



How to Wear and Care for Menstrual Cups

Before you use them

Before you use the cup the first time, you may like to give it a good clean. Some people advocate boiling it in a pot of water for 10 mins (make sure the cup is fully submerged). You can place the cup into a whisk to keep it elevated off the bottom of the pan to avoid burning. Some people like to use a sterilising solution. Some people feel a wash with soap and water is fine. You should do this at the beginning of your cycle, when you want to wear it for the first time, and you should also do this at the end of your cycle before you put it in storage. (Personally I just use soap)

Storage

If you are taking your cup out overnight, you can give it a wash/rinse and leave it sitting out somewhere to dry, without needing to put it back in the pouch. Just give it a rinse when you use it next to remove any dust etc. When it is time to store your cup for the next month, keep your cup in a breathable container. In its pouch in your medicine cabinet or a drawer in your bedside table etc. is fine – it should not be sealed up in a plastic container or other such thing.

Insertion

If you can practice with the cup before your period starts, this is a good way to get familiar with how it works, without the worry about it being messy. You can use lubricant (suitable for silicone) with the cup if you need to. Remember to be relaxed, and try different folds and different body positions if you are having trouble. I find running the cup under the hot tap to heat it up a bit works well.

To insert it, hold it in the folded position, and insert it (the cup comes with instructions for folds and insertion). Make sure you release our hold on the cup slowly, so that it does not pop open too suddenly. If that happens, you may find you get some cramps – removing the cup and inserting it again should stop that (and they should go away on their own after a short while anyway). You can then give the cup a twist by holding the base of the cup, or run your finger around the top rim to make sure it is fully unfolded. If you can feel the cup is dented in at all, this means it has not fully opened – twist the cup, or press outward against the vaginal muscles to help the cup open.

Stem

You may find the stem of the cup sits close to (or even pokes out of) the entrance of your vagina. If the stem irritates you, you can try pushing the cup up a little higher, or you can trim the stem off with scissors. If you trim, make sure you take a little off at a time, as you can always cut more off later, but you can't glue it back on if you've cut too much off 😊

Removal

You're not supposed to use the stem to just pull the cup out. You should use your finger to press into the top rim of the cup, to break the seal of the cup against the vaginal wall first, then you should hold the base of the cup (or the stem) and carefully pull the cup down until you get to the vaginal opening. You can then tip the cup sideways a little to bring one side of the rim out. Depending on how full the cup is, you may spill some when removing it, so it is best to remove it in the shower or over the toilet.

It is common for the cup contents to “separate” with a watery fluid on top and the thicker blood at the bottom. You may see small clots in there. That is perfectly natural.

Clean up

Blood sinks to the bottom of the toilet bowl, so you may need to either flush a few times, or place some toilet paper in the toilet before emptying the cup. Another option if the cup is not too full, is to take some toilet paper and carefully place it into the cup to soak up the blood, then drop the toilet paper in the toilet.

Rinsing before inserting it again is preferable, but you can wipe it clean with toilet paper, or even reinsert it again without cleaning it if necessary. If you are in a public toilet and/or don't have easy access to a sink, you could try a bottle of water or the Lunette cleansing wipes. These could help wipe any blood from your fingers too.

To give the cup a proper clean, rinse the cup with water, then fill the cup and hold your palm over the rim, squeeze the cup and the water should be forced out through the airholes around the rim of the cup – clearing them out. You may need to do this a few times to fully clear it.

Only use mild soaps, preferably fragrance free and as natural as possible. Cup companies recommend against using an oil based soap, as this may affect the silicone. Soapy residue can irritate the delicate skin of the vagina, so make sure to rinse well. You can use sterilising solutions, but these are not really necessary.

Leakage

You may want to wear a pantyliner with the cup, to catch any leaks. While the cup actually leaking should be rare, often you will have a small amount of blood that was in the vagina before you inserted the cup, which may be enough to mark your underpants if you are not wearing a liner.

The cup may leak if it becomes too full, often this results in a “bubbly” feeling, which gives you an indication that the cup needs to be emptied. If the cup is not inserted properly, it may not create a seal properly and may leak. If this happens, you may need a few cycles to get the hang of inserting it properly.