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Questions

1. Briefly discuss the CYCLIC CHANGES in any two of the following;
2. CERVIX
3. VAGINA
4. BREASTS
5. Explain any one of the following
6. Menstrual cycle
7. Hormonal regulation of the menstrual cycle

**ANSWERS**

1. CYCLIC CHANGES IN THE VAGINA

Cyclic change refers to the change that occurs during the menstrual cycle. The cytological examination of the vaginal smears showed that the superficial cells increased in number towards the middle of the cycle and the number of intermediate cells declined gradually. Parabasal cells were observed mainly at the beginning of the cycle; they disappeared towards the middle of the menstrual cycle. During the early follicular phase, the cells were moderately separated from each other and during the second half; the superficial cells appeared clumped together. The maturation index of the vaginal smears can be considered as a tool for distinguishing the different phases of the menstrual cycle.

CYCLIC CHANGES IN THE BREASTS

Changes also happen to the breasts during the menstrual cycle.

Each month, women go through changes in the hormones that make up the normal menstrual cycle. The hormone estrogen is produced in the first half of the menstrual cycle. It stimulates the growth of milk ducts in the breast. The increasing level of estrogen leads to ovulation halfway through the cycle. Next, the hormone progesterone takes over in the second half of the cycle. It stimulates the formation of the milk glands. These hormones are believed to be responsible for the cyclical changes that many women feel in their breasts just before menstruation. These include swelling, pain and soreness.

1. MENSTRUAL CYCLE

The menstrual cycle is the monthly series of changes a woman’s body goes through in preparation for the possibility of pregnancy. Each month, one of the ovaries releases an egg- a process called ovulation. At the same time, hormonal changes prepare the uterus for pregnancy. If ovulation takes place and the egg isn’t fertilized, the lining of the uterus sheds through the vagina. This is a menstrual period.

The menstrual cycle which is counted from the first day of one period to the first day of the next, isn’t the same for every woman. Menstrual flow might occur every 21 to 35 days and the last two to seven days. For the first few years after menstruation begins, long cycles are common. However, menstrual cycles tend to shorten and become more regular as you age.

CAUSES OF MENSTRUAL IRREGULARITIES

1. Pregnancy or Breast Feeding
2. Eating disorders, extreme weight loss or excessive exercising
3. Polycystic ovary syndrome(PCOS)
4. Premature ovarian failure
5. Pelvic inflammatory disease(PID)
6. Uterine fibroids