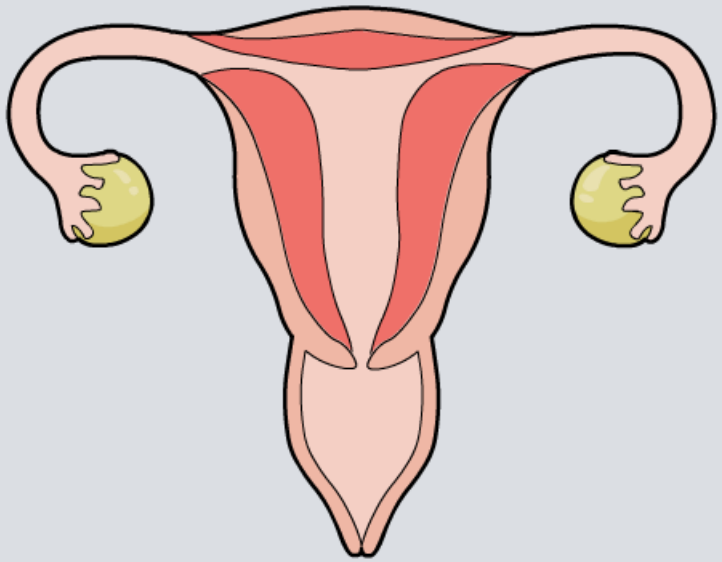
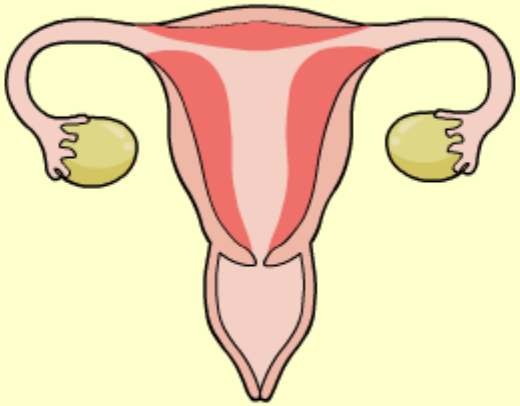
Female Reproductive System



The menstrual cycle

What happens during the menstrual cycle?

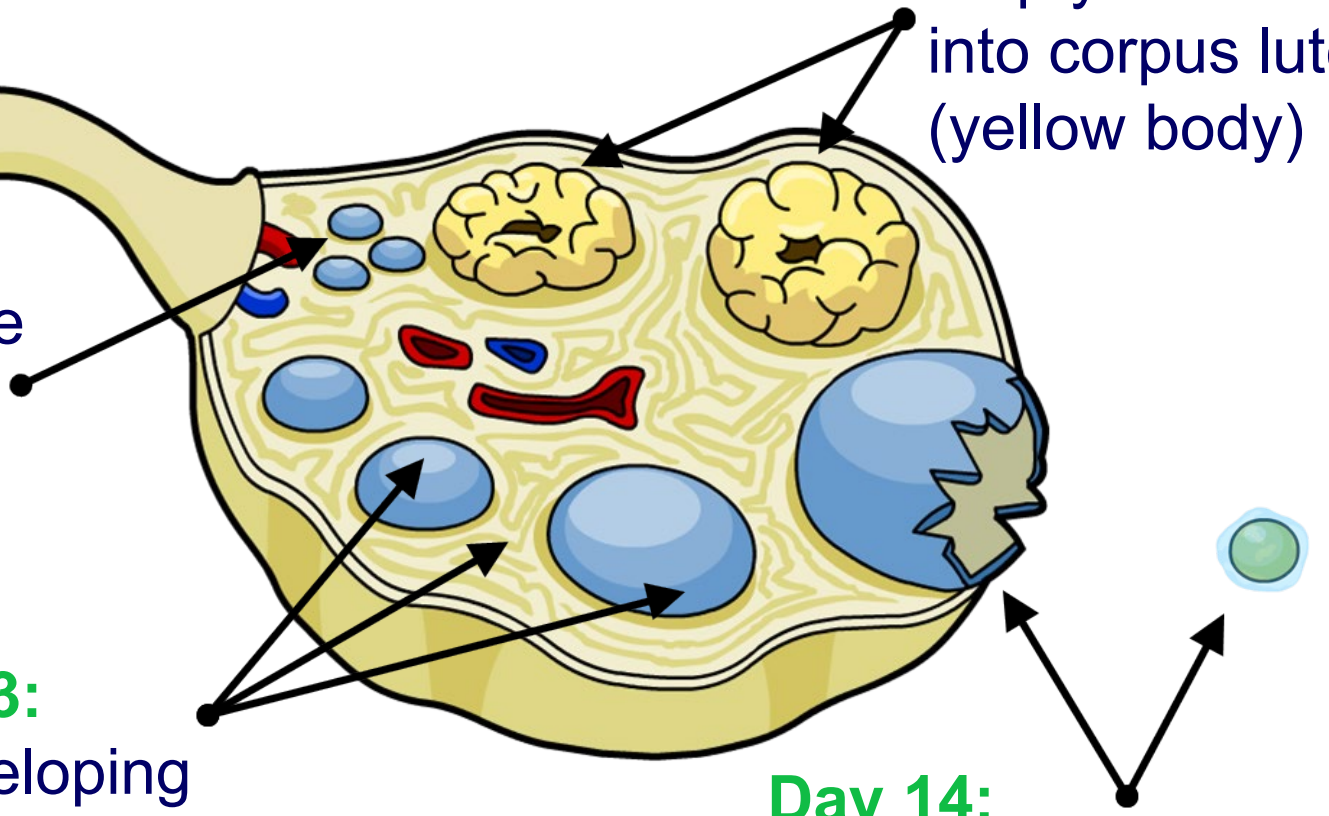


Click "**start**" to find out.

start

Inside the ovary

What happens in the ovary during the menstrual cycle?



Day 15-28:
empty follicle turns into corpus luteum (yellow body)

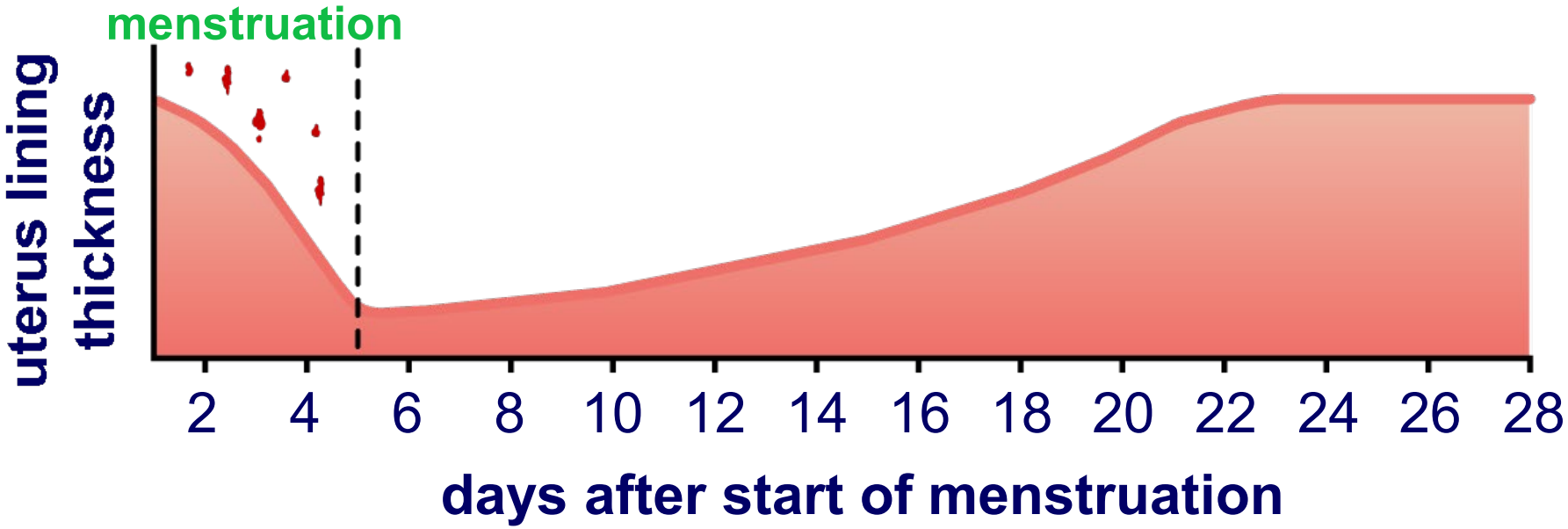
immature eggs

Day 1-13:
egg developing inside the growing follicle

Day 14:
ovulation – egg released from follicle

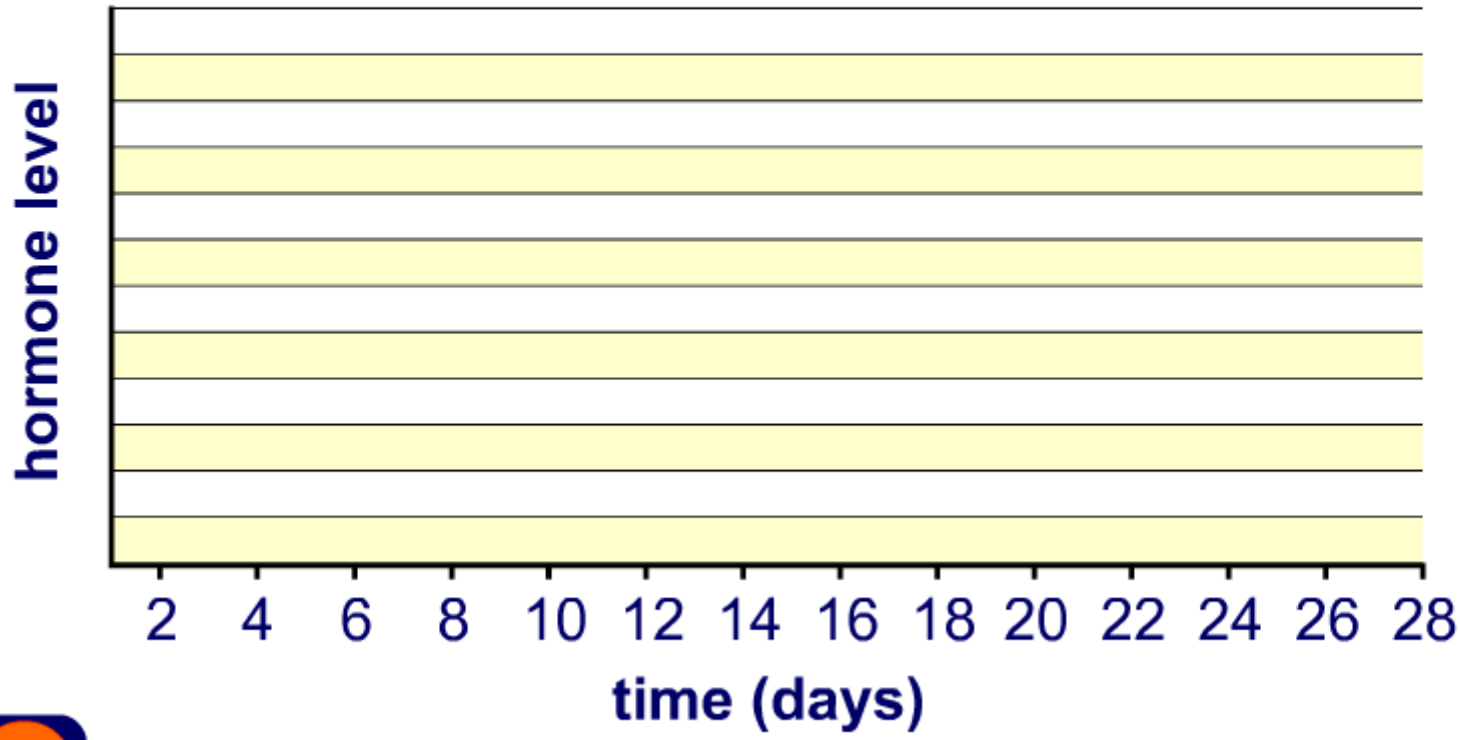
Uterus lining

The lining of the uterus becomes thicker with blood vessels and more stable during the menstrual cycle. Why is this important?



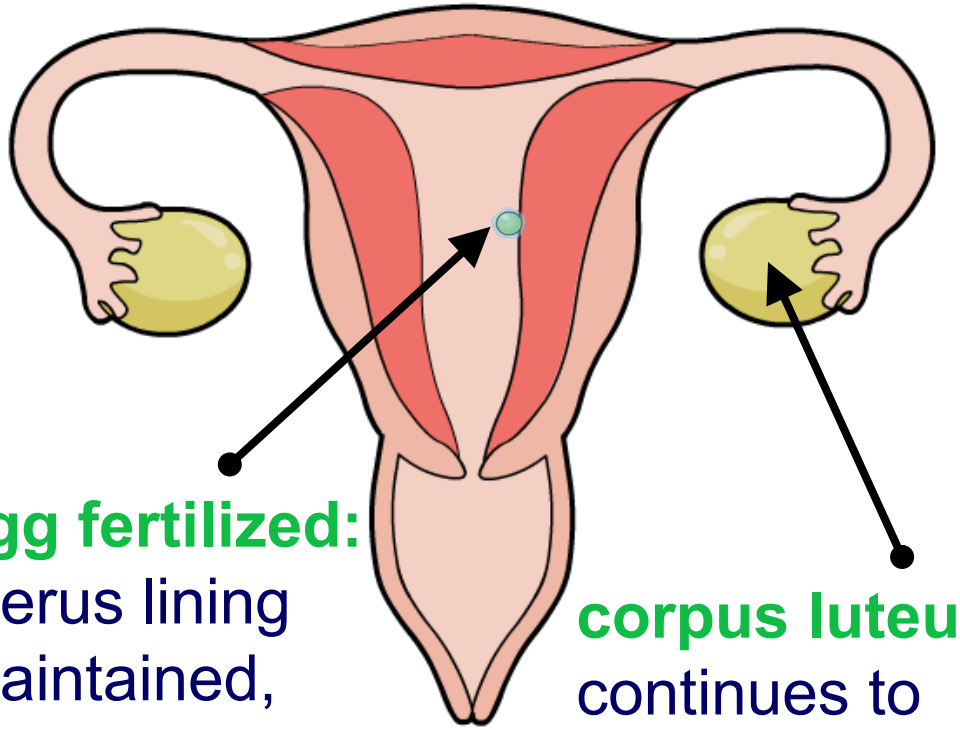
A fertilized egg will bury itself (implant) in the uterus lining. The egg needs a plentiful supply of oxygen and nutrients to develop.

Hormone levels



Pregnancy

If the egg is fertilized, the uterus lining must not break down otherwise the fertilized egg will not develop.



egg fertilized: uterus lining maintained, egg implanted

corpus luteum: continues to produce progesterone and estrogen

progesterone memo

To: uterus

From: corpus luteum

Maintain uterus lining.

estrogen memo

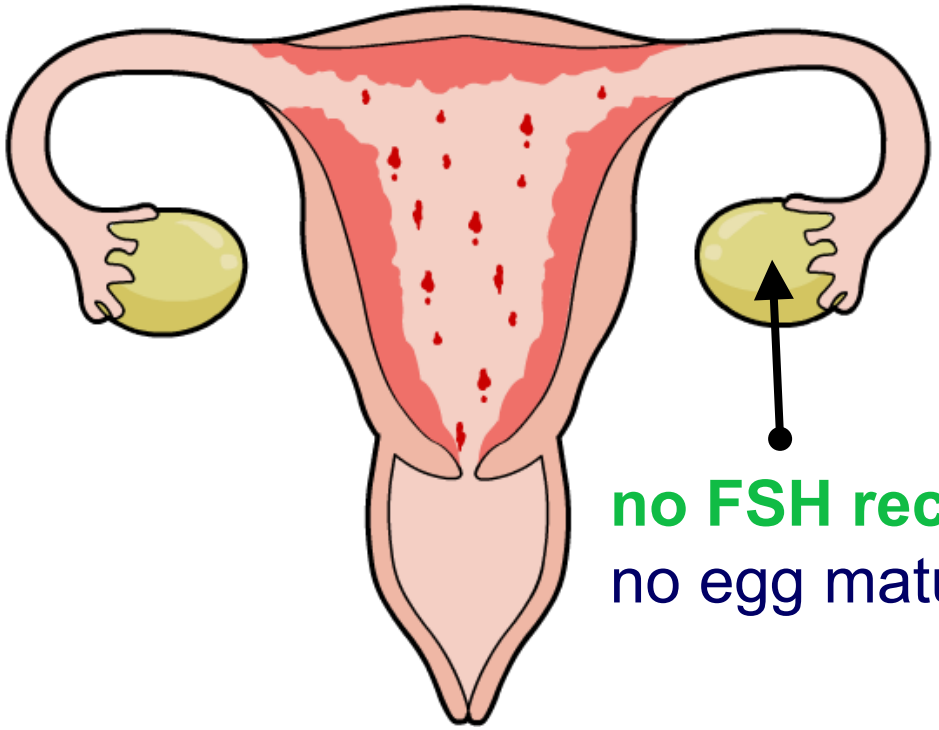
To: pituitary

From: corpus luteum

Don't send FSH.

How does the contraceptive pill work?

Contraceptive pills contain progesterone and need to be taken every day. How do they work?



progesterone memo

To: pituitary

From: contraceptive pill

Stop sending FSH.

no FSH received:
no egg maturing

Contraceptive pills mimic pregnancy, which means that the ovaries do not produce any eggs.

Hormonal changes

What is the sequence of changes in the menstrual cycle?

1. The egg is unfertilized – period occurs
2. The pituitary gland releases FSH
3. The ovaries release estrogen
4. Estrogen causes the uterus lining to thicken
5. Estrogen switches FSH off and stimulates LH release
6. LH stimulates egg release
7. The pituitary gland releases LH
8. FSH stimulates egg maturation and estrogen release

?

C solve

Summary of fertility hormones

What hormones are involved in the menstrual cycle?

click the brain
to start