# DivaCup Q&As

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If you have an immediate concern not covered in this document or in the User Guide, please email us at support@divacup.com or contact us by phone, leaving your name and email address, and our Customer Support Team will take care of you!

Customer Support | Monday – Friday 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM EST
Phone: 519-896-9103
Toll Free US/Canada: 1-866-444-DIVA (3482)

AUSTRALIA:
Consumers: 1-300-884-456 or divacup@lightningbrokers.com.au
Retailers: 1-300-884-456 or divacup.retailers@lightningbrokers.com.au
Your First Questions

Answering questions about menstrual health and providing a sustainable solution for period care is what Diva International is all about. That’s why we have taken the time to answer some of your questions and help you through your period experience, *The Diva Way*.

The fact is, menstrual cups have been around for 80 years, but the truth about them has been lost in the frenzy of disposable tampons and pads. Like anything new, The DivaCup may take some getting used to as the experience of wearing The DivaCup is totally different than the sensation of tampons. Even women who are used to wearing pads as their preferred method of period care (because they cannot wear tampons or are not comfortable with internal feminine hygiene products) are finding great success with The DivaCup!

*Please Note: The DivaCup should only be worn during menstruation and should not be worn during any other time of the month.*

12 hour leak-free protection

According to consumer research, 60 percent of women experience leakage every month when using tampons and pads! Rest assured, with The DivaCup your days of racing to the washroom to survey the leak damage after a sudden “surge” are over. The DivaCup can be worn up to a maximum of ten (10) – twelve (12) consecutive hours and should be emptied, washed and rinsed a minimum of two (2) – three (3) times daily. The DivaCup is made of soft silicone that actually softens with body heat. Because of this, the cup forms to your body. Our *Tips for Success* section has lots of information to help ensure you are getting the most out of your DivaCup.

The “ick” factor

A common response we hear when we tell women (and men) about our product is “Ewww! That’s gross!”. With our culture’s fascination with disposables it’s no wonder this response prevails. However, once you take the time to learn about The DivaCup, and actually try it for yourself, you will be surprised at how clean and comfortable it really is. Plus, unlike tampons and pads, by catching your menstrual flow in its unique bell-shape, The DivaCup gives you the opportunity to learn about your monthly flow, educating and empowering you about your body and your health.

Your flow

Don’t let your imagination get the best of you. Removing The DivaCup is not at all like a scene from a horror movie. The DivaCup conveniently holds one full ounce of menstrual flow (30 ml). As the average woman only flows approximately 1 to 1.4 ounces (30-40 ml) per cycle, The DivaCup is the ideal menstrual solution to care for your cycle. In fact, many women are surprised at the amount of flow and expected that there would be much more!

The convenient ounces and milliliters measurement feature of each DivaCup allows women to keep track of their flow and report details to their health professional if needed. Tampons and pads are not a reliable or
scientific method of determining flow, because they come in many absorbencies, contain surfactants and moisture control agents.

**Odor**
Menstrual flow only begins to develop an odor when it is exposed to air. As The DivaCup is worn internally, your days of worrying about period odor are over. Menstrual fluid on tampons and pads is exposed to air which creates odor throughout the day. For the first time, The DivaCup will leave you feeling fresh and confident the entire day!

**Ideal for women of all shapes and sizes**
The DivaCup is suitable for women of all ages, sizes and lifestyles. When most women are first introduced to The DivaCup they are surprised by its size and often ask us “will that even fit?”. Unlike the cylinder shape of tampons, The DivaCup is shaped like a bell. We assure women, whether age 13 or 33, that there is nothing to worry about.

The vaginal canal is an elastic, muscular tube only about four (4) – five (5) inches (10.2 – 12.7 cm) long and is designed to stretch and return back to its normal size. We know this to be true because our vaginas do just that during childbirth or intercourse.

For those concerned about the hymen, please consult your physician before use of any internal feminine hygiene protection. As for all other gynecological concerns, we suggest you consult your physician. This will help you make an informed decision!

**Sex, birth control and anatomy**
It is not necessary to remove The DivaCup for urination or bowel movement; however, as The DivaCup sits low in the vaginal canal, it cannot be worn during intercourse. The DivaCup is not a birth control device and should not be used for this purpose. The DivaCup is regulated by the US FDA, Australian TGA and Health Canada solely for use as feminine hygiene protection.

Please note the following when using The DivaCup with an internal birth control device such as an IUD or NuvaRing®.

The DivaCup is worn low at the base of the vagina and away from the cervix. This means that it should not interfere with an internal birth control device. However, please use caution when using any internal feminine hygiene product with an IUD as there is the possibility that they can be dislodged. When using The DivaCup, it is important to carefully follow the directions in our User Guide, paying close attention to inserting The DivaCup low in the vaginal canal and breaking the seal (suction) before removal. Many of our customers use The DivaCup with an IUD or NuvaRing® simultaneously, but we recommend that you become familiar with your birth control device’s risks (such as the body expelling the IUD, etc.).

As with any gynecological concerns, please consult your physician prior to using any kind of internal feminine hygiene product, including a menstrual cup.
Lifespan
Silicone is very durable, but we recommend that you inspect your cup regularly for signs of deterioration such as a sticky or powdery film, severe discoloration or odor, etc. If you detect any of these signs or if you experience irritation we recommend you replace your DivaCup with a new one.

Depending on the factors unique to each woman, like vaginal pH, how well and often the cup is cleaned, what cleansing agents are used, etc., the lifespan may vary. Since The DivaCup is a personal hygienic product, a general guideline is to replace it once a year, but ultimately, it is up to the consumer to decide when it is necessary to replace the cup.

Our Care and Cleaning instructions can provide you with some helpful tips for caring for your DivaCup.

Will The DivaCup get “stuck” or “lost”?
The vaginal canal is an elastic, muscular tube only about four (4) – five (5) inches (10.2 – 12.7 cm) long! This means that the vagina does not connect to other parts of the body so The DivaCup cannot get lost. For more information please visit our Tips for Success.

Colors and dyes
The DivaCup is exclusively available in a natural un-pigmented silicone. We considered manufacturing The DivaCup in colored silicone but decided against it because the skin, including the sensitive skin of the vaginal walls, should not be exposed to dyes, chemicals, etc. Although colors are fun, adding other components such as pigment particles, along with chemical additives required to bind the particles to the silicone, create additional risk to the base chemistry of the silicone. Diva International feels that this is an unnecessary risk to take as there is still a possibility that the particles or other chemicals may not bind properly and could leach into the body.

Product Cost
At first glance it may seem that The DivaCup is expensive compared to buying a box of tampons or pads. However, every DivaCup user will attest that it is worth every penny, and more. Plus, The DivaCup pays for itself in just a few months since it is a reusable product. The Suggested Retail Price of one DivaCup is USD/CAD$39.99. This reflects a savings of $100-150 a year when compared to purchasing disposables.

Samples
Because of the lifespan, production and cost of The DivaCup we do not offer free samples. However, we believe strongly in giving back to our Diva fans. We frequently post discount codes, sales and giveaways on both our Facebook and Twitter! pages. Follow us today for a chance to win a free DivaCup while also learning about menstrual awareness and other DivaCup related news!

How it Works
We’ve put together some simple, easy-to-follow directions to make your DivaCup experience as comfortable as the cup is to wear.
Please Note: This is a condensed version of the User Guide. Customers receive a full version with purchase of The DivaCup or you can download a PDF version here.

Step 1: Fold

Fold Option 1 “U Fold“: Press the sides of the cup together and then fold it in half again forming a tight “U” shape.

Fold Option 2 “Push Down“: Place a finger on the top rim of the cup and press it down into the center of the inside base to form a triangle. This makes the top rim much smaller to insert.

Step 2: Hold

Hold the folded sides firmly in place between your thumb and forefinger so that the curved edge is facing away from your palm (or so that the stem is facing your palm).

Step 3: Insert

In a comfortable position and with your vaginal muscles relaxed, gently separate the labia with your free hand and then push the curved edge of the folded DivaCup horizontally into the vaginal opening. Not sure where to find your labia? Visit our All Things Period page for a brief overview on vaginal anatomy.

Step 4: Seal and Rotate

Grip the base of the cup (not the stem) and turn the cup one full rotation (360 degrees) in either direction or insert the cup about half way, turn the cup one full rotation and then push it horizontally in the rest of the way. The DivaCup must rotate easily as this ensures that it is fully open and that it is positioned horizontally towards your tailbone.
Step 5: **Removal**

To remove, pull gently on the stem of The DivaCup until you can reach the base of the cup. Pinch the base of the cup to release the seal and continue to pull down to remove it. After the cup has been removed, empty the contents in the toilet, wash The DivaCup well with warm water and The DivaWash, or a mild unscented water-based (oil-free) soap, and reinsert.

**When to empty**

The DivaCup must be emptied, washed and reinserted at least 2 times a day (twice in a 24 hour period) and can be worn overnight without concern of leaking. Most women need only to empty it in the morning and again in the evening.

By monitoring the fullness of the cup over a couple of cycles, you will quickly learn how often to empty it according to your specific needs. Most women find that the cup is not even half full after 12 hours. For those with heavier flows, the cup is simply emptied more often.

If you have a fairly regular cycle, you may insert The DivaCup right before your period to avoid spotting.

**Choose Your Size**

Whether you’re a junior in high school, junior associate or a coach of your daughter’s junior little league team, the DivaCup will fit into your life, not the other way around.

The DivaCup is available in two sizes, Model 1 and Model 2. Your cup size is stamped on the inside rim of the cup. There is a small difference between the two sizes (Model 1 is 1/8” (~0.3 cm) smaller), but it is important to use the recommended sizing to prevent leakage.

**Model 1:** Recommended for women under 30 years old who have never delivered vaginally or by caesarean section.

**Model 2:** Recommended for women over 30 years old and/or for women who have delivered vaginally or by caesarean section.
Care and Cleaning

What you put into your vagina will determine its overall health, which is why maintaining your vagina’s pH levels is so important. A vagina with a high pH level often leads to discomfort, odor, irritation and even infection.

Many women do not realize that the feminine hygiene products they use are the culprits of their vaginal discomfort. The vagina is self-cleansing and continually produces fluid that “flushes” the vagina. When a tampon is inserted, its composition of rayon and cotton absorbs your vagina’s protective fluid, drying out and disrupting its normal pH levels.

When used as directed, The DivaCup is a more sanitary feminine hygiene solution to tampons or pads. Latex-free, plastic-free, BPA-free, odor-free and free of colors and dyes, The DivaCup is made from healthcare grade non-absorbent silicone, which means it will not dry out or disrupt the natural environment of your vagina.

Just like your vagina needs regular care, so too does your DivaCup. By following our care and cleaning tips in our User Guide and the tips below you can ensure a pleasant DivaCup experience.

Care during your cycle

The first thing you must always do before removing or inserting your DivaCup is to thoroughly wash your hands with warm water and soap. Before insertion and after removal, you must also wash your DivaCup using The DivaWash or warm water and a mild, unscented, water-based (oil-free) soap. Remember to empty and wash your DivaCup at least twice a day, a minimum of every 12 hours.

If you are unable to wash The DivaCup after removal (for instance when using a public restroom), wash your hands thoroughly before entering the stall, empty the contents in the toilet and simply use a dry or damp tissue to clean the cup. At the next convenient time, clean as per the above instructions. When traveling, or otherwise, always wash the cup using potable (safe to drink) water.

What not to do

Never use a lubricant to insert The DivaCup. The ingredients in lubricants can damage the silicone, so we suggest using only water as a lubricant!

When cleaning your DivaCup be sure to avoid using: vinegar, tea tree oil, scented/fragranced soap, castile/peppermint soap or any other oil based soap, rubbing alcohol, antibacterial soap, hand sanitizer, pre-moistened wipes, hydrogen peroxide, dishwashing soap, bleach or harsh chemicals as some have been known to damage or compromise the silicone (may leave a sticky or powdery film, etc.) and may need to be replaced
to avoid irritations, burning, etc. *If you have cleaned your DivaCup with any of the non-recommended cleansers, replace the cup if there are any signs of deterioration or if you experience irritation.*

We do not recommend cleaning The DivaCup in the dishwasher because chemicals, detergents and residue from previous dishwashing could harm the cup.

**Cleaning your DivaCup rim and holes**

The four holes under the rim of your DivaCup are of vital importance. They create the seal that secures the cup in place. If the holes need extra cleaning, we suggest that you gently stretch each hole under warm running water to remove any debris. You can also soak the cup in warm water for a few minutes then use a soft toothbrush (specifically designated only for the cup) for this. You can use a toothpick (discarding after use), as well. We do not suggest a pin as it may cause damage to the cup.

**End of cycle care**

At the end of your cycle, wash The DivaCup as you normally do with either the DivaWash or warm water and a mild, unscented water-based (oil-free) soap. As needed, you can boil The DivaCup in an open pot of boiling water for five to ten (5 -10) minutes with plenty of water. Do not leave the boiling pot unattended. If you accidentally burned your cup when the pot boiled dry, your cup may be ruined and should be replaced.

**Storage**

After use and proper cleaning, The DivaCup must be placed in something that will allow for air flow. For this reason each DivaCup you buy comes with a breathable drawstring cotton pouch. After proper cleaning, place your DivaCup in your carrying pouch, in a safe place, where it can stay until your next period.

*Please Note: The DivaCup should not be stored in a plastic bag or airtight container as it is impossible for moisture to evaporate without air flow.*

**Discoloration**

Over time, menstrual cups can discolor for various reasons. If The DivaCup starts to discolor, you can try boiling it as per the instructions in the User Guide. A discolored DivaCup does not mean you need to replace the cup.

**Odor**

Silicone itself is odor-free, but if your cup does develops an odor, depending on what cleanser was used, and a number of factors unique to each woman, the silicone may be compromised. You can try boiling the cup as per the instructions in the User Guide, however if an odor remains after boiling and thoroughly washing your cup, you may want to consider purchasing a new cup.
Disposal
Silicone is not recyclable, but, since it starts out as sand, it degrades over time depending on the temperature, anaerobic activity and moisture in the landfill. This applies to all products made from silicone, like baby bottle nipples and toys. To dispose of your DivaCup, thoroughly wash the cup, cut it up into smaller pieces, and dispose in the trash.

General Care
We recommend that you inspect your cup regularly for signs or deterioration (such as a sticky or powdery film, severe discoloration or odor, etc.) or if you experience irritation. If for some reason your DivaCup starts to discolor or develop an odor you may want to consider replacing it or giving it a thorough cleaning by boiling it and washing it well with the DivaWash.

It is important to follow the Cleaning & Care instructions outlined in your User Guide to ensure good vaginal health and prevent any damage to the silicone. *If at any time The DivaCup is exposed to unsanitary conditions such as a toilet, please replace it with a new one.*

Tips for Success
No one expected you to ride your bike without training wheels on your first try. Likewise, finding the right fold, routine and time of use for your DivaCup may take a few cycles. Once you’ve got a handle on it, you’ll be inserting and removing the cup without even thinking about it.

Every woman’s body is unique in shape, and flow, which is why some women manage to have success inserting The DivaCup on their first try, while others may require a couple tries (or even a few full cycles) to experience all its wonderful benefits!

**Below are a few helpful tips to help you find the right fit and feel of your DivaCup.**
- Read your User Guide!
- Remember to thoroughly wash your hands with soap and warm water before insertion and removal.
- To maintain the integrity of The DivaCup clean thoroughly with warm water and The DivaWash or use a mild unscented water-based (oil-free) soap.
- Unlike tampons, be sure to insert the The DivaCup horizontally (toward the tailbone).
- After insertion, ensure that the cup is fully open by rotating it a full 360 degrees in either direction.
- Practicing Kegel exercises will help keep your vaginal muscles strong and may help The DivaCup stay in place better and prevent leakage.
- Do not insert The DivaCup while lying down as this may result in the cup being positioned improperly, leading to discomfort and possible leaking.
• If The DivaCup does move up in the vaginal canal and you are experiencing difficulty removing it please refer to Section B of the User Guide for assistance. In the rare case that you are still unable to remove The DivaCup after more than twelve (12) hours, seek medical advice.

• If your cup does leak, it has not been inserted properly; it has not been rotated; it is not inserted at the right angle (horizontally); or the muscle tone of your vagina needs to be strengthened with Kegel exercises (usually necessary after multiple vaginal childbirths).

The mystery behind Kegels

Kegels are exercises that many women practice to strengthen their vaginal muscles (pubococcygeus PC muscles) – which are the muscles that hold The DivaCup in place. Although often helpful post pregnancy, Kegels are a great exercise that any DivaCup user can practice. And the best part about them is that they can be done anytime and anywhere (on the bus, at the office, watching TV etc).

How to Kegel!

To practice Kegels you must first identify your PC muscles. When in the washroom, try starting and stopping the flow of urine. The muscle you use to start and stop this flow is your PC muscle and this exercise is called a Kegel!

Mix it up!

Doing a series of Kegels each day is all it takes to strengthen your PC muscles. Simply tighten your PC muscles, hold for three seconds, release and repeat. You can also practice a series of quick Kegels, without holding the muscle in between.

Medical Questions

Comfort, ease and menstrual awareness are positive attributes that come with using The DivaCup. In some cases, customers have reported that the comfort of the cup makes for a less-painful period experience and some women even forget they are menstruating altogether!

We have found that women who use The DivaCup are more aware of their menstrual health than women who do not. This is because when using The DivaCup, a woman, literally is able to connect with her flow and body.

We’ve put together some important medical information you may have questions about.

Please Note: The following is meant to be informational in nature and is not offered as medical advice, nor does it substitute for consultation with your physician. If you have any gynecological/medical concerns or conditions regarding the use of internal feminine hygiene products, we encourage you to consult your physician.
Internal Matters

Physically, The DivaCup is suitable for women of all ages (even if you cannot wear tampons) as the vaginal canal is made up of very flexible tissue and muscles. Women’s bodies are designed this way to be able to deliver a baby. After being stretched, after intercourse or childbirth, the tissue returns back to its normal size.

*Please Note: The DivaCup should only be worn during menstruation and should not be worn during any other time of the month.*

The DivaCup sits low in the vaginal canal and because it is made from healthcare grade non-absorbent silicone it should not irritate the inside of your vagina, if cleaned and cared for properly. With regards to concerns over infections such as, cervicitis, yeast infections or Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS) please consult your physician prior to using The DivaCup. **If at any time during your use of The DivaCup you experience any discomfort, discontinue use and contact your physician.**

Birth Control and STIs

Menstrual cups are regulated by the FDA and Health Canada for use only as feminine hygiene protection. **The DivaCup should not be used as a birth control device and will not protect you from Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).**

Remember, because of its placement, low in the vaginal canal, The DivaCup must be removed prior to intercourse.

When not to use

There is no known increased risk of yeast infections with the use of menstrual cups. However, if you have a vaginal infection, it is best to discontinue use of The DivaCup until the infection has cleared up completely. It is unknown if yeast (Candida albicans) can be completely eliminated with boiling, therefore we suggest replacing the cup with a new one if you had a yeast infection while using The DivaCup. Please refer to your User Guide and visit our Care and Cleaning section for detailed instructions on boiling your cup.

Also, never use the cup at the same time that a topical medication is being used. The medication may compromise the silicone and ruin the cup. If this happens, please replace the cup with a new one.

The DivaCup should not be used during postnatal bleeding. We suggest you contact your health care physician before using any internal feminine hygiene product after childbirth.

**For further questions concerning vaginal infections and use of a menstrual cup, please contact a physician or healthcare provider.**
Allergies

Synthetic latex rubber and natural latex or gum rubber contain a protein called “nitrosamine”. This is the chemical that produces the allergic reaction that many people have to latex. The DivaCup is made from durable top quality, healthcare grade silicone that is suitable for use by women with latex allergies, because it is nitrosamine and latex-free. You can learn more about the manufacturing process of The DivaCup here.

The DivaCup: One could have sensitivity to any substance, but it is extremely rare to have sensitivity to silicone. Studies indicate that silicone is biocompatible with the body. This is why silicone has been used in healthcare applications for over 50 years. If you do experience skin sensitivity, immediately discontinue use and contact your health care provider.

Packaging: Please note that the packaging for our products of The DivaCup and DivaWash comes from a variety of sources, and because of this we cannot guarantee that the packaging is free of gluten, tree nuts or peanuts; however, The DivaCup itself does not contain any of these ingredients.

Above all, should you have any concerns about allergies, please consult your physician or dermatologist.

Extreme Sports and Travel

You have so many demands on your time – period care shouldn’t be one of them. The DivaCup offers up to 12 hours of hassle-free menstrual care, giving you ultimate comfort without putting you on a schedule.

With The DivaCup you don’t have to worry about where to tuck that tampon string when swimming or if your tampon or pad can handle the various angles of your body movement during a yoga pose or when dancing, swimming hiking, skydiving, camping, etc.

From business trips to family vacations to backpacking across the world, The DivaCup is all you need! With its 12 hour leak-free protection, The DivaCup lets you pack that extra pair of shoes, instead of the armful of tampons and pads that previously took up precious room in your luggage. Plus, that ten hour canoe ride will be an easy feat as you won’t need to worry about finding a bathroom to switch your product every four hours or so.

Remember, no matter where you are in the world, The DivaCup only needs to be washed well, with clean, potable water, twice a day (every 12 hours). If you need to remove your DivaCup in a public place, just wipe it with a damp tissue and reinsert. At the next convenient time, wash The DivaCup with the DivaWash or warm
water and a mild, unscented water-based (oil-free) soap. The most important thing to remember is to make
sure your hands are clean before you insert or remove the cup.

**Extreme Sports**

For ultimate comfort and protection during your next skydive or jet ski ride, ensure your DivaCup has been
inserted properly, that the cup is fully open, the seal is in place and that you can easily rotate the cup in either
direction. Refer to our Tips for Success for more insight.

**Traveling Tips**

The best way to avoid infection when cleaning The DivaCup in a developing country is to use potable water.
This means that if the water is safe to drink it is safe to use to clean your DivaCup.

**Camping Tips**

Depending on the type of camping trip you are on, your method for cleaning your DivaCup will vary.
Remember that when you don’t have access to a bathroom, The DivaCup can be wiped out with tissue and
washed and rinsed at the next convenient time. Always be sure to wash your hands before inserting or
removing The DivaCup.

According to the guidelines of [Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics](http://www.lnit.edu/), when camping in the back country and with no access to proper disposal facilities, please use standard “cathole” practices. Also, observe the practice of containing your flow in a sealed plastic bag and hang it in a “bear bag” with other trash away from other animals.

**Cathole:** Catholes should be dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, trails, and drainages. Bring a trowel to dig the hole, and disguise it well after use.

**Bear Bag:** In bear country, hang “smellables” from tree limbs 12 feet off the ground, 6 feet from the tree’s trunk, and 6 feet below the supporting limb, or store it in specially designed bear-resistant canisters or on-site lockers.