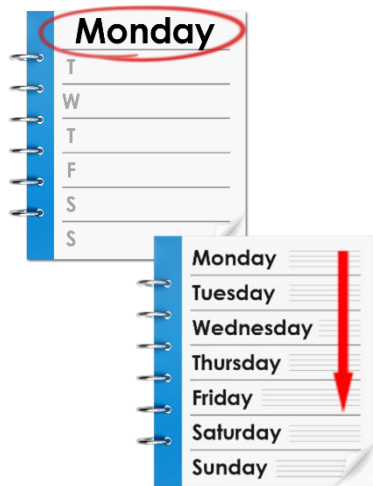
It can be helpful to keep a note of:

- the dates your periods start and end
- your **symptoms**

A **symptom** is a sign that you have an illness or health condition.

You can keep a note of this information using a calendar, a diary or an app.

If you are seeing your doctor there are some useful things to think about before your appointment like:



- the day your last period started
- how many days your period usually lasts



- what was the shortest time between your periods (from the first day of one period to the first day of the next)

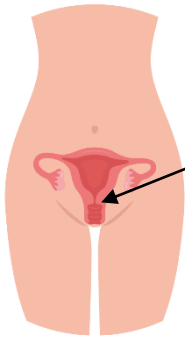
- what was the longest time between your periods (from the first day of one period to the first day of the next)



- how often you needed to change your period products on a heavy day
- if you are over 25, when you had your last **smear test**



A **smear test** checks the health of your **cervix**.



The **cervix** is the opening to your womb from your vagina.



You can then discuss this information with your doctor to help them understand what you are experiencing.

Your doctor will talk with you about health conditions and decide if you need any tests or treatment.

You can ask [questions](#).

Treatment



Your doctor will talk with you about the right treatment for you.

This might include:

- changing the way you live your life, like changes to what you eat or how much exercise you do
- taking some hormonal contraception to help your period become more regular

If your doctor thinks you might have a health condition that is affecting your periods, they may refer you to a specialist.

This specialist is usually a doctor called a gynaecologist.

This is said like this:

g-eye-na-col-o-jist.

If you do see a specialist doctor, they may carry out an internal examination to check your womb and pelvis, as well as your tummy.



As this is an intimate examination, the doctor will have another person there.

You can ask for a female doctor or a female health professional to do the examination.



They might then do some more tests, like blood tests, to rule out any other health conditions.

You can ask [questions](#).