

 **COACHES ARMOURY**

THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE & ATHLETES

RESOURCES

THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE AND ATHLETES

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

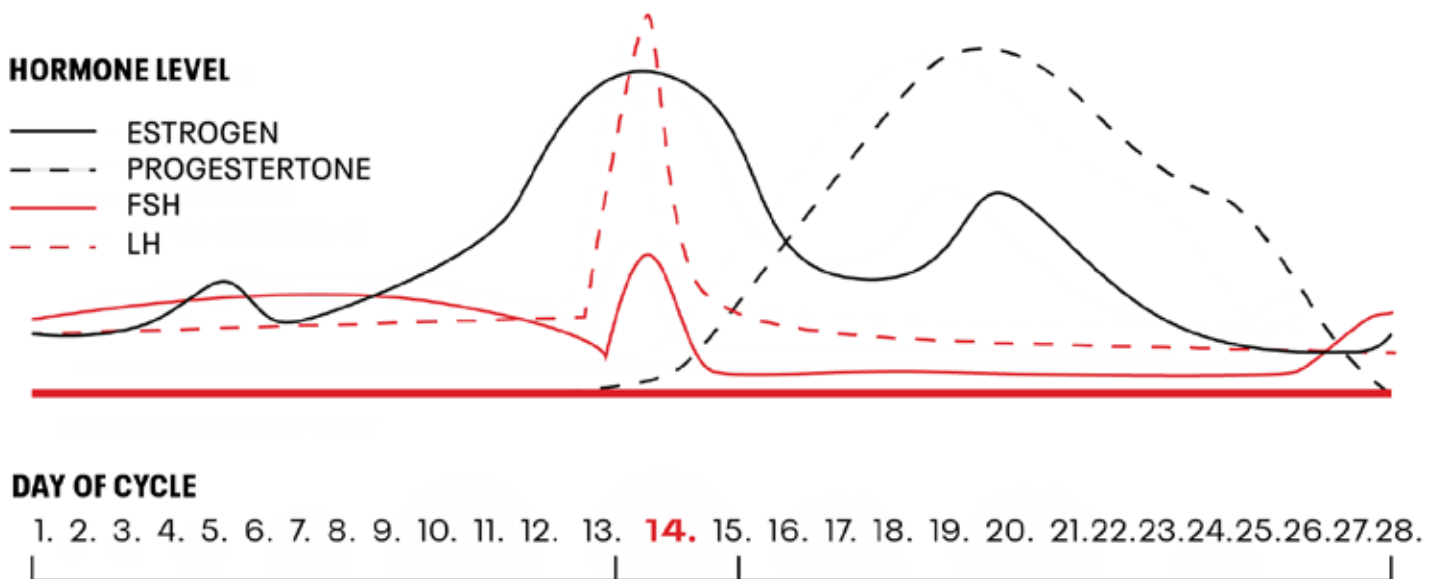
- Women generally go through a myriad of hormonal changes every month leading up to their period.
- These hormone changes can affect their athletic performance, injury risk, hydration and cool down needs.
- Athletes can use their cycle to their advantage and train appropriately to continue to meet and exceed their goals.
- By training an athlete to be ready no matter where she is in her cycle for games, competitions, or races, she will have a distinct advantage over her unprepared competition.

AWARENESS DURING HER CYCLE PHASES:

- Once she gets her period and for the next two weeks, her body is better prepared for building muscle strength and movements that require greater contractile force.
 - Consider heavier weight training here
- There is a window from about 7-14 days after her period where she's more at risk for ligament laxity.
 - Be mindful of HIIT type training movements especially regarding the ACL in the knee.
- The week before her period is commonly known as "PMS" week for a lot of women. Athletes may start to notice:
 - Fine motor skills and spatial cognition (ex. where they are on the field in relation to teammates) might be worse.
 - Increased risk of clumsiness, not as smooth as they want to be
 - More tired/not sleeping as well due to shifting hormones
 - More moodiness due to shifting hormones
 - Feels warmer quicker, may take longer to cool down/recover
 - More sodium loss
- That week before her period, really focus on fine motor skills, hand eye coordination, balance exercises, etc. Encourage less screen time at night, reduced caffeine late in the day, and the importance of sleep. Be extra aware of the cool down/recovery this week. Improve hydration and electrolyte use as needed.

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The Menstrual Cycle: Through the phases



Weight training better here

Watch the explosive HIIT style exercises.
Protect ligaments.

More at risk for mood swings, overheating, clumsiness, electrolyte loss, little mistakes, feeling slower.

FOCUS ON:

- Fine motor skills/hand-eye coordination/balance exercises, etc.
- Encourage less screen time at night, reduced caffeine late in the day, and the importance of sleep.
- Be extra aware of cool down/recovery this week.
- Improve hydration and electrolyte use as needed.