

Brits use over 250 different phrases for periods, but still don't like talking about them[1],[2]

10/1/2018

---Favourites include painting the town red, Liverpool are playing at home, and red badge of courage1---

London, 1 October 2018 – **New research released today shows that while people in the UK use over 250 different terms to refer to periods, as a nation we still aren't comfortable talking about them and lack basic knowledge.**¹

In fact, a third of adults (31%) finds the subject uncomfortable and one in five women - and over a third of men - don't know where period blood comes from.¹

The survey, carried out by heavy periods information site **Wear White Again**, also reveals that 11% of men and women have never talked to their partner about periods, and just under a fifth of women are uncomfortable discussing periods with female friends. In fact, 17% of women are uncomfortable discussing them with a GP (increasing to 22% for women with heavy periods), meaning they could be missing out on much needed treatment.¹

The taboo around periods seems to be leading to a lack of understanding about them too - 33% of men and over a fifth (21%) of women did not know where in the body period blood comes from, with some even thinking it came from the bladder.¹

Dr. Dawn Harper, GP and media medic, commented, "It's staggering to see how many terms we have invented for periods and yet some people still don't feel comfortable talking to the people closest to them. We sometimes use colloquial language, however, this can make it difficult for women to discuss intimate details about their periods, such as pain and flow. It's important to know and understand what's normal and what's not when it comes to periods and discussing them with others can help facilitate this."

To help these conversations happen, Wear White Again has launched the **Talking Heavy Periods[BG1]** guide, which

aims to help men and women become more knowledgeable about periods. It shares some of the words and phrases we feel most comfortable using to describe periods and the ones we don't. For example, nine out of 10 people dislike the terms 'on the rag' and 'shark week', while 45% prefer to use the term 'having a period'. It also looks at the questions women (and men) should be asking to understand what's "normal" and what to discuss with their GP.

Dr Harper continued, "Periods are certainly nothing to feel uncomfortable about! It's so important to speak to your GP if you are experiencing heavy bleeding which impacts your day-to-day life. Heavy periods are a medically recognised condition for which a range of treatment options are available."

From being worried about bleeding through clothes, to significant pain and changing tampons every hour, heavy periods are an important and unaddressed health issue that can massively impact people's lives. It is important that both men and women understand what's normal. The survey results showed that whilst more than one in five women currently suffer from heavy periods,[3] one in 10 women didn't know any of the causes¹ In addition, 33% of men believe the average woman's period lasts three days or less, and 10% of men didn't know how often the average woman has a period.¹

The Talking Heavy Periods guide along with further information about heavy periods and available treatment options can be found on the Wear White Again website: www.wearwhiteagain.co.uk

Note to editors

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Top 28 expressions to describe periods

(one for every day of the average menstrual cycle!)

Aunt Flo
Tomato soup
Devil's waterfall
Dracula's lunch
Cardinal has his hat on
Jam sandwich
Red badge of courage
Checking into the red roof inn
Red wedding
Arsenal / Liverpool playing at home

Cup of joy is overflowing
Mickey Mouse is in his clubhouse
Painting the town red
Time for the rabbit
WI Week
Tearing down the wall paper
Star Week
Scoobies
Shark Week

Rollover Week
Painters are in
On your redder
Old friend
Mouse time
Moon cycle
In dry dock
Having your Nellie
Granny pants Week

About
Heavy
Periods

A heavy
period

(menorrhagia) can be categorised as:

- bleeding that lasts more than seven days per cycle[4]
- bleeding so severe that a sanitary pad or tampon must be changed every hour for several hours in a row4
- heavy flow that keeps you from your normal activities,4 or even stops you from working[5]
- bleeding with large blood clots4
- feeling very tired or weak4 and often feeling depressed or moody1
- constant pain in the lower part of your stomach during your cycle4

About Hologic

Hologic Inc., the company behind Wear White Again, is an innovative medical technology company primarily focused on improving women's health and well-being through early detection and treatment. Hologic is committed

to raising awareness about and educating on heavy periods. For more information on Hologic, visit www.hologic.com.

[1] Opinium Research carried out an online survey from 25th May to 1st June 2018 of 2,003 UK adults (men and women) aged 18+ (nationally representative), including 504 women who suffer from heavy menstrual bleeding. Respondent named a total of 242 words / phrases to refer to periods.

[2] Wear White Again conducted a Twitter Chat in partnership with Britmums using #LanguageOfPeriods. From this an additional 12 words / phrases to refer to periods were collected from member of the public.

[3] National Heavy Menstrual Bleeding Audit, 2011. Available at:
https://www.rcog.org.uk/globalassets/documents/guidelines/research-audit/nationalhmbaudit_1stannualreport_may2011.pdf Last accessed July 2018

[4] Heavy Menstrual Bleeding | Bleeding Disorders in Women. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/blooddisorders/women/menorrhagia.html> Last accessed July 2018

[5] Gallinat A. An impedance-controlled system for endometrial ablation: five-year follow-up of 107 patients. J Reprod Med. 2007;52(6):467-472

[BG1] NB final version of the guide is being uploaded