

THE PROCESS OF MENSTRUATION



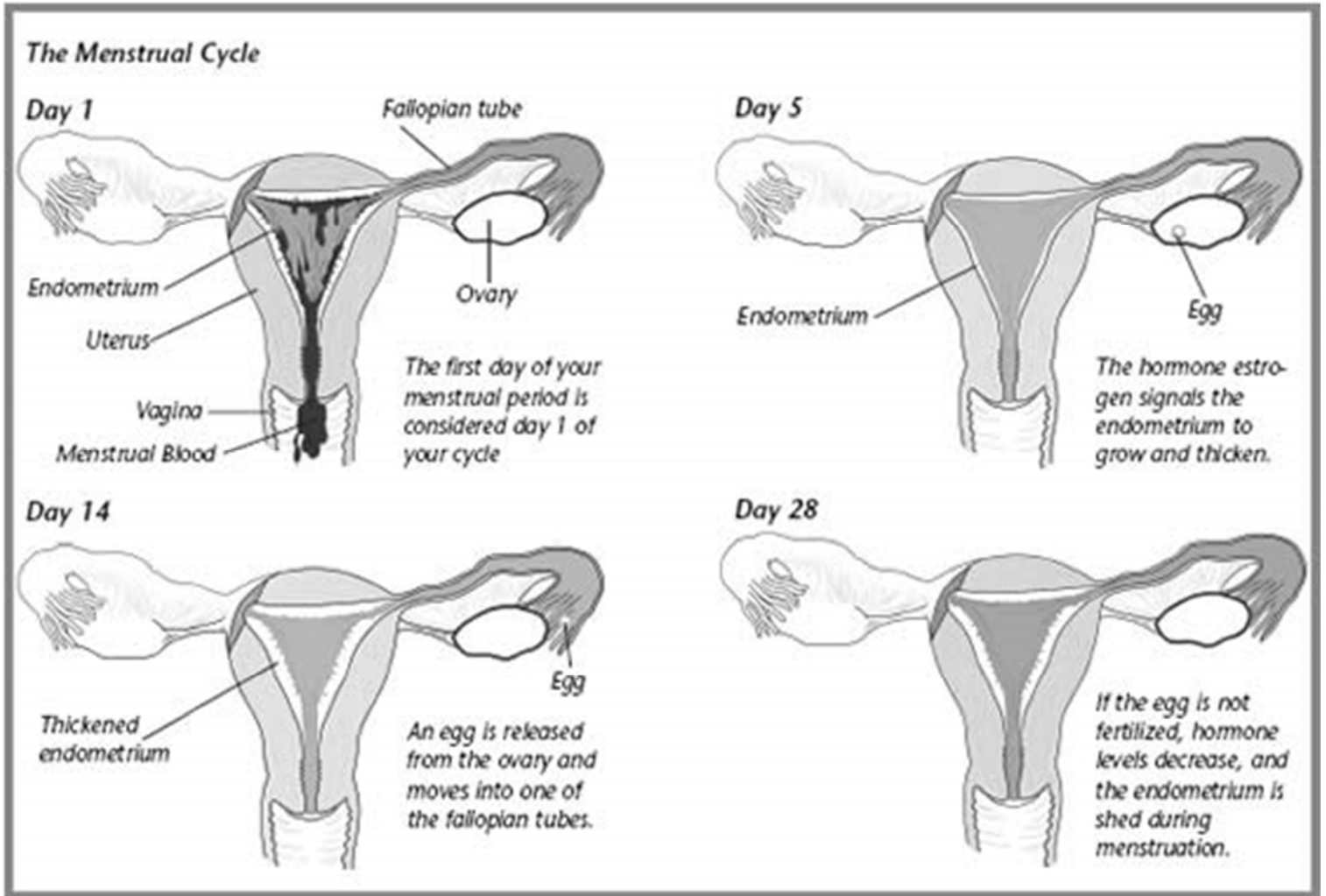
Menstruation is triggered by a small gland located in the base of the brain, called the _____ . The pituitary gland produces chemicals that act like messengers, traveling in the blood to the ovaries.

During each monthly cycle, one of the ovaries releases an egg cell, which is smaller than a grain of salt. It enters in the nearby _____ and travels toward the uterus that has a special lining of blood and tissue, called the _____. The lining grows thick as the uterus prepares to receive the egg cell.

If the egg cell is united with a male sperm cell- a process called _____ – it will enter the uterus, attach itself to the lining and begin to develop into a _____. The lining supports the growth and development of the fetus. If the egg cell is not fertilized, the lining of the uterus is not needed. Both the lining and egg cell dissolve and flow out of the uterus, through the vagina, and out of the vaginal opening. This discharge is the _____. When the lining is completely removed from the uterus, the flow stops.

Menstrual flow is not only made up of blood but also fluids and tissue. The facts are the average loss of blood during each period is 1 2/3 tablespoons to 4 tablespoons, or only about a quarter of a cup. This is an insignificant amount when considering that there are at least 120 ounces of blood in the body, and new blood is constantly being produced. The blood and tissue discharged as menstrual flow are no longer needed by the body.

Menstruation is the process by which the lining of the uterus is shed periodically as menstrual flow. It usually occurs once a month, except during pregnancy. During that time the fetus is growing and _____ (chemical substances that control the menstrual cycle) in the body do not allow menstruation. The length of each menstrual period varies from person to person. Usually a period lasts from three to five days, though variations from two to eight days are common.



The travel time for an egg to move from the ovary to the uterus is approximately _____. The fallopian tube is where conception occurs.

When the unfertilized egg reaches the uterus, it usually disintegrates and is flushed away with the menstrual flow. However, if the egg is fertilized, _____ takes place and pregnancy begins!

