

Game C: Menstrual Cycle Game








Purpose:

To understand the menstrual cycle and fertility during the typical woman's cycle, and clarify misconceptions about menstruation and fertility.

Materials:

 Menstrual Cycle set of cards

- Secretions cards (12 cards) – Purple 
- Period cards (5 cards) – Purple 
- Cycle days (number 1-32) – Purple 
- Sperm (card 41) – Light Blue 
- Ovum (card 42) – Light Blue 

Take Away Messages:

- The menstrual cycle is not the same thing as the period or menstruation. Menstruation is having the monthly bleeding. The cycle covers all the days between one period and the next.
- Menstruation (monthly bleeding) is a healthy sign that a woman is able to become pregnant.
- Women have fertile days and infertile days during their cycle. Women can get pregnant if they have sex during their fertile days without using a family planning method.

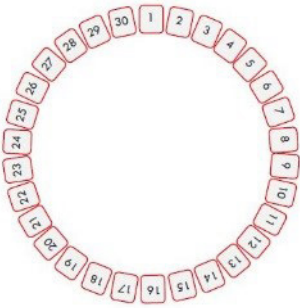
Note to Facilitators:

In this activity, you will help participants learn about the woman's menstrual cycle using a set of cards. You will explain different points as you place cards on the ground

Introduction:

We are going to play the menstrual cycle game. In this game, we will learn about when women are fertile or not during their cycle. We will also learn that a woman's monthly bleeding is normal and not unclean.

How to Play:



- **Spread** out the number cards 1-32 on the ground in a large circle and have participants stand outside of the circle.
- **Tell** the participants: “All of these cards represent the woman’s menstrual cycle and each card is a day of the cycle.”
- **Ask:** “**Tell me about menstruation or period? What do you know about the menstrual cycle?**”

- **Listen** to the participants, then **TELL:** Menstrual cycle is not the same thing as the period or menstruation. Tell them, women’s cycles usually last between 26 and 32 days. It is different for every woman and that is normal. The menstrual cycle covers all the days between two menstrual periods. It is called a cycle because it happens over and over again.



- Next, **place** the red drop cards next to the cards numbered 1-5.

Tell: “The red drops represent menstruation (or monthly bleeding).”

Ask: “**How many days do women normally bleed?**”

Tell: “Women usually have monthly bleeding for 3 – 7 days. Every woman is different and that is normal.”

- **TELL:** “Every month, a woman’s womb prepares to receive a fertilized egg if she becomes pregnant.

If her egg is not met by the man’s sperm (fertilized egg) her body gets rid of the blood from her womb.

This is menstruation and it happens to women every month, from puberty to old age.”

- Now **hold up** the card with the egg.

Tell: “Every woman’s body releases one egg into her womb each month. Although the egg only lives for 1 day, the woman can become pregnant during several days. This is possible because the man’s sperm can live for several days inside the woman and meet the egg.” Men are fertile every day since puberty and are able get woman pregnant during the fertile period if they do not use FP methods.

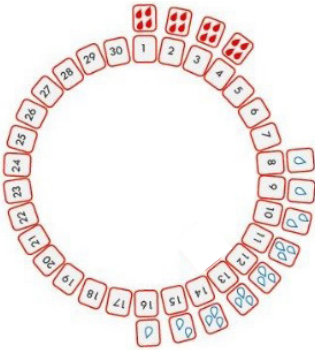
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Ask: “When do you think that the egg is released each month?”

Ask the participants standing behind the cards numbered 8 to 19 to raise their hands.

Tell: “The egg can be released around mid-cycle between this time period. It is not possible to know the exact day an egg comes out”



- **Place** a few clear drop cards by the cards 8 to 19.

Tell: “Every month, women’s bodies produce clear secretions that they can see or feel in their genitals. These cards represent secretions.”

Ask: “Have you felt or noticed in your genital area something different from your monthly bleeding? What do these secretions look like?”

Tell: “Secretions are normal and when they are healthy they do not smell, itch or cause any pain.

Healthy secretions are a sign that a woman is fertile. On days when she has secretions the chance of pregnancy is higher. If she has sex without using a family planning method she can get pregnant. Other days when there are no secretions – these days are safe or infertile days.”



- **Place** the egg card on Day 12.

Ask: “What happens if the egg meets the sperm soon after being released?”

Tell: “The answer is that if the egg and sperm meet, the egg is fertilized and it means a pregnancy.”

- **Walk** to participants standing behind cards 8-19 and say that during this time when a woman has secretions and her egg is released, she can get pregnant. Then walk to the participants standing behind cards 20-30 and say that because there is no egg in the womb during these days, the sperm will not meet an egg, therefore a woman is less likely to get pregnant.
- Using sperm cards, stand inside the circle. **Tell** participants to walk in a circle around the cards while clapping or singing. While they are circling, **put** the sperm on different card numbers. Have participants stop and ask them if pregnancy can happen on the day where you put the sperm. Use these examples:



Put the sperm on card 22. Ask again if the woman can get pregnant on this day. The answer is NO because there is no egg.

Put the sperm on day 15. Ask again if the woman can get pregnant on this day. The answer is YES because she has secretions that tell she is fertile. Also show the egg card on day 12 say that this is around the time an egg comes out.

Repeat as many times as necessary to be sure the participants understand when they are fertile during their cycle.

Discuss:

- ? What information about the menstrual cycle was new to you?
- ? Is it possible for a woman to get pregnant on any day in her cycle? On which days of her cycle is woman most likely to get pregnant?
Answer: A woman is only fertile and can get pregnant a few days in her cycle. Those days around the middle of her cycle.
- ? What can women do to avoid pregnancy?
Answer: Because it is not possible to know exactly when the egg will come out, a woman should use a family planning method to prevent pregnancy.
- ? As you go home today, is there someone with whom you can share the information we learned here? What will you tell this person?

- What is one thing you learned today that you would share with a friend or family member?
- **Please talk with your health provider if you have questions or are interested in family planning.**

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