

Bloody Beautiful

Everything you've always
wanted to know about the
menstrual cycle

even if you didn't know you did



Anneke Valk



Would you host a meeting at midnight?

Why not?





What makes a mere bit of cotton
so intimidating...?



Plausible?

Why not?

The biology of the menstrual cycle is clouded by taboos

Today you'll discover

biology

impact & opportunities

self-care

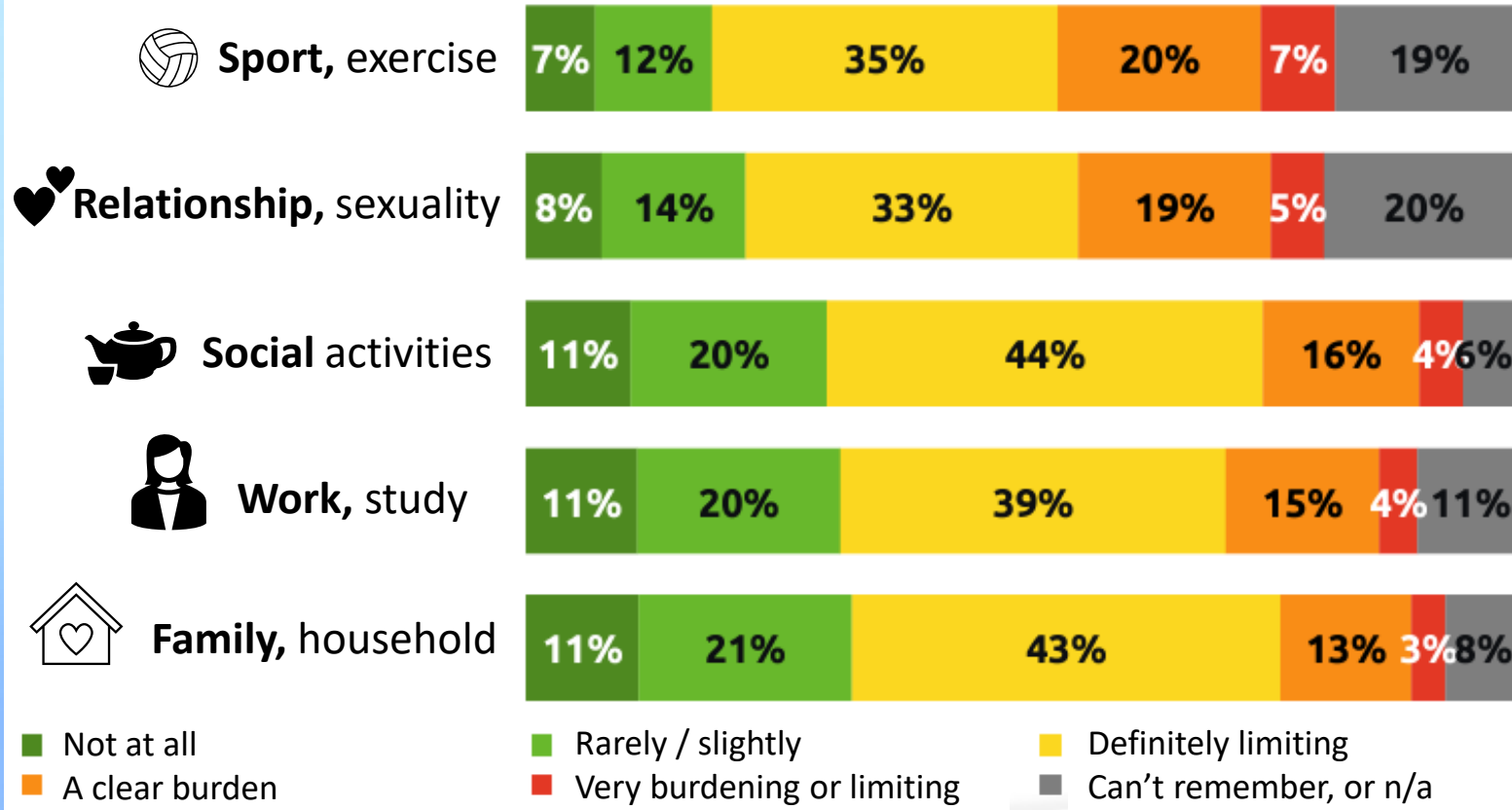


WOMEN
INC

age
18 – 55

2022

To what extent to you feel **burdened** or **limited**
(n = 2.433 participants)

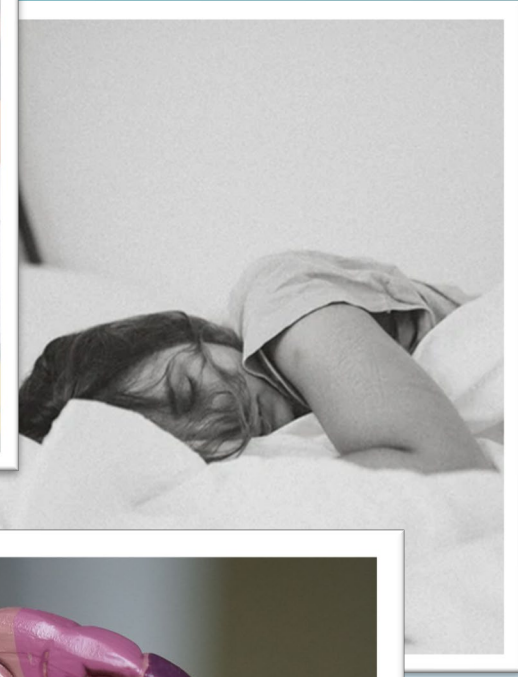


Hormones direct your **energy** & behaviour

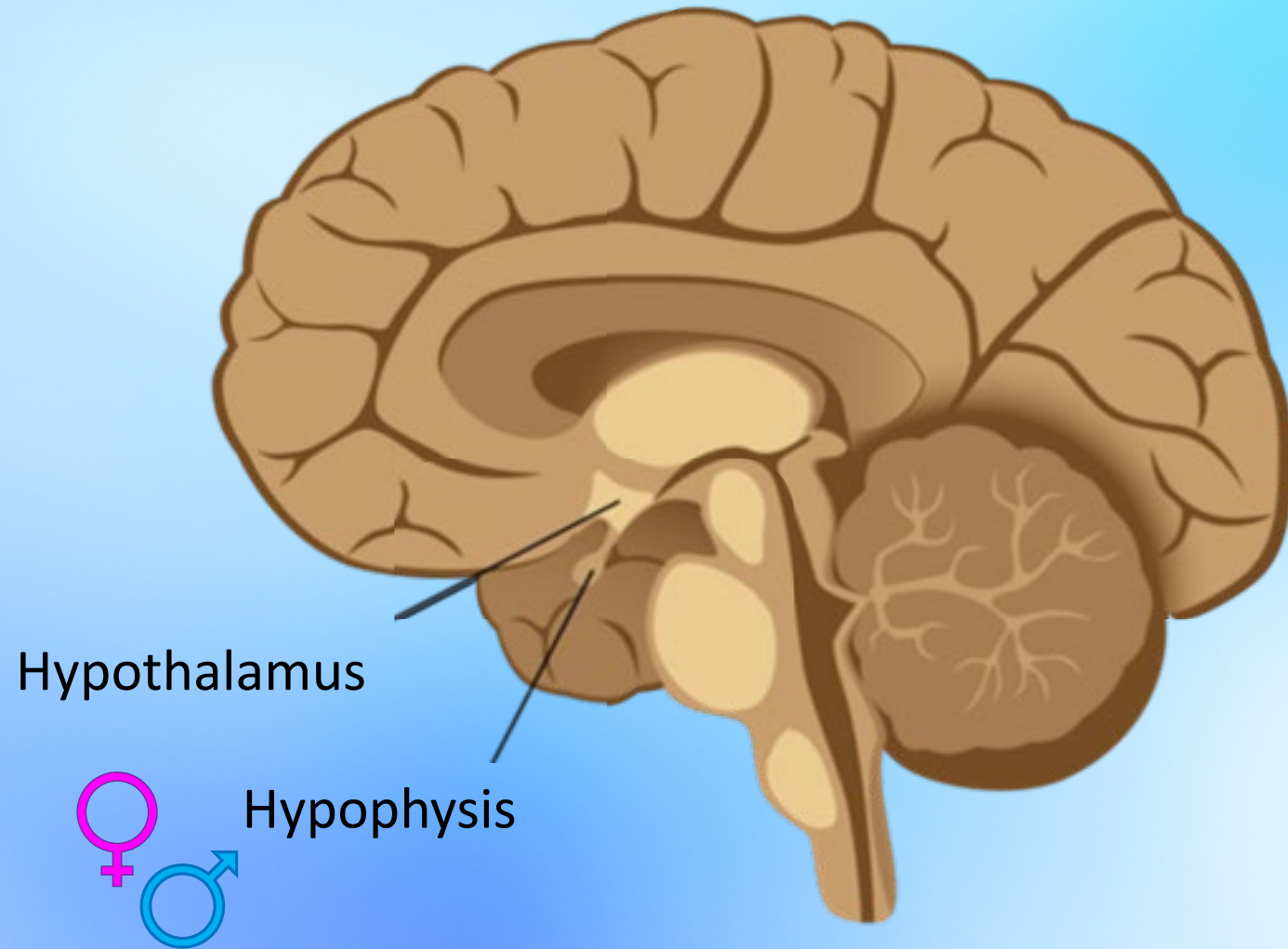
They **strongly** impact your mood, body, physiology

- ✿ Cortisol
 - ✿ Testosterone
 - ✿ Oestrogen & Progesterone
- neuroactive

*Effects of synthetic hormones...**

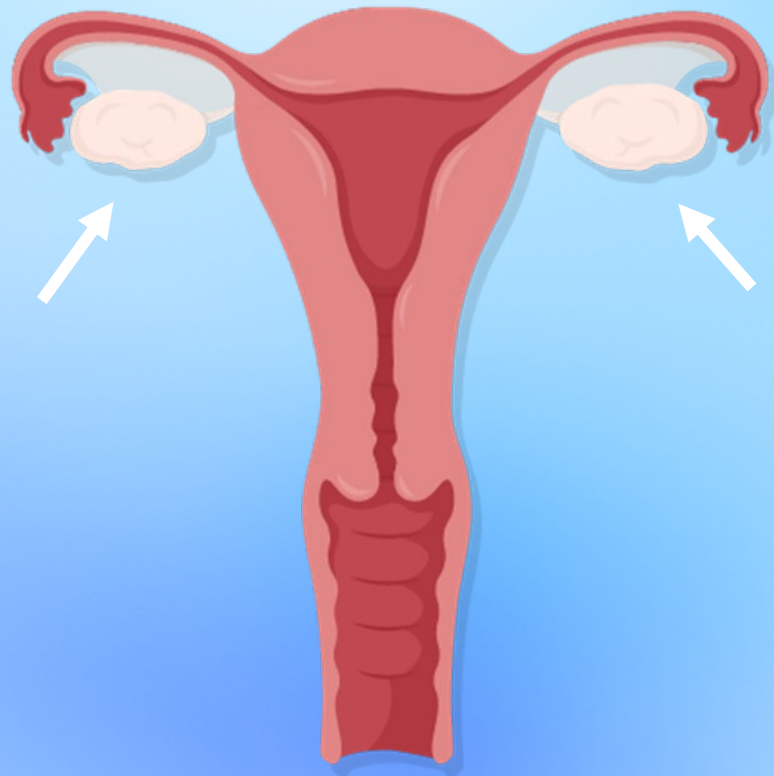


Is it “all in your head”?



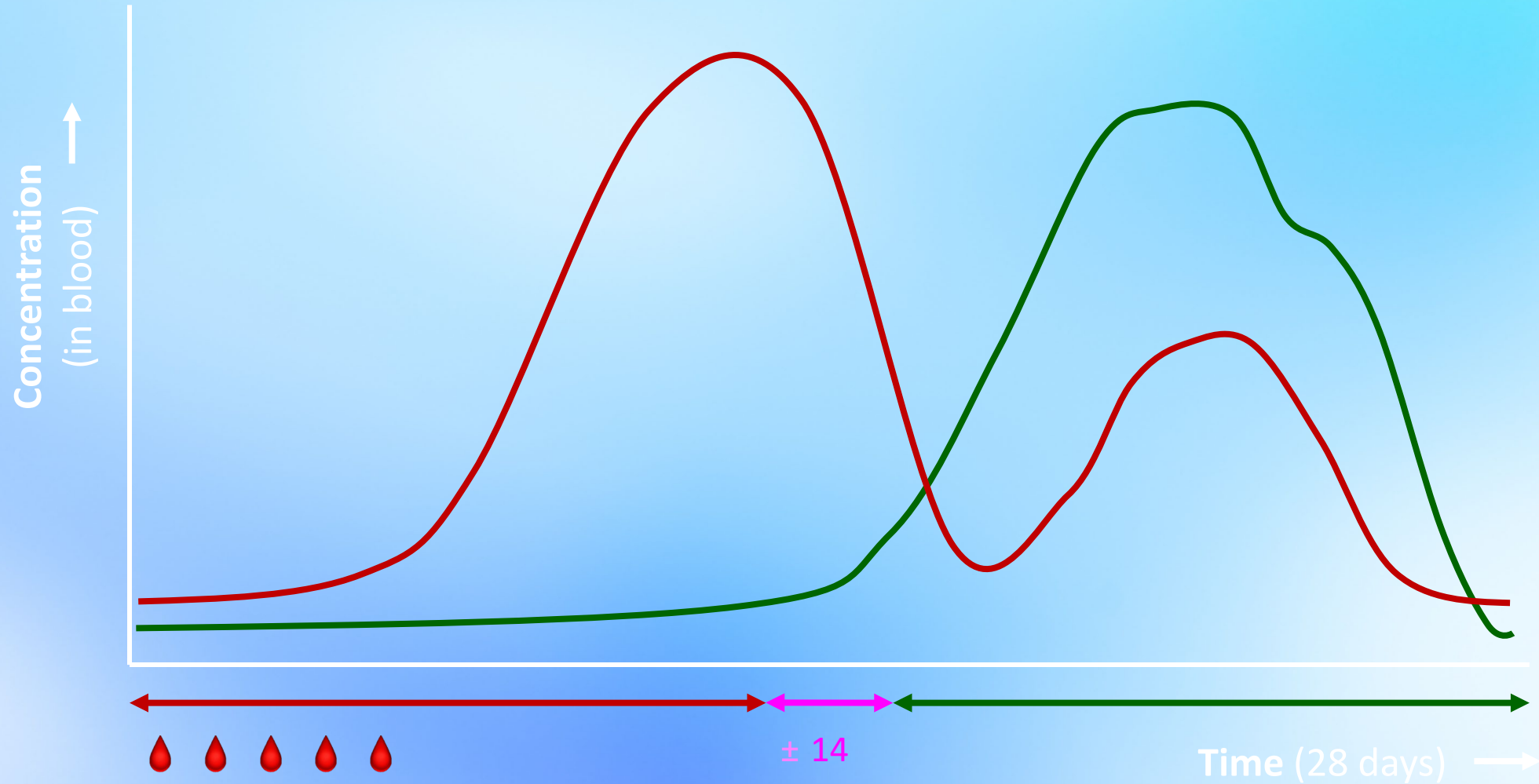


Menstrual cycle:
vital function

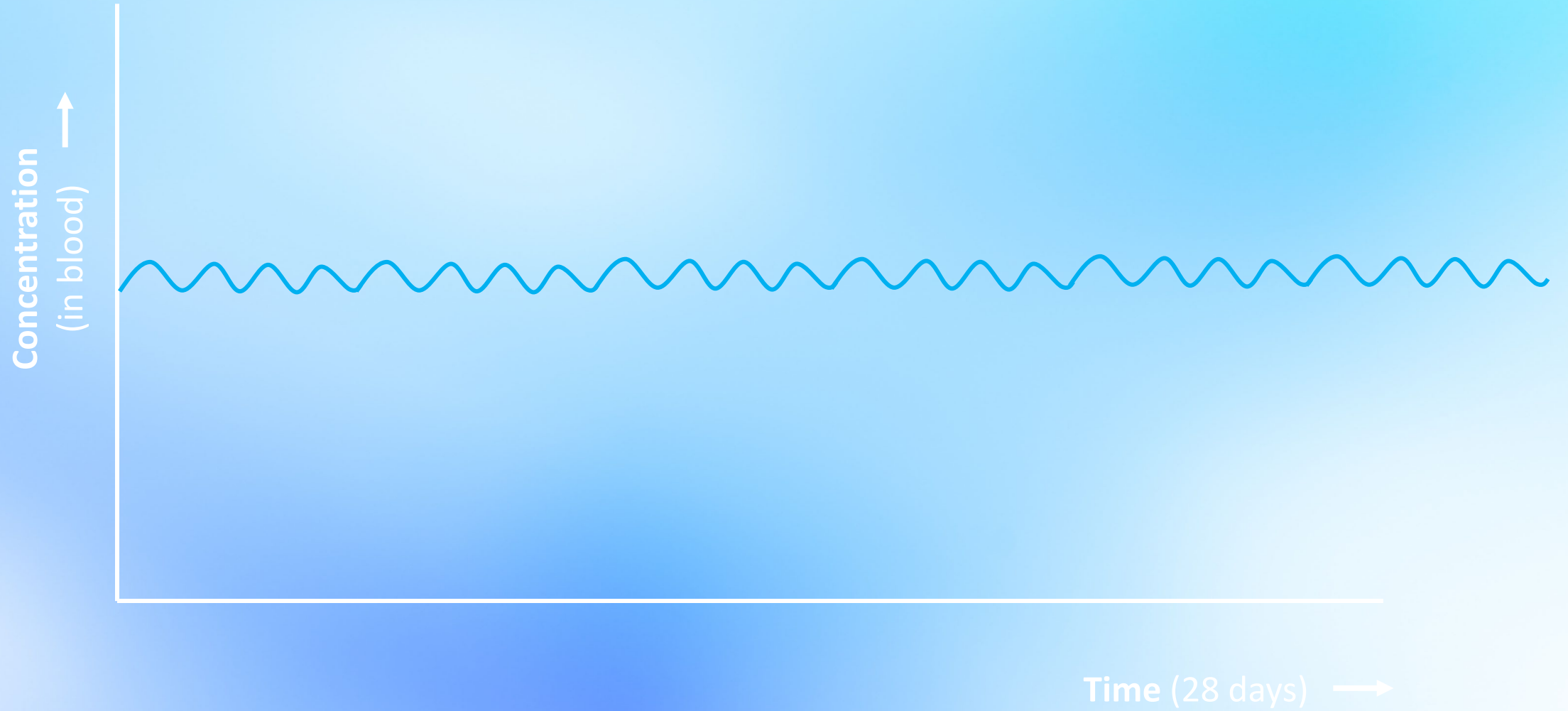


Oestrogen

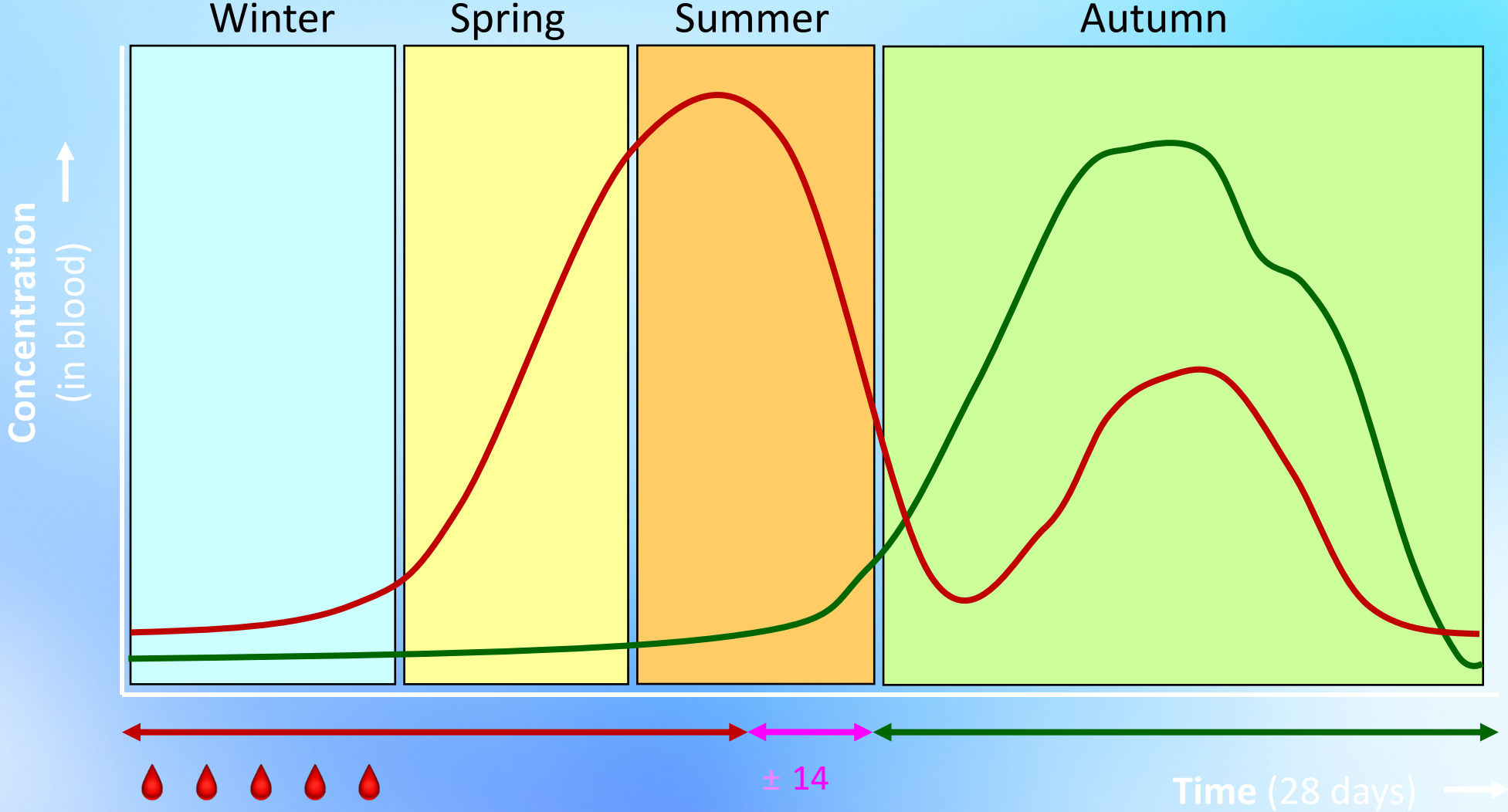
Progesterone



Testosterone



Seasons & vocabulary



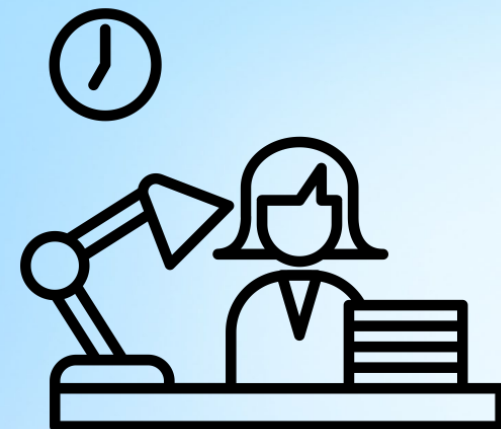
Winter



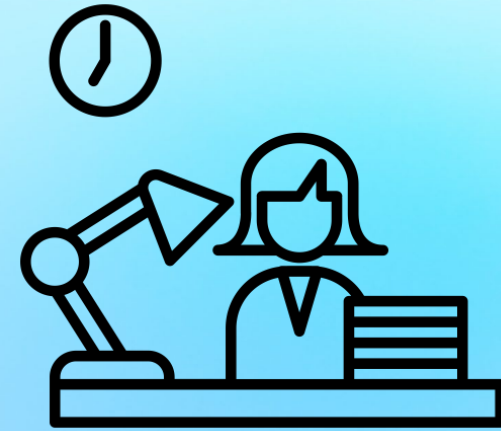
Letting go

Reflection

Fresh start?



Winter



Study Radboud UMC

2019

32.748 participants

2/3 would really appreciate
greater flexibility at work

Productivity loss due to menstruation related symptoms, Schoep et al. (2019)

Winter



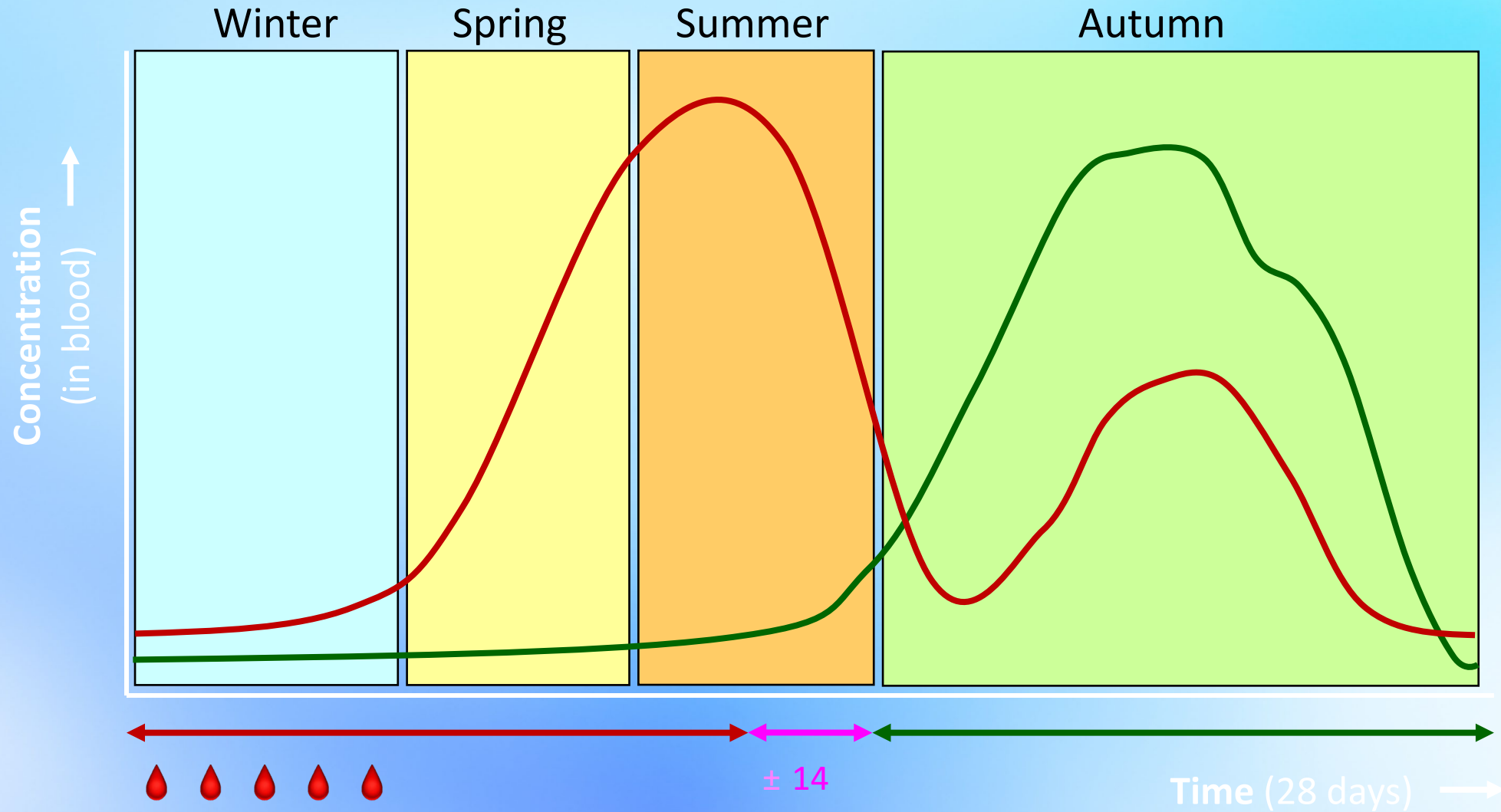
Going for a walk

Communication

Respect & trust



“You can access a different talent every season”



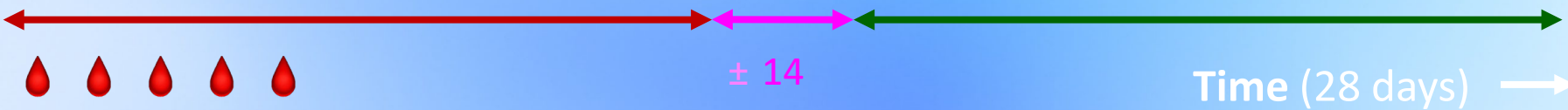
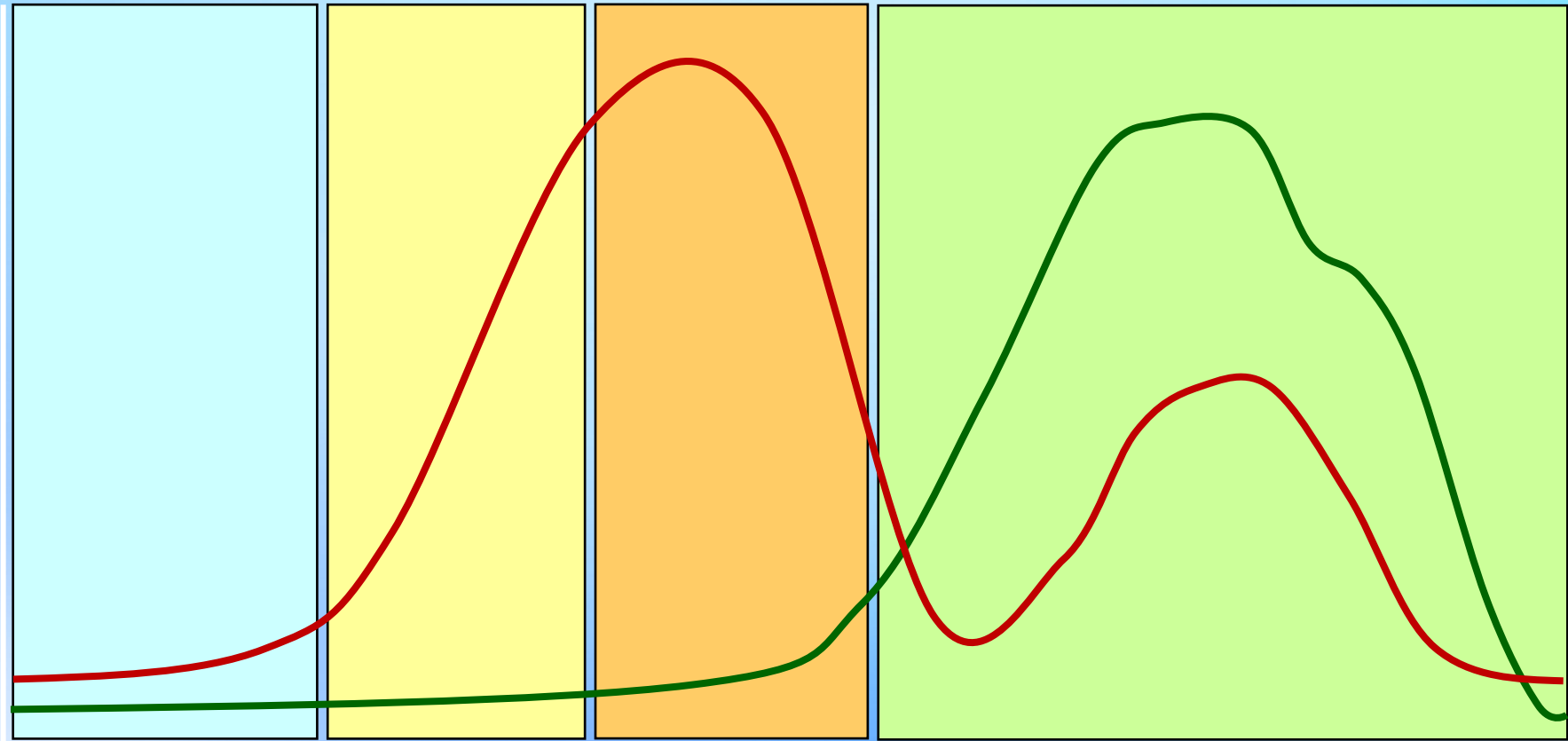
Which energy exactly...?

Winter

Spring

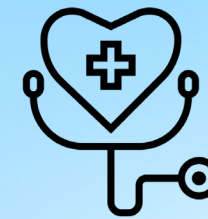
Summer

Autumn





Can you guess,
what I hope
you will do, after this presentation?



It allows you to be **present**

To understand the **context**



**A lot of us, *regardless of gender,*
are so used to adapting to a situation
or “society”...**



That we don't even “feel” that anymore...



Imagine you meet this lady

What would you say to her?



29 DAYS

*On communication,
and when 50% is actually 100%*

Anneke Valk

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and when 50% is actually 100%

Can you communicate about your seasons?

Could you bring a hot flask to work?

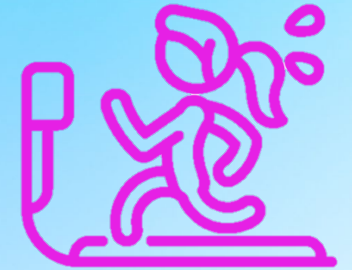


Today we covered

biology

impact & opportunities

self-care



PS Resources in the handouts 

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Books

Period Power, Masie Hill

Power Wise, Wild Power, Alexandra Pope Sjanie Hugo Wurlitzer

Hart & Hormonen, fit de overgang in, Janneke Wittekoek

Te Lijf, kunst van het *mooi* ouder worden, Isa Hoes & Medina Schuurman

Ook leuke meisjes worden 50, Maaïke de Vries, Manon Kerkhof

Podcasts (English)

Gonads, by Radio Lab. I absolutely *loved* this one. You'll never view "gender" the same again. Highly recommended.

The Menstruality Podcast, by the Red School. Haven't listened to this one yet, but it's on my list. The Red School is where Maisie Hill and many others were trained and inspired.

Podcasts (Dutch)

Baarmoederverhalen. Aanrader!

Seizoen 1: Endometriose (2 afleveringen: wat is het, wat kun je eraan doen?)

Seizoen 2: Perimenopauze, overgang

Opvliegers NPO radio 1 of Spotify. Veel afleveringen, tal van aspecten.

Wijzevrouw Eva de Groote en Isabel de Waele; openhartig, realistisch en positief

We zijn toch niet gek? Suzanne Rethans. Veel afleveringen, andere stijl dan podcast “Opvliegers”

Your health insurance might cover:

Gynecologist, overgangsconsulent / perimenopauze consultant, vitality courses, lifestyle budget

There's more out there than you'd think. Break the taboos, connect with others, find the help & support you deserve.

Scientific literature, recent studies, guidelines

Ghrelin and the Control of Energy Balance in Females, Smith, et al., (2022) *Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology*

Management of perimenopause disorders: hormonal treatment, Troia, Libera et al. (2020) *Gynecological Endocrinology*.
HRT can have tremendous positive effects (even though it's still taboo in some countries)

Hormonal contraceptives as disruptors of competitive behavior: Theoretical framing and review, Arthur et al., (2022) *Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology*. Hormonal contraception can work wonders if you suffer from the effects of your cycle (e.g. when you have endometriosis), or when you wish to prevent pregnancy. What few people know, is that side effects can be cognitive too. This is relevant when you suffer from mood swings or depression.

Plan Internationaal: *Bloedelijk? Dit zeggen jongens over menstruatie* (2022) Boys know surprisingly little about menstruation. Maybe it's time to change that?

Werken tijdens de overgang, RIVM, Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport (2022)

De overgang: klachten en de invloed op het werk, Oude Hengel, Karin et al. (2022)
Verdiepend onderzoek van de Nationale Enquête Arbeidsomstandigheden.

Handreiking *De overgang en werk*, Stichting van de Arbeid (2023)