



# Menstrual Hormones

## PHASE 1: MENSTRUAL

"not pregnant"

all hormone levels are low as the body sheds the old uterine lining

## PHASE 2: FOLLICULAR

"preparing for pregnancy"

hormone levels rise as the ovary prepares an egg for ovulation

## PHASE 3: OVULATORY

"likely to become pregnant"

many hormones peak (and rapidly drop) to trigger the egg release

## PHASE 4: LUTEAL

"potentially pregnant"

the uterus lining thickens to nourish a (potentially) fertilized egg

### FOLLICLE STIMULATING HORMONE (FSH)

*stimulates the ovary follicle to prepare an egg for ovulation and estrogen release*

### LUTENIZING HORMONE (LH)

*triggers the ovary to release an egg at ovulation, which leaves an empty follicle (now called the corpus luteum)*

### ESTROGENS

*prepares the uterus lining for possible pregnancy and thins cervical mucus (so sperm can enter)*

### PROGESTERONE

*thickens and maintains uterine lining, turns off LH/FSH, triggers menstrual bleeding when it drops*

### TESTOSTERONE

*much lower in women than men, but peaks around ovulation to increase libido (when she is most fertile)*

