

Session 2

Female and Male Fertility

Objectives

By the end of this session, the participants will:

1. Describe the menstrual cycle.
2. Describe sperm production.
3. Dispel three common myths about menstruation.
4. Dispel three common myths about erections, ejaculations, and wet dreams.



Materials Needed

- Flip chart or chalkboard
- Assorted feminine products that are commonly used in your country (pads, rags, tampons, etc.)
- One egg
- Empty bowl
- Six cups or glasses of water

Before You Begin

- Carefully read all of **Content for Session 2** (pages 44-54).
- Read each step of the session. Think about how you will perform each step and what you will add to every session.
- For each participant for Steps 3 and 6, make photocopies of the Female Reproductive System—Internal Genitalia handout (page 49), the Female Reproductive System—External Genitalia handout (page 51), and the Male Reproductive System handout (page 53). (If you cannot make a photocopy, draw them on the flip chart or chalkboard for everyone to see.)

- For Step 5, bring samples of products that women use when having their period (pads, rags, tampons, etc.). Bring what is used and available in your country.
- For Step 6, write down the role-plays on sheets of paper for each pair.
- For Step 4 and Step 6, crack the egg and place only the egg white in a bowl.



Time

Activity	Minutes
Step 1: What is Fertility?	10
Step 2: Fertility Myths and Facts	20
Step 3: Introduction to Female Fertility	20
Step 4: Signs of Fertility	10
Step 5: Products We Use during Menstruation	20
Step 6: Introduction to Male Fertility	20
Step 7: Talking about Our Fertility	30
Step 8: Take-Home Messages	20
TOTAL MINUTES	150

Step 1: What is Fertility?

**Large Group Discussion
(10 minutes)**

Pose the following questions to the participants:

- What does “fertility” mean?
- When does a woman become fertile?
- When does a man become fertile?

After you listen to their answers, tell the group that you are going to discuss these items in more detail in this session.

Facilitator Note

Encourage participants to say what they know about this topic even if it is wrong. This will give you an opportunity to gain a better understanding of what they know. Be certain that participants understand what fertility is. Stress that boys and girls are developing their fertility at approximately the same time.

Step 2: Fertility Myths and Facts**Large Group Game
(20 minutes)**

Explain that the group is going to play a game that will focus on signs of female and male fertility, specifically menstruation and wet dreams, and that this game will help them identify and correct myths (incorrect beliefs) around the topic.

Divide the group into two teams and place them on opposite sides of the room. Have each team choose a name.

Read one of the following statements to the first member of Team A. That person should consult with the rest of the team to determine whether the statement is a “myth” or “fact.”

Once the first player responds, say whether the answer is correct and mark the score on the flip chart or chalkboard. Award one point for each correct answer. If the answer is correct, ask the player to say why this is correct. If the answer is incorrect, provide the right response and briefly explain why.

Continue by reading another statement to the first member of Team B, then alternate teams until everyone has had a chance to respond. After you have read each of the myths and facts, ask the teams to come up with two things that they have heard about menstruation and wet dreams and share these. Have the opposite team state if it is a myth or fact, and

again, tell them if they are correct and why. Afterward, add up the score and announce the winning team.

Myth or Fact?

Statement	Myth or Fact
The blood coming from a woman during menstruation means that she is sick.	Myth
Cold drinks do not cause menstrual cramps.	Fact
Women are able to eat spicy or sour foods during menstruation.	Fact
If a woman misses her period, this could mean she is pregnant.	Fact
If men do not ejaculate, sperm will collect and make their penis or testicles burst.	Myth
It is perfectly safe for a woman to wash her hair or take a bath during her period.	Fact
Having menstrual blood means a woman is dirty.	Myth
When a boy or a man has a wet dream, it means he needs to have sex.	Myth
When a man has an erection, he must always ejaculate.	Myth
Most boys have wet dreams during puberty.	Fact
If a penis is touched a lot, it will become permanently larger.	Myth

Facilitator Note

You may also want to adapt or add the local myths in your community to the above list.

Close the activity by asking:

- How did you feel about this activity?
- What new facts did you learn?
- Do you think it is good to have these myths in society? How could society do better in helping people understand about menstruation and wet dreams?

Step 3: Introduction to Female Fertility

Large Group Discussion (20 minutes)

Ask the girls to volunteer what they have heard about menstruation from their sisters, mothers, aunts, other female friends and relatives, media, school, etc. After you have let them speak, confirm or correct their statements. Distribute the Female Reproductive System—Internal Genitalia handout to each person in the group. Explain the basis of menstruation using the Content for Session 2 as your guide. Be sure to cover the following sections from the Content for Session 2:

- **What is menstruation?** Use the Female Reproductive System—Internal Genitalia handout to explain each point. Have participants take turns reading the text aloud and ask them to point out the place in the picture mentioned in the text.
- **At what age do girls start menstruating?**
- **What is the sign that menstruation has started?**
- **What is the menstrual cycle?**
- **How much blood flow is there?**
- **What is the length of the menstrual cycle?**
- **How does the body feel during menstruation?**
- **What is ovulation?**
- **What are some of the things a woman may feel around the time of her period?**
- **What is menopause?**

Explain to participants that a woman's menstrual cycle happens in phases:

1. She has her period and bleeds.
2. There is no bleeding for a few days.
3. She may start to have secretions.
4. She ovulates.

5. She has no secretions.
6. She may start to experience bodily or emotional changes just before her next period.
7. The cycle starts all over again.

After discussing the menstrual cycle, distribute the Female Reproductive System—External Genitalia handout to each person in the group. Explain to participants the various parts of the external female anatomy.

Stress the Following

- Once a girl has started to menstruate (have her period), she is physically able to become pregnant.
- A girl can become pregnant before her first period if she has already become fertile.
- It is called the menstrual cycle because it repeats continuously, except during pregnancy, until menopause.
- The menstrual cycles start at puberty and ends at menopause.
- Having a period means that a girl is becoming a woman. Almost every woman in the world has her period. There is nothing to worry about.

Step 4: Signs of Fertility

Large Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Get the bowl with the egg white in it.

Tell the group that sometimes girls can see a whitish or clear fluid on their underpants or experience a feeling of wetness around their vagina. This fluid or wetness is called a “secretion.” Secretions do not happen every day—just some days of the menstrual cycle.

Tell the group that those secretions from the vagina help sperm travel through the uterus to meet the egg.

Explain that women are most aware of their secretions during ovulation—when women are most fertile—because the secretions have more water in them at this time. Women may have other kinds of secretions during the rest of their cycle, but these are less moist. Some women may have no secretions. It depends on the woman.

Take the egg white in the bowl and drip it from your fingers to show them what a secretion can look like. Tell the group that not all secretions are exactly like this—some are thicker or thinner.

Tell the girls that if they pay attention to their vaginal secretions, they can learn to recognize what is normal for them. If they see anything different from what they see normally, they should consult a health provider. For example, yellow or strong-smelling secretions are often a sign of infection.

Stress the Following

- Some women get heavy secretions; some get very light secretions or none at all.
- Having secretions does not mean that a woman's vagina is dirty. It just means that her body is going through its normal, constant menstrual cycle changes.
- If secretions suddenly change color or smell, this might mean that a woman has an infection, and she should see a health provider.
- Most women do not have secretions all the time—just on some days of the menstrual cycle.

Step 5: Products We Use during Menstruation

Small Group Activity (20 minutes)

Ask participants to form five or six small groups. If culturally appropriate, have boys and girls mixed together.

Give each group one of the products used during a woman's period and a cup or glass of water.

Allow participants to touch and play with the products. Ask the participants in each group to explain how the products are used and disposed of. Tell each group to place the products in water. Explain that the products absorb water like a sponge and this is what they do for blood during the menstrual period.

Encourage the boys to ask questions for the girls to answer.

Ask participants the following questions:

- Why use these products?
- How do they work?
- How often do they need to be changed?
- How should they be disposed of or cleaned?
- Where are they sold and how much do they cost?

Step 6: Introduction to Male Fertility

Large Group Discussion (20 minutes)

Get the bowl with the egg white in it again.

Ask the participants to volunteer what they have heard about erections, ejaculations, and wet dreams from their brothers, uncles, other male friends and relatives, media, school, etc. After you have let them speak, confirm or correct their statements. Be sure to cover the following sections from the Content for Session 2:

- **How are sperm produced?** Use the Male Reproductive System handout to go over this briefly. Have participants take turns reading the text aloud and ask them to point out the place on the picture mentioned in the text.
- **What is an erection?**
- **What is ejaculation?** (Pinch the egg white here between your fingers to show what this liquid looks like and point out that the color of ejaculate (semen) is often whiter and less clear than the egg white.) Explain to participants that semen is the fluid that leaves the man's penis when he ejaculates.
- **What are wet dreams?**

Stress the Following

- A boy cannot control when he will have an erection or wet dream.
- Erections and wet dreams are completely normal. It means a boy is becoming a man.
- Boys do not have to ejaculate each time they have an erection.
- Semen leaves the body during ejaculation.
- Ejaculation means a boy is physically able to get a girl pregnant.

Step 7: Talking about Our Fertility

Pair Exercise (30 minutes)

Divide the group into pairs. Assign the following role-plays to each pair. If there are too many pairs, more than one pair can do the same role-play. Ask each pair to act out the situation using the information they just learned. Encourage them to be creative and encourage girls to act out male roles or boys to act out female roles. Give participants five minutes to prepare each skit.

Role-play #1: One person plays the aunt; the other plays a 12-year-old girl. The girl is worried because she has not gotten her period yet, but her friends have. The aunt comforts the girl, letting her know that the first period starts as early as age nine or 10, but can also start a few years later.

Role-play #2: One person plays a 10-year-old girl; the other plays the older sister. The girl is frightened because she began her period and does not understand what it is. The older sister explains what menstruation is and why it is happening.

Role-play #3: One person plays the father; the other plays the 13-year-old son. The son is worried because he keeps waking up, and the bed is a little wet. He asks his father what is wrong with him. The father explains to him what wet dreams are and that they are normal.

Role-play #4: One person plays a 12-year-old girl; the other plays her mother or father. The girl has stained her clothes with menstrual blood at school and is too embarrassed to return to school because she thinks everyone saw her. The mother or father comforts her and tells her that every woman has an occasional spot on her clothes. The mother or father explains what to use to stop the blood in her panties.

Role-play #5: One person plays the older brother; the other plays a 12-year-old boy. The boy is worried because he ejaculated and now thinks his sperm is floating in the air and might get someone pregnant. The brother explains to him about wet dreams and ejaculation.

Step 8: Take-Home Messages

(20 minutes)

Close the session by stressing the following:

- Menstruation, erections, ejaculations, and wet dreams are entirely normal signs of puberty.
- Menstruation means that a girl is physically able to become pregnant.
- Ejaculation means that a boy is physically able to get a girl pregnant.

Stress the Following

Encourage participants to ask questions, but let the group know that they will have a private session to talk about these things with a facilitator of their own sex (Session 4).

Thank them for being an enthusiastic group. Tell them that it is hard to talk about one's body sometimes and that you are proud of them for participating and sharing with each other.

Extra Activities

The following are optional activities you may do with the group.

Activity 1: Tracking Our Fertility (For Girls)

This exercise is most appropriate for 12- to 14-year-old girls who are more likely to have started menstruating. The activity calls for girls to keep a private daily calendar of their menstrual cycles and secretions. For those girls who have not begun their periods, they can ask their mothers or older sisters to do this activity with them. Because this is a private and confidential activity, a girl who has not started her period should not feel embarrassed or left out, since no one else will know this information. The final product will include a calendar that the girls can use to understand their bodies better (and thus predict their behavior) and an essay describing the process of keeping the calendar.



Materials

- Blank notebooks or blank one-year calendars
- Coloring pencils or crayons

Explain to participants that the activity will proceed over several months. To avoid misunderstandings at home, consider informing parents or caregivers about this activity before you assign it to them.

The single most important fact to share with the participants about the calendars is that they will remain *confidential*. Neither you nor fellow participants should at any time have access to anyone else's calendar.

1. Present each girl with a calendar for the year. If buying calendars for everyone is not affordable, have them make their own in a notebook. They can put each month on a different page of the notebook like the following:

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

2. Tell the girls that for each month, they are to mark the day that their period starts with a *large* “**X**” and then mark every day that there is bleeding with a *small* “**x**.” They should also mark those days on which they observe secretions with a *small* “**o**.” Below is a sample calendar.

Sample Menstrual Cycle Calendar January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 X	11 x	12 x
13 x	14 x	15	16	17	18	19 o
20 o	21 o	22 o	23 o	24 o	25 o	26
27	28	29	30	31		

3. As the months progress, remind participants that you are expecting them to mark their calendars each month.
4. Ask the girls to calculate the length of their cycle each month. This means counting the number of days between the first day of their period to the day before they get their next period. Ask them to observe the number of days in their short cycles and in their long cycles—and then ask them what they think the typical pattern might be. Ask them to

add up each cycle length and divide by the number of cycles to get the average length of their cycles for the year. The following is a sample calculation based on nine cycles:

Cycle 1	26
Cycle 2	28
Cycle 3	33
Cycle 4	31
Cycle 5	33
Cycle 6	28
Cycle 7	29
Cycle 8	29
<u>Cycle 9</u>	<u>28</u>
Average	29

Stress that many girls have irregular periods when they first begin menstruating, and if they miss a month, it does not necessarily mean there is a problem.

5. Toward the end of the year, tell participants more about the personal essay that you expect from each of them about the process of keeping the calendar. Go over what the personal essay should contain. Explain that the essay should answer the following questions:
 - What did you think of keeping the calendar—positives and negatives?
 - Were you surprised at how regularly or irregularly your body acted?
 - What did you learn about your body that you did not know before?
 - How did you feel during menstruation physically and emotionally?

Content for Session 2

What Is Menstruation?

Menstruation is the normal, healthy shedding of blood and tissue from the uterus. It is also called a woman's "period." It usually lasts between three and seven days. Menstruation happens for most women about once a month. It is a sign that a woman can possibly become pregnant if she has sexual intercourse. Women stop menstruating during pregnancy but then start again after they have the baby.

At What Age Does a Girl Start Menstruating?

Just as some girls begin puberty earlier or later than others, the same applies to periods. Some girls may begin to menstruate as early as age nine or 10, but others may not get their first period until a few years later.

What Is the Sign That Menstruation Has Started?

A woman knows that she has started her period when a little blood comes out of her vagina. The blood does not pour like water from a tap. It comes out slowly. Usually by the time she has noticed a feeling of unusual wetness, her panties have absorbed any blood that has come out. This is why it is important to anticipate approximately when each month she will start bleeding, so she can wear a sanitary napkin or other protection to prevent the blood from staining her clothing.

How Much Flow Is There?

The menstrual flow—meaning how much blood comes out of the vagina—can vary widely from person to person. Usually, an entire period consists of a few to several spoonfuls of blood—how much depends on the individual. The blood often starts off as a rusty color and then gets redder. It lightens to a rust color again until it stops. The amount of blood can also vary from day to day.

What Is the Menstrual Cycle?

The menstrual cycle is the period of time beginning on the first day of a woman's period until the day before she begins her

next menstrual period. Since this happens regularly, it is called a “cycle.”

What Is the Length of the Menstrual Cycle?

The length of the menstrual cycle (the time between one period and the next) varies for each woman. For some, the cycle is as short as 21 (or even fewer) days. For others, it is as long as 35 days or more. Irregular periods are common in girls who are just beginning to menstruate. It may take the body a while to adjust to all the changes taking place. For example, a woman may have the same length cycle for two months, then miss a month, or have two periods with fewer days in between them. Her menstrual cycle will probably become more regular, although she may continue to have irregular periods into adulthood. Sometimes she might have some spotting of blood for a day or two in the middle of her cycle. This is usually nothing to worry about.

When Is a Woman or Man Fertile?

A woman is fertile when she has the ability to become pregnant. A woman is fertile only certain days of each menstrual cycle—these are the days when she can become pregnant. A woman is fertile for a few days each cycle from her first menstruation until menopause.

Beginning with his first ejaculation, a man is fertile every day and has the ability to father a child for the rest of his life.

What Is Ovulation?

Ovulation is the periodic release of a mature egg from the ovary. This usually happens around the middle of a woman’s menstrual cycle.

What Is Menopause?

Menopause is the stage at which a woman’s menstruation ends. It ends because the hormones that cause eggs to mature in her ovaries stop. Menopause usually occurs when women are in their late forties or early fifties. But, menopause can take place earlier or later than this. Some women may stop menstruating by the time they are 35, and some not until their late fifties.

How Does the Body Feel during Menstruation?

Sometimes a woman may experience physical or emotional changes around the time of her period. Not everyone has these feelings—some women do not feel anything. A woman may experience:

Physical symptoms: cramps, pain, bloating, weight gain, food cravings, swollen or painful breasts, swollen hands or feet, skin problems, headaches, dizziness, or irritability.

Emotional symptoms: short temper, aggression, anger, anxiety or panic, confusion, lack of concentration, nervous tension, fatigue, or depression.

These changes are sometimes referred to as premenstrual syndrome (PMS). PMS is related to changes in the body's hormones. As hormone levels rise and fall during a woman's menstrual cycle, they can affect the way she feels, both physically and emotionally.

She may find that taking pain relievers, hot water compresses, herbal teas, or other local remedies can give her relief from menstrual symptoms. If these do not help, she should visit a health provider and discuss the matter.

What Are Secretions?

Girls can sometimes see secretions on their underpants or experience a feeling of wetness. These secretions are a whitish liquid. Girls often get secretions around the time of ovulation, when the body is ready to receive and nurture a fertilized egg. Secretions help sperm travel through the uterus to meet the egg for fertilization, so when a girl has secretions, she knows that this is the time when she is fertile.

Paying attention to vaginal secretions helps girls understand their bodies. Knowing what is normal for the body helps girls recognize things that are not normal. For example, yellow or strong-smelling secretions are not normal. These kinds of secretions are often a sign of infection, and she should visit a health provider.

What Products Do Girls Use during Menstruation?

Clean rags: These are cut to fit in the panty area by sewing several layers of cotton rags on top of each other. These must be clean. They must be washed thoroughly and hung in a private but sunny place to dry. They should not be shared with others.

Toilet tissue: One can use toilet tissue by making a thick, long wad of toilet tissue. Sometimes toilet tissue is too rough, however, and it can cause irritation and soreness to the skin. It also may not be sufficient to absorb the quantity of blood.

Pads or sanitary napkins: These are designed to fit the panty area close to the body. They have strips of tape that keep them attached to the panties, and the panties help to hold the pads close to the opening of the vagina. Pads have a plastic lining to minimize the spill of blood. If a woman uses pads, she needs to throw them down a pit latrine, bury them, or burn them after use. They should not be left in the garbage pile or flushed down the toilet, as they will cause blockage.

Tampons: These are small, compressed cotton objects, formed into solid, tube-like shapes, that are pushed up into the vagina during menstruation. The cotton softens as it absorbs the blood that comes into the vagina from the uterus. Attached to the tampon is a strong, soft cotton thread, which hangs out of the vagina. Pulling this thread removes the tampon.

A girl must always wash her hands before and after inserting a tampon. A tampon also needs to be changed frequently, because it could cause infection if left in the vagina. One should never leave a tampon in for more than eight hours.

Whatever a girl uses (rags, toilet tissue, pads, or tampons), she should change it frequently to avoid staining and odor. When menstrual blood comes in contact with air, it can develop a stale odor.

Pads and tampons cost more than toilet paper and rags, but all work equally well. A girl can usually ask her sister, mother, or other close female relative what she uses.

A girl might be worried that her friends might see her carrying such products with her. She should know that placing these in a simple plastic bag in her purse, school bag, or backpack usually prevents any embarrassment.

If a girl's panties or clothes get stained with blood, she can soak them in cool, mildly salty water. Hot water will cause the blood to set and remain as a permanent stain.

What Is an Erection?

An erection occurs when the penis fills with blood and becomes hard and straight. Erections happen sometimes as boys fantasize and think about sexual things, or sometimes for no reason at all. Boys do not have any control over when this will happen. It is very common for boys to wake up with an erection

in the morning. While asleep at night, a boy's penis will probably become erect and then go down about five to seven times. This is completely normal and healthy. Having erections is *not* a sign that a boy needs to have sex.

When the penis is erect, a boy will find that he cannot urinate easily because a muscle closes off the bladder. He will have to wait until the erection goes down before he can urinate.

What Is Ejaculation?

Ejaculation is when semen comes out of a boy's or man's erect penis due to sexual excitement. A man does not have to ejaculate every time he has an erection. If he waits, the erection will go down on its own without causing any harm.

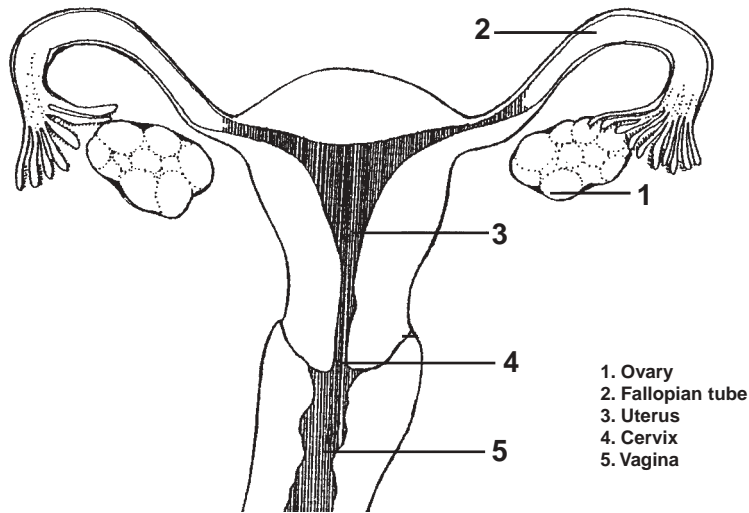
When a boy begins puberty, the ejaculated semen tends to be slightly clear or slightly yellow. As the boy grows into a man, he begins making a larger amount of mature sperm, and his ejaculation will probably become more whitish. Boys are not born with sperm; they begin to produce them during puberty. A boy begins to produce sperm and continues to produce them through his entire life. If the sperm is ejaculated into the woman's vagina, she may become pregnant. The ejaculate can also carry diseases that could infect a woman.

What Is a Wet Dream?

A wet dream (or nocturnal emission) is when a boy's penis becomes erect, and he ejaculates while sleeping. This causes the boy's underwear or the bed to be a little wet when he wakes up.

If a boy does not know about wet dreams, he could be worried or confused. Wet dreams are completely natural and normal. A boy cannot stop himself from having wet dreams.

Handout: Female Reproductive System—Internal Genitalia



Session 2

Every female is born with thousands of eggs in her **ovaries**. The eggs are so small that they cannot be seen by the naked eye. Once a girl has reached puberty, a tiny egg matures in one of her ovaries and then travels down a **fallopian tube** on its way to the **uterus**. This release of the egg from the ovary is called **ovulation**. The uterus prepares for the egg's arrival by developing a thick and soft lining like a pillow. If the girl has had sex in the last few days before she ovulates, by the time the egg arrives in the fallopian tube, there might be some sperm waiting to unite with the egg. If the arriving egg is united with the sperm (called **fertilization**), the egg travels to the uterus, and attaches to the lining of the uterus and remains there for the next nine months, growing into a baby. If the egg is not fertilized, then the uterus does not need the thick lining it has made to protect the egg. It throws away the lining, along with some blood, body fluids, and the unfertilized egg. All of this flows through the **cervix** and then out of the **vagina**. This flow of blood is called the "period" or **menstruation**.

Key Words

Cervix: Lower portion of the uterus, which extends into the vagina.

Fallopian tubes: Tubes that carry the egg from the ovaries to the uterus.

Fertilization: Union of the egg with the sperm.

Menstruation: The monthly discharge of blood and tissue from the lining of the uterus.

Ovaries: Two glands that contain thousands of immature eggs.

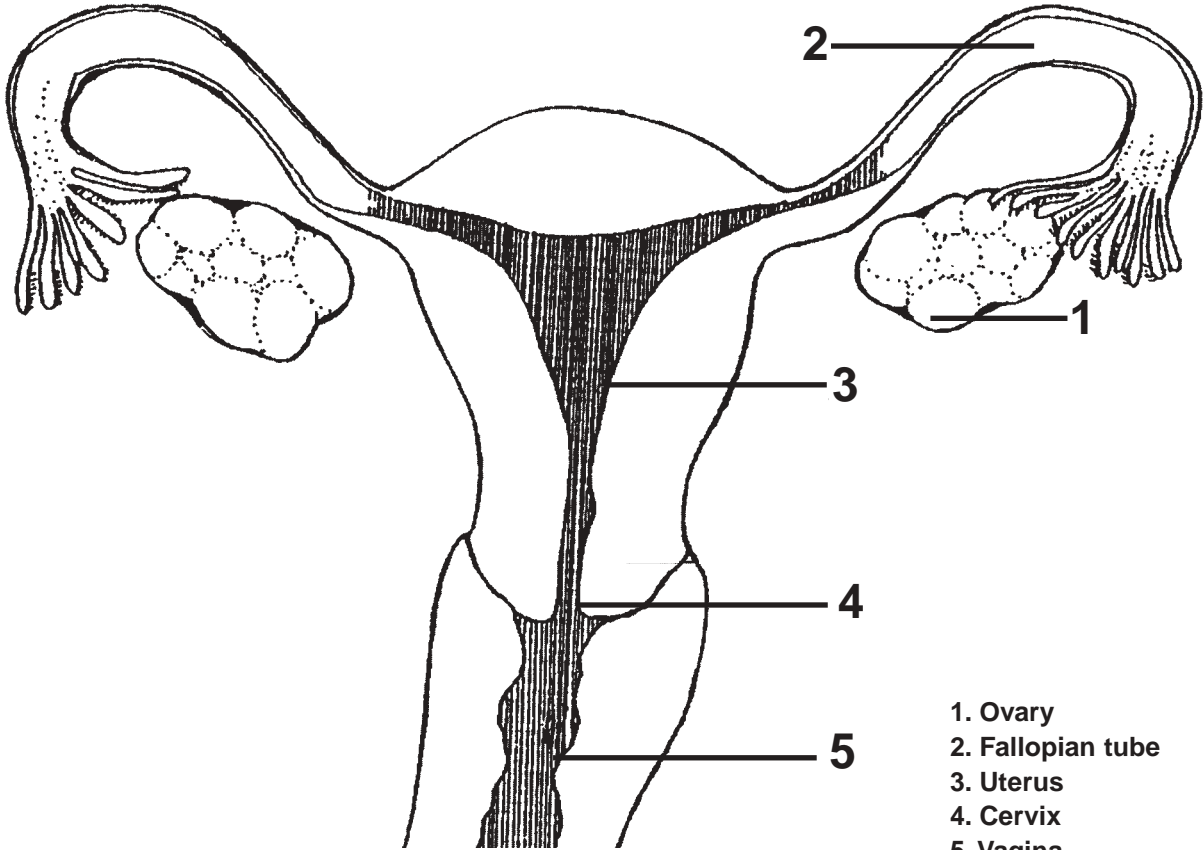
Ovulation: The periodic release of a mature egg from an ovary.

Secretion: The process by which glands release certain materials into the bloodstream or outside the body.

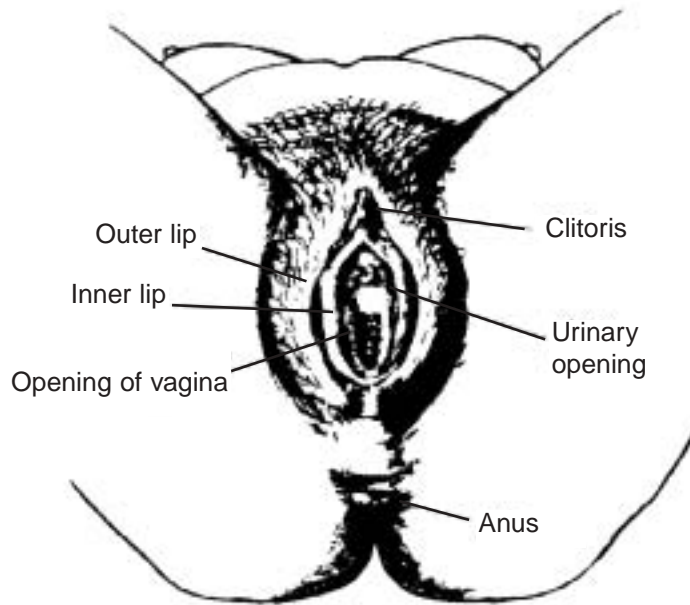
Uterus: Small, hollow, muscular female organ where the fetus is held and nourished from the time of implantation until birth.

Vagina: Canal that forms the passageway from the uterus to the outside of the body.

Female Reproductive System—Internal Genitalia



Handout: Female Reproductive System—External Genitalia



Session 2

The external genitalia includes two sets of rounded folds of skin: the **labia majora** (or **outer lips**) and the **labia minora** (or **inner lips**). The labia cover and protect the vaginal opening. The inner and outer lips come together in the pubic area. Near the top of the lips, inside the folds, is a small cylindrical body called the **clitoris**. The clitoris is made up of the same type of tissue as the head of the male's penis and is very sensitive. The **urethra** is a short tube that carries urine from the bladder to the outside of the body. Urine leaves a woman's body through the **urethral** or **urinary opening**. The **vaginal opening** is the place from which a woman menstruates. Both the urethral opening and vaginal opening form the area known as the **vestibule**. Altogether, the external genital organs of the female are called the **vulva**.

Key Words

Clitoris: Small organ at the upper part of the labia, which is sensitive to stimulation.

Labia majora (outer lips): Two folds of skin (one on either side of the vaginal opening) that cover and protect the genital structures, including the vestibule.

Labia minora (inner lips): Two folds of skin between the labia majora that extend from the clitoris on each side of the urethral and vaginal openings.

Urethra: Short tube that carries urine from the bladder (the place where urine is collected in the body) to the outside of the body.

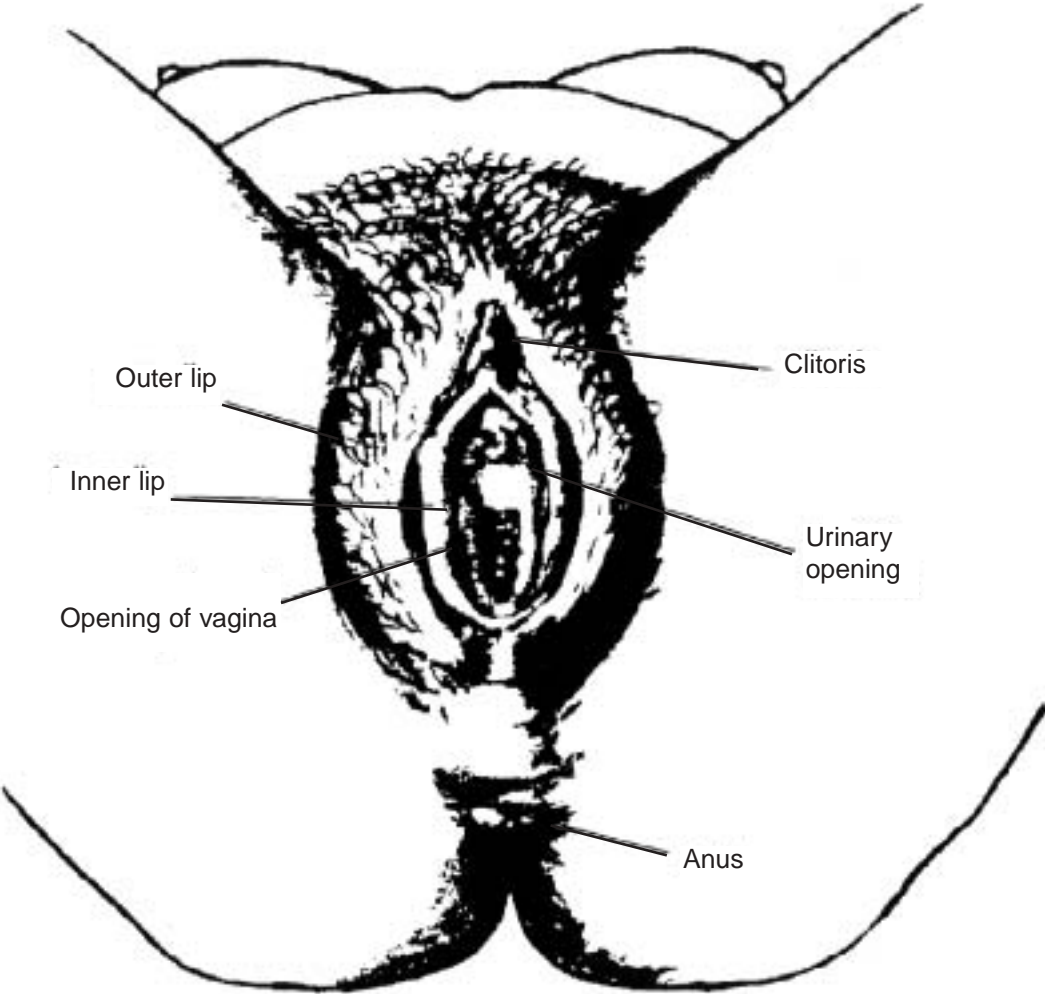
Urethral (urinary) opening: Spot from which a woman urinates.

Vaginal opening: Opening from the vagina where menstrual blood leaves the body.

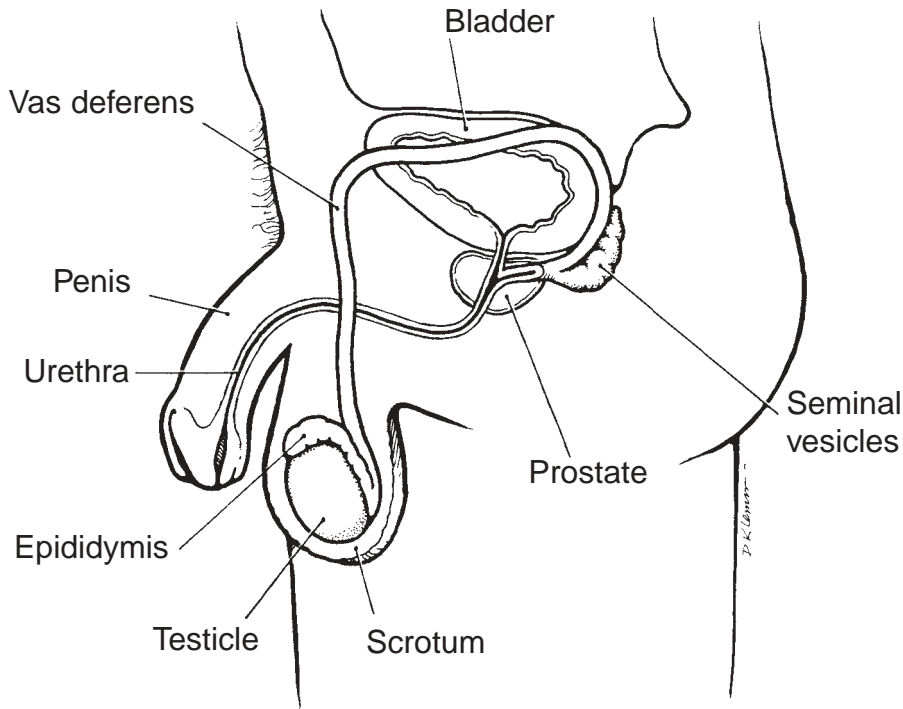
Vestibule: Area of the external female genitalia that includes the vaginal and urethral opening.

Vulva: The external genital organs of the female, including the labia majora, labia minora, clitoris, and vestibule.

Female Reproductive System—External Genitalia



Handout: Male Reproductive System



Session 2

From puberty on, **sperm** are continuously produced in the **testicles** (or **testes**), which are found inside the **scrotum**. As the sperm mature, they move into the **epididymis**, where they remain to mature for about two weeks. The sperm then leave the epididymis and enter the **vas deferens**. These tubes pass through the **seminal vesicles** and the **prostate gland**, which releases fluids that mix with the sperm to make **semen**. During **ejaculation**, the semen travels through the **penis** and out of the body by way of the **urethra**, the same tube that carries urine. The **urethral** or **urinary opening** is the spot from which a man urinates or ejaculates.

Key Words

Ejaculation: Forceful release of seminal fluid from the penis.

Epididymis: Organ where sperm mature after they are produced in the testicles.

Penis: External male organ through which semen or urine leave the body.

Prostate gland: Gland that produces a thin, milky fluid that enables the sperm to swim and become part of the semen.

Scrotum: Pouch of skin behind the penis that holds the testicles.

Semen: Fluid that leaves a man's penis when he ejaculates.

Seminal vesicles: Small glands that produce a thick, sticky fluid that provides energy for sperm.

Sperm: A male sex cell.

Testicles (testes): Male reproductive glands, which produce sperm.

Urethra: Canal that carries urine from the bladder (the place where urine is collected in the body) to the urinary opening. In males, the urethra also carries semen.

Urethral (urinary) opening: Spot from which a man urinates.

Vas deferens: Long, thin tubes that transport sperm away from the epididymis.

Male Reproductive System

