



What to Know About Swimming During Your Period

Many swimmers have questions about how to manage having their period as an athlete.

The bottom line is, swimming on your period is OK and in many ways, staying active while managing period symptoms can actually help you feel better both physically and mentally. Having an action plan for managing your period can relieve stress or worry.

Below we will outline some common questions we hear from swimmers and parents.

Is it sanitary to swim while menstruating?

The answer is yes, it is sanitary. You can use a range of products to be able to attend swim practice while on your period. What products you choose to use should be based on your comfort level. There are a lot of options. The only products that are not OK to use in the pool are a disposable pad or a reusable cloth pad.

A functional filtration system and balanced pool chemicals / sanitizers are used to keep the water clear and swimmable, which will neutralize any organic contaminants that might be introduced to the pool (such as a small amount of period blood, or other fluids like mucus or spit). It is still best practice to use one of the methods outlined below to cut down on what gets into the water. However, swimmers should not feel overly concerned about "leaking" into the pool in some way.

Is it healthy to swim while menstruating?

Yes, physical activity is often one of the best ways to relieve other symptoms that are associated with getting your period (like cramps or bloating).

You can absolutely swim while menstruating. You can do any form of exercise, and in fact many athletes notice over time that during particular parts of their menstrual cycle they experience their recovery is improved (often during the 1-2 weeks just following their period), or they feel stronger and faster in the water. It is also common for exercise to help relieve cramping if that is something that you experience in connection with your period.

What period products are OK to use in the pool?

Menstrual Cup [OK in the pool] - A menstrual cup is a small, bell-shaped cup inserted into the vagina to collect menstrual blood during a period. The cup is reusable, is washed out between uses, and generally holds more blood and is less likely to leak (when fit correctly) than a tampon.



Disposable Tampons [OK in the pool] - Tampons are an absorbent product that fit inside the vagina and soak up menstrual blood. If you are using a tampon, it's best to change it soon after swimming because a wet tampon that has been in pool water could cause the growth of unwanted bacteria. You can go straight to the bathroom after in-water practice to change your tampon.

Period Swimwear [OK in the pool] - Period swimwear is very similar to period underwear, but it includes a waterproof layer. There are a lot of swimsuit styles and options, some more similar to a competitive swimsuit style. There are also bikini style suits - some swimmers wear just the bikini bottom hidden under their normal practice swim suit. This is a great option for anyone who would like an alternative to using a tampon or cup while swimming or as an added layer in addition to another product.

What period products are OK to use outside of the pool / for dryland?

Period Underwear / Reusable cloth Pads [not for the pool] - Reusable underwear or cloth pads absorb menstrual blood and prevent leaks from getting on clothes. These products can be washed at home in the washing machine between uses. Many brands can absorb a large amount of blood. Period underwear can also be used as a strong "backup" while using a tampon or cup to catch any leaks.

Disposable Pads [not for the pool] - These are narrow pieces of material that stick to underwear. Disposable pads are used once and then thrown away.

Who can I talk to if I have questions?

Communication is key! It's common to feel unsure about whether or not it's OK to talk about being on your period. Your coach has likely had hundreds of conversations with swimmers about swimming while menstruating and this is a totally OK conversation topic.

You can tell your coach if you have cramps, if you're feeling fatigued / bloated, or if you need to get out during part of practice to access period products. You don't have to share anything more than what you feel comfortable talking about. Having some kind of communication can be helpful and may reduce any sense of worry that you have about managing your period at swim practice.

As you continue through the sport, you are likely to hear teammates talk about their experiences training while on their period and it can be helpful to connect with others.

Parents, we strongly recommend opening this conversation topic well before your swimmer experiences getting their period for the first time! You can use this article as a starting point. We



also recommend purchasing and talking about how to use a range of different products so that your swimmer has a chance to think about and become familiar with what is available to them.

It can be very helpful to open this conversation topic at home and to have multiple products at the ready! Likewise, our team has tampons and pads at the pool that can be available by request.

Period swimwear has come a LONG way!

Period swim suits are really great. Swimmers who are not comfortable using a tampon / cup can use period swimwear instead. Swimmers who are using a tampon or cup can layer with a period suit and feel more confident about avoiding leaks while getting in and out of the pool.

Here are some products that most closely align with a competitive suit. Two options that we've heard work well are:

- (1) Wearing a one-piece suit that is as similar as possible to a competitive swimsuit
- (2) Wearing period swimwear bikini bottoms under a regular team / competitive swimsuit

One Piece -

[Knix High Neck One Piece Swimsuit](#)

[Knix Classic One Piece Swimsuit](#)

[Knix Teen Period Swim Sport One-Piece](#)

[Knix Teen Period Swim Square Neck One-Piece](#)

[Beautikini One Piece Racerback](#)

[Modibodi Teen Swimwear Racerback](#)

[Ruby Period Swimwear Racerback](#)

[Ruby Period Swimwear One Piece](#)

Bottoms -

[Knix High Rise Bottom](#) or [Leakproof High Rise Bikini Bottom](#)

[Savi Period Swimwear High Waisted Bottoms](#)

[Ruby Classic Period Swim Bottom](#)

