

Menstrual Cup



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a menstrual cup?

A. This is a two inch-long cup made from soft medical grade silicone. It is inserted into the vagina and placed lower than a tampon and it is used to collect menstrual blood. It is reusable and does not cause dryness or irritation.

2. How do I know what size of the menstrual cup to use?

A. The Menstrual cup is available in two sizes: size A and size B. This is based on pelvic floor tone, and it's important to get your size right for proper usage of the menstrual cup. Pelvic floor tone differs according to; age, childbearing history and what sort of exercise you do. Below is a chart guide to the size:

Have I had children?	I am under 30 years	I am over 30 years
No	B	A
Yes, a vaginal birth	A	A
Yes, by Caesarean	B	A

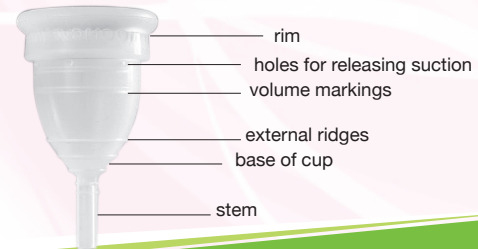
Size A

i. The size A Menstrual cup is recommended for women aged 30 and over and for all women who have given birth vaginally, regardless of age.

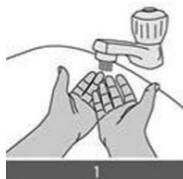
Size B

i. The size B is designed for young girls and women under the age of 30 and who have not had a vaginal birth. It may also be suitable for women over the age of 30 who have had corrective surgery to the vagina, or who are advanced in tone-maintaining activities such as yoga, or dance.

ii. If you are not sure of your size, please consult a healthcare professional.



3. How is the menstrual cup inserted?



1
Wash your hands with clean water and soap and rinse them.



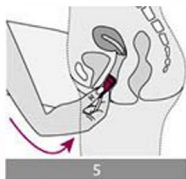
2
Get into a comfortable position (standing / squatting / kneeling).



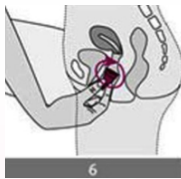
3
Fold the menstrual cup as shown in illustration 2 and 3.



4
Once folded, holding the cup with your fingers, guide it into the vagina up towards your back.



5
Rotate the cup as you push it forward.



6
Release it to let the seal rest on the vaginal wall.

4. How do know if I should trim the stem of my menstrual cup?

- A. The stem is deliberately long to account for women's different lengths of vaginas. It is designed to be trimmed easily if necessary so that the end of the stem sits inside your vagina. Many women trim the stem, while others cut it off completely. For women with longer vaginas, the stem can be useful to balance the menstrual cup. It is recommended to trim only if it's sitting outside your vagina. If you find using the menstrual cup uncomfortable when sitting or walking, or it pinches you, then it is probably sitting outside of the vagina and you will need to trim the stem.

5. And how can I do it?

- A. If the menstrual cup stem is long and makes it uncomfortable to use, use a clean pair of scissors, or a nail cutter and trim the stem a little at a time up to the point when the cup is comfortable to wear.

6. How is the menstrual cup removed?

- A. Wash your hands, either sit on a toilet or squat. Gently pull on the stem of the cup until you reach the base of the moon cup. To release the seal, either gently squeeze the base of the cup or insert a finger alongside the cup. When the base of the cup is almost out, angle the cup slightly sideways to remove half of the rim before angling it to release the other half. This ensures the cup slides out smoothly while remaining upright to avoid spilling the content.

7. What happens when I cannot get it out?

- A. If you cannot remove your menstrual cup, take your time and relax your vaginal muscles, as these are particularly sensitive to stress and will clench up around the menstrual cup.

8. How do I get the correct position for removal of the menstrual cup?

- A. For example squatting makes the vaginal canal shorter, so this is an excellent position for removal. You can also sit on the toilet with your legs apart, and your back upwards and straight or take any another position that you find comfortable with your legs wide apart

9. What if I cannot reach the menstrual cup?

- A. Use a sequence of small; downward pushes while concentrating on the vaginal muscles.

10. What if I cannot release the seal?

- A. Insert your clean index finger and squeeze the base of your menstrual cup to release the seal. You may also insert a thumb and finger and push both sides of the menstrual cup in. You will feel the seal being released then pull the menstrual cup down towards the entrance to the vagina and keep it folded as it was during insertion to allow it to come out of the vaginal opening.

11. How is the menstrual cup cleaned?

- A. It is important to always wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling your menstrual cup. The cup is made from medical grade silicone which does not support bacteria growth. Use water and/or non-perfumed soap to clean and rinse it properly to avoid vaginal irritation. There is no need to sterilise your menstrual cup during your periods, as the vagina has its own self-cleansing system.

If you want to sterilise your menstrual cup between periods, you can either; boil it immersed in water for 5-7 minutes (do not boil dry), or immerse in a small container of bleach e.g. 1 part of Jik to 5 parts of water for 7-10 minutes. Always keep the menstrual cup dry in the cotton breathable bag it comes in after use.

12. Is using the menstrual cup messy?

- A.** No. When you remove the menstrual cup, the outside of it is relatively clean, with the vast majority of the blood collected inside of it, the cup stays upright and is rarely full. Empty its content rinse with water or wipe, before re-inserting. There is minimal contact with it.

13. When I use the menstrual cup and it leaks, what can I do?

- A.** When used correctly, the menstrual cup should not leak. The most common reason for leakage is not placing the menstrual cup low enough in your vagina. Ensure that a seal has been formed between menstrual cup and the vaginal wall by;
- Running your finger around the side of the menstrual cup to ensure it is fully open
 - Pinching the base of the cup (not the stem) and rotating the menstrual cup
 - Clenching your menstrual cup with your vaginal muscles

If you have the size B, and it moves around or leaks, then you may need size A.

14. I have really heavy periods, can the cup handle this?

- A.** Yes. The Menstrual cup works very well for heavy periods as it can collect up to three times more menstrual blood than disposable sanitary products. This means that you will need to attend to the menstrual cup less often. You can accurately measure your flow and if concerned about the flow, it would assist your physician to know exactly how much you bleed and treat you accordingly.



15. Is it ok to use a menstrual cup with a light flow?

- A.** Yes. The Menstrual cup is perfect for light flow, as it collects without drying the vaginal walls. This means that you will find removal a lot more comfortable.

16. Is it safe to wear at the menstrual cup at night?

- A.** Yes. The menstrual cup is safe to wear at night. Make sure it is empty before going to bed and then empty it again as soon as you wake up.

17. Can I change my menstrual cup in public toilets?

- A.** Yes you can. Wash your hands at the sink and take a small bottle of water into the toilet cubicle with you. Remove the menstrual cup, tip the contents into the toilet bowl, rinse with a small amount of water and re-insert. In the absence of a water bottle, wipe the menstrual cup with toilet paper and re-insert.

18. Can a girl who started her periods use the menstrual cup?

- A.** The cup comes in two sizes; A and B. Size B-smaller menstrual cup is designed for young girls to use, even when they first start their periods.

19. Does the cup affect the hymen?

- A.** The hymen is a thin membrane found at the entrance of the vagina and once a girl reaches puberty, it tends to be elastic. In the course of a woman's life, the hymen can be stretched by pelvic examinations, regular physical activities, use of tampons and sexual intercourse. The hymen has space for periods to flow through thus it is perfectly safe to use a menstrual cup.

20. Is it safe to use the menstrual cup with the Intrauterine Device (IUD)?

- A.** There are no problems associated with using the cup while having an I.U.D. It is recommended to place the menstrual cup low down in the vaginal canal and to take care to release the seal properly when removing the menstrual cup. When you start using an I.U.D, please wait one whole period before using the menstrual cup. This will help the I.U.D settle in. It is recommended that you request a healthcare practitioner to trim short the IUD strings. You should regularly check your IUD strings to make sure they are always in place.

21. Can I use oil-based lubricants e.g. vaseline while inserting the menstrual cup, without worrying about damaging the rubber?

- A.** It is recommended that one does not use oil-based substances with the menstrual cup as they can weaken the material over time. Water based lubricants or plain water are fine.

22. Can one use the menstrual cup right after giving birth?

- A.** No. It is **not** recommended to use the cup for the first six weeks after giving birth. This is because of the increased risk of infection after trauma to the vaginal tissues.

23. Is it ok to use the menstrual cup while engaging in sporting activities including swimming?

- A.** The menstrual cup is ideal for use whilst doing all sports, including aerobics and swimming.

24. Can the Menstrual cup cause me to get vaginal thrush?

- A.** No, the menstrual cup will not give you vaginal thrush. The vagina has protective secretions that maintain the correct Ph and also prevent thrush and other infections. Menstrual cup does absorb these secretions, hence the vagina remain healthy during your periods. Always rinse your menstrual cup with plenty of water in case you use soap to clean it. Traces of soap on the cup can upset the Ph balance of your vagina.

25. Is it advisable to leave the menstrual cup in for 8 hours or more without changing it and is there a risk of suffering from toxic shock syndrome (T.S.S - a bacteria infection associated with the use of tampons)?

- A.** It is absolutely safe to leave the menstrual cup in for 8 hours before refreshing. Menstrual cup has never been associated with T.S.S. However, as a precaution, you should be aware of TSS symptoms; including sud-



den high fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, dizziness, fainting, or a rash similar to sunburn. If you experience these symptoms during your periods you should remove your menstrual cup and contact a health practitioner immediately. If you have suffered from T.S.S previously, it is recommended not to use any internal form of sanitary protection, including the menstrual cup.

26. Please Note:

- The menstrual cup does not protect you against pregnancy
- The menstrual cup will not protect you from /sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Discontinue the use of menstrual cup and contact a health practitioner if you experience symptoms such as general pain, burning, and irritation, inflammation in the genital area or discomfort during urination
- Always removed the menstrual cup before sexual intercourse
- Do not share your menstrual cup with another person.

For more Information, please contact



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