

Use the following guidelines to determine the quality of bleeding (H, M, L, S):

Note: Have the client chart in the comments sections the # of pads/tampons used in a day. A regular tampon/pad holds 5ml of blood.

Heavy: Using approximately 5 or more regular pads or tampons per day (needing to change pad or tampon at night).

Medium: Using approximately 3-5 regular pads or tampons per day. Consistent flow.

A regular pad becomes soaked in about 4 hours.

Light: Using approximately 1-2 regular pads or tampons per day. Some regular flow. Light bleeding often happens at the beginning or end of menstruation.

Spotting: Using only a pantyliner. Irregular flow.

Recording menstrual flow using a menstrual cup:

Record the number of times changed and the volume emptied. Depending on the menstrual cup, it can hold anywhere from 20-35 ml. It is important to know how many ml the menstrual cup holds, however, if there are no measurements on the cup the approximate percentage filled (50%, or less or more) can be used. The below refers to the total volume filled per day.

Heavy: >25ml or having to change a full cup more than once in a day.

Medium: 15-25ml or approximately 1/2 cup to almost full.

Light: 5-10 ml or ¼ to ⅓ of a menstrual cup.

A woman typically loses 40 - 80 ml (8 - 16 teaspoons) of blood over the course of her period. A light period would involve losing less than 40 ml and a heavy period would involve losing more than 80 ml.

Note: mucus and cellular sloughing add volume to menstrual flow.

Citations For Menstrual Cup Conversion:

1. <https://divacup.com/faqs/>
2. <https://www.menstrualcup.eco/blog/how-much-can-a-menstrual-cup-hold-compared-to-a-tampon>
3. <https://www.cemcor.ubc.ca/resources/very-heavy-menstrual-flow>
4. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20093896/?from_term=blood+loss+menstrual+cycle&from_pos=10

Heavy periods: Overview; Created: December 31, 2009; Last Update: May 4, 2017; Next update: 2020.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK279294/>

