

— A GENTLE HANDBOOK · FOR MOMS WITH DAUGHTERS OF 8-12


Pehli Influencer

*How to walk your daughter through
her first period — calmly, lovingly,
and with the right guidance.*

*The first sentence a mother speaks on her daughter's first period can shape
how she feels about her body for the rest of her life. Let's make that sentence
a soft one.*

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INSIDE THIS HANDBOOK

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Read in order the first time. Keep the kit page handy. Re-read the dialogue page before you have the conversation.

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Before we begin — a note to every mother.

She might be eight. She might be twelve. She might be in her school uniform, in the middle of a math class, or quietly in the bathroom at home wondering if something is very wrong. Whenever it happens, one thing is true: **you** are the first person she will look at to know if she is safe.

Girls in India today are getting their first periods earlier than ever — some as young as eight.* And almost all of them, before they understand what is happening, ask the same silent questions: *Am I okay? Did something bad happen? Will my life change now? Can I still be normal?*

She isn't asking for a biology lecture. She's asking to be held. This handbook is a small, gentle map for that moment. It will not tell you what to feel — you already know. It will only help you say the right things, in the right tone, at the right time, so that the first chapter of her body's new story begins with warmth and not with shame.



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*A child between 8 and 12 is in what we call the **identity-formation** stage. The emotional tone of her first period becomes a quiet template — for how she treats her own body, how she speaks to her future daughter, and how comfortable she is asking for help in a crisis. Lead with safety. Information can come later.*

For you, Mama —

You don't have to be perfect. You just have to be the soft place she lands on. That is already enough.

Before the first period.

I

The conversation should not begin on the day it happens. It should begin months before — softly, casually, like talking about teeth, or hair, or rain.

Why early matters

When a girl learns about periods *before* they happen, she experiences her first period as *"the thing Maa told me about"* — familiar, expected, manageable. When she learns about it *during*, the same biological event becomes a frightening surprise that her brain may store as trauma.

Early conversations also tell her something larger: *"My body is something we can talk about in this house."* That single belief protects her for decades.

Three gentle entry points

- **While putting clothes into the wardrobe** — Ask her to help you fold laundry, and casually hold up a sanitary pad. The same way you'd hold a face wash and say — "You know what this is?"
- **While watching a sanitary product ad on TV** — "Have I told you what that ad is actually about? Come, I'll explain."
- **While walking through the chemist** — "Let me show you what these are. One day you'll need to know which one feels best for you."



*Periods should be
a word she has
heard at home
long before she
has felt it in her
body.*



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Watch for the *signals of impending menarche*: breast budding (often appearing 2 years before the first period), a sudden growth spurt, mild acne, a clear or white vaginal discharge that begins 6–12 months before. When you notice any of these, gently move the conversation closer.

II

If it happens suddenly.

A school washroom. A friend's birthday party. A long train journey. Sometimes the body does not check our calendar. Here is what to do in the first thirty seconds.

THE 30-SECOND RESPONSE

When she calls you in panic

1. **Lower your voice.** Whatever you feel, slow your breath. She is matching your tone, not your words.
2. **Say it's okay first, ask questions later.** "Beta, are you fine? This is something we prepared for. Don't worry, I'm here."
3. **Give her a plan, not a lecture.** "Stay in the washroom, I'm arranging for help. If there are tissues, fold them and place inside your underwear."
4. **Praise her for telling you.** "I'm so glad you called me. That was the smart thing to do."

IF SHE'S AT SCHOOL

Being there is the answer

Call the school's female staff or sick-room attendant. Most Indian schools keep emergency pads — ask. Reach the school yourself if you can; just *being there* is more reassuring than anything you'll say.



III

The first conversation — what to say.

There is no single correct script. There is only one correct intention: *make her feel safe before you make her informed.*

The opening line — four gentle variations

Use the version that sounds most like *you*. The most important thing is that it feels honest — not memorised.

1

When the moment is calm and at home

"This happens to every woman, and it happened to me too when I was your age. You don't need to worry or feel alone. Your body is healthy and learning something new, and I'm going to help you understand it step by step."

2

When she is overwhelmed

"Sab theek hai. Aaj ka din actually bahut special hai — your body is growing beautifully. Tum ab thodi aur badi ho rahi ho, aur yeh darne ki nahi, samajhne aur celebrate karne ki baat hai. Main yahaan hoon. Jo bhi sawaal ho, hum dono milke samjhenge."

3

If she found out before you did

"You handled that on your own — I'm so proud of you. Come, sit with me. Let me tell you what your body is doing, and why this is actually a healthy and wonderful part of growing up."

4

For the bedtime conversation later that night

"Today was a big day. Not a bad day — a growing-up day. What happened today is natural, healthy, and actually something to feel proud of. Your body is learning something amazing. And whatever you want to ask me, you always can. Even the questions that feel silly. Especially those."

• TONE & BODY LANGUAGE

- **Sit at her height.** Standing over her makes any conversation feel like a verdict.
- **Hold her hand or shoulder.** Skin contact lowers cortisol faster than any sentence will.
- **Soften your face.** A neutral face reads as worry to a frightened child.
- **Don't whisper.** Whispering teaches her this is a secret. Speak in your normal, indoor voice.

*She is not asking what menstruation is. She is asking if she is still **your child**. The answer is yes — louder than usual.*



IV

Explaining periods — simply, gently, once.

She doesn't need a diagram of fallopian tubes today. She needs one true sentence she can keep in her pocket.

A simple, true explanation

"Inside your tummy, there's a soft little place called the *uterus*. Every month, your body softly prepares the inside of the uterus — just in case, one day, much much later, you choose to grow a baby. When that soft lining isn't needed yet, your body very gently lets it leave, and that's the blood you see. It isn't a wound. It isn't a problem. It's your body's monthly rhythm — natural, gentle, yours."

That single paragraph is enough for the first day. The rest can come slowly, over the months, when she asks.

Questions she might ask

- ? **"Does it hurt?"** — "You might feel a little discomfort sometimes, but most periods do not hurt very much. Even during this, you can still continue doing the things you love."
- ? **"How long will it stay?"** — "Around three to five days. Every month. Your body finds its own rhythm."
- ? **"Can I still play / dance?"** — "Yes you can do everything you love just with a pad or a period panty."
- ? **"Will anybody else come to know?"** — "This shouldn't be a secret, you can share with anyone you feel comfortable and safe with."
- ? **"Did I do something wrong?"** — "You are growing into a beautiful woman and this is your body telling you that things are doing fine."
- ? **"What if I get a stain on my clothes?"** — "It's okay — you never need to feel ashamed. It happens sometimes. Just change your pad or period panty when you can, and keep a spare set with you just in case."

THE MONTHLY CYCLE, SIMPLIFIED

Your body in four soft phases

Inside your body has a soft little nest, and the changes in the nest puts your body in 4 phases.

01

The Period Phase

The old lining of the nest is gently leaving the body. You may feel tired, emotional, or uncomfortable sometimes — and that's okay. If anything worries you, you can always talk to a parent or trusted grown-up.

Days 1–5

02

Building the Nest

Body starts building a soft new lining again. This is the phase where you might feel more happy, strong & energetic.

Days 6–14

03

Nest is ready

Now the nest is ready — just in case a tiny new guest ever needs a place to grow someday. In the end this is one of the most beautiful ways the body prepares with care.

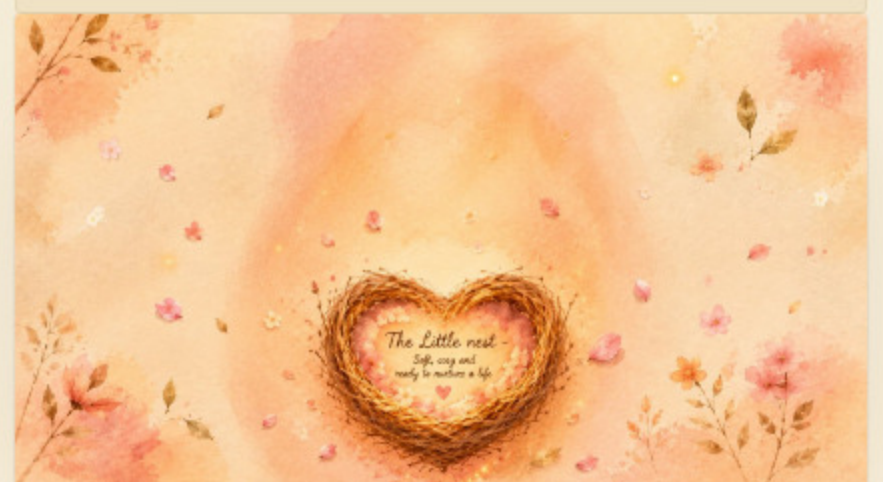
Days 15–22

04

Restart of the next phase

If the new guest does not arrive, the body lets go of the lining of the nest, and prepares to begin a fresh new cycle again.

Days 23–28





Sanitary products & how to wear them.

For a child, the body is one mystery. The product is another. Take both mysteries away on the same afternoon, with a cup of milk and an unhurried hour. Giving her a demo would be the best way of explaining.



PRODUCT · SANITARY PAD

The everyday pad

A soft cotton-like layer that sticks to the inside of her underwear. The flaps (called *wings*) wrap around the underwear from below, so it doesn't move.

How to wear it · four steps

1. Open the wrapper. Pull off the long paper strip in the middle.
2. Stick the pad to the inside of clean underwear, sticky side down.
3. Pull off the small paper strips on the wings.
4. Fold the wings under, so they hug the underwear from below.

Change every 4–6 hours. More often on heavy days. Wrap the used pad in its wrapper or in toilet paper before placing it in the bin.



PRODUCT · PERIOD PANTY

The period panty

A regular-looking underwear, except the inside layer is specially made to soak up period blood quietly and hold it in place — no pad needed. Perfect for school days, sleep, long bus rides, hiking.

How to wear it · simply

1. Open the pack and take out a fresh period panty. Tear along the side seams to open it out flat, just like a fresh pad.
2. Wear it just like normal underwear — the soft absorbent layer is built in, on the inside.
3. The thicker, slightly darker side always goes against the body — that's the absorbent layer.
4. Wear for 6–8 hours on a normal day. Change sooner on heavier days.
5. When it's time to change, roll it inward tightly, wrap it in the disposal pouch or tissue, and throw it in a covered bin. Never flush it.
6. Wash your hands before and after — always.

WHY PERIOD PANTIES MATTER FOR YOUNGER GIRLS

*For an 8–12 year old, the **fear of leaking in public** can be larger than the period itself. A period panty quietly removes that fear with its 360° protection and snug fit. She doesn't have to remember to change a pad between classes. She doesn't have to ask the teacher. She doesn't have to feel watched. For a small child still learning her body, that quiet confidence is everything.*



HYGIENE · THE THREE QUIET RULES

- **Wash hands before and after.** Always. Same as before eating.
- **Change regularly.** Every 4–6 hours for pads, 6–8 for period panties — even if she "doesn't feel like" it.
- **Wipe front to back.** A small thing that prevents infections for life. Teach it once, gently.

VI

The first period comfort kit.

Not an emergency kit. A *comfort* kit. Prepared *together*, weeks before. So that when the day comes, she already owns a small bag of love — just for her, for when she needs it.

Why we prepare it *before*

A kit prepared *after* the first period feels like a response to a problem. A kit prepared *before* feels like a celebration of growing up — like buying school books before the first day of class. The act of packing it together becomes the conversation. The conversation becomes the safety.

How to introduce the kit, naturally

- "Beta, this Saturday let's put together a small pouch — just for you, just for when you need it."
- Let *her* pick the pouch. Colour, shape, character on it.
- Pack it slowly, over a cup of tea. Show each item like you'd show her a new pencil box.

For fathers, brothers, the whole house

A father who calmly buys pads at the chemist sets a quiet, lifelong standard for the kind of partner she'll choose one day. A brother who doesn't flinch when the kit sits on the dining table teaches her, without a word, that her body is not embarrassing. The kit, sitting visible in the home, does this work on its own.

THE COMFORT KIT · CHECKLIST

What goes inside

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ✓ 2-3 disposable period panties | ✓ 1-2 sanitary pads — just in case |
| ✓ 1 spare underwear | ✓ Small soft towel |
| ✓ Wet wipes (unscented) | ✓ A small keepsake from home |
| ✓ Paper soap strips | ✓ Reusable heating patch |
| ✓ One small chocolate or snack | ✓ A handwritten note from Mama |

Pack it inside a soft cloth pouch she chose herself. Keep one set at home, one inside her school bag.

Sample note from Mama —

"Whenever you open this pouch, remember: this is not an emergency. This is just your body doing something it knows how to do. And I'm one phone call away. — Mama"

*Prepare the kit together. The kit becomes the conversation. The conversation becomes **the safety**.*



VII

What helps her feel safe — and what doesn't.

Two simple lists. The first is what she needs most from you, in this order. The second is what to quietly set aside — phrases and habits most of us were raised on. None of them are our mothers' fault. But the line can stop with us.

PART ONE

What she needs most

01

Safety

That you are not panicking. That nothing has gone wrong.

02

Normalcy

That every woman she loves has been through this. Maa, Mausi, didi, teacher.

03

Agency

That she has a kit, a plan, and a choice in how she manages this.

04

Privacy

That it's hers to share, or not. Not gossip. Not announcement.

05

Continuity

That she is still your child. Still going to school. Still allowed to climb trees. Nothing important has changed.

PART TWO

What to gently set aside

Words to leave behind

- ✗ **"Now you are a woman."** She is still a child. Let her be one. Womanhood arrives slowly, on its own time.
- ✗ **"Don't tell your father / brothers."** Secrecy teaches her it is something to hide. It isn't.
- ✗ **"Be careful around boys now."** This sentence places the burden of behaviour on her, not them. She did nothing.
- ✗ **"Don't enter the kitchen / temple."** If your family practices these traditions, that is a private adult conversation — never a rule taught to a frightened child on day one.
- ✗ **"Don't touch the pickle, it will spoil."** A myth. Quietly let it go.
- ✗ **"This is the curse of being a girl."** Never. Not even as a joke. She is listening.

Habits to leave behind

- ✗ **Whispering the word "period."** Say it at normal volume. So she does too.
- ✗ **Wrapping pads in black plastic, always.** A small pouch is enough. Black plastic teaches shame.
- ✗ **Over-explaining.** She is 9, not 19. One paragraph today is enough. The rest comes when she asks.
- ✗ **Making it a "special talk."** The bigger the build-up, the more she suspects something is wrong. Keep it casual.
- ✗ **Comparing.** Never "your cousin handled it so well." She is not her cousin. She is your child.
- ✗ **Over-protecting.** No need to pull her out of dance class, sports, or sleepovers. Periods are not pause buttons.

Most cultural messaging around periods was written for control. We are writing something else now — for care.





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*Children remember the **emotional climate** of an event far longer than the words spoken in it. If she remembers feeling safe, the body she grows into will feel like home. If she remembers feeling watched or shamed, that body will always feel like something to manage. The opportunity is sacred — and it lasts only a few hours.*

One last thing.

*You will not get every word right. You will sometimes say the wrong thing and remember it for years. That is alright. The handbook is not asking you to be flawless — only present. Sit down. Lower your voice. Hold her hand. Say "**I'm here, and you are okay.**" Everything else can be learned later, together.*

— with love, for every Indian daughter

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