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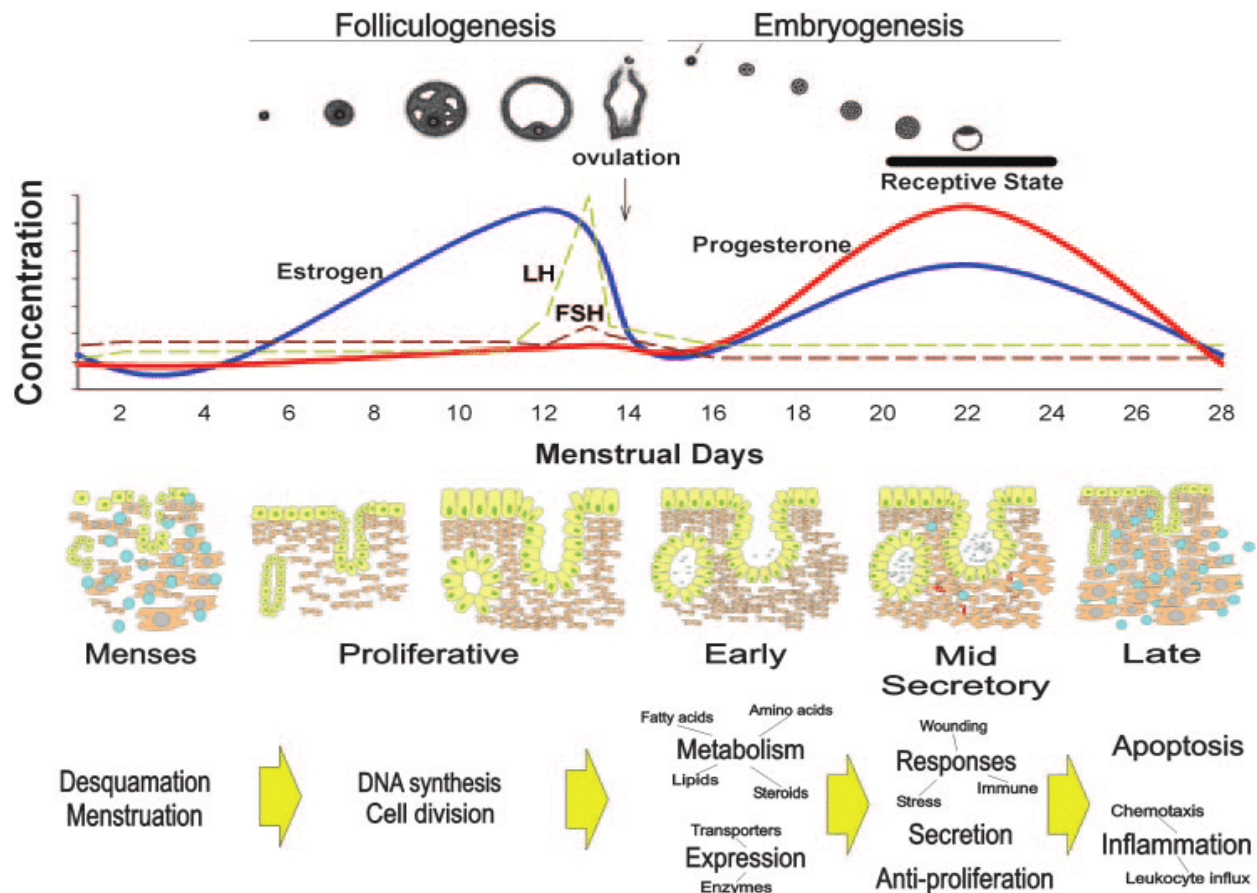
ASSIGNMENT

- Explicate the Menstrual Cycle

Menstruation is the elimination of the thickened lining of the uterus (endometrium) from the body through the vagina. Menstrual fluid contains blood, cells from the lining of the uterus (endometrial cells) and mucus. The average length of a period is between three days and one week.

The menstruation cycle refers to the cycles in which a woman's uterus grows and sheds a lining (the endometrium) which could support the development of a fertilized egg. It typically occurs in 28 day cycles, so a woman generally gets her period every 28 days. However, cycle length may be as short as 21 days or as long as 40 days in some women. First Menses occurs at puberty and is called Menarche and ceases at menopause. Menstrual cycle could be ovulatory or anovulatory. The inner lining of the uterus (the endometrium) goes through three phases during the typically 28 day menstrual cycle. The 3 phases are:

1. the Proliferative/follicular/preovulatory phase
2. the Secretory or luteal phase
3. The Menses phase



- Briefly discuss the CYCLIC CHANGES in the following:
 1. BREASTS

. When the ovaries start to produce and release (secrete) estrogen, fat in the connective tissue starts to collect. This causes the breasts to enlarge. The duct system also starts to grow. Often these breast changes happen at the same that pubic hair and armpit hair appear. Once ovulation and menstruation begin, the maturing of the breasts begins with the formation of secretory glands at the end of the milk ducts. The breasts and duct system continue to grow and mature, with the development of many glands and lobules. The rate at which breasts grow is different for each young woman.

Cyclic changes in the breasts occurs during and before the menstrual cycle. The hormone estrogen is produced by the ovaries in the first half of the menstrual cycle. It stimulates the growth of milk ducts in the breasts. 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. During pregnancy the hormones estrogen and progesterone stimulate further growth of the breasts.s

2. VAGINA

Human uterine mucosa undergoes cyclic morphologic changes, which depend on the ovarian function. In the course of the reproductive cycle, the vaginal epithelium is subject to normal, cyclic changes, that are influenced by estrogen: with increasing circulating levels of the hormone, there is proliferation of epithelial cells along with an increase in the number of cell layers. As cells proliferate and mature, they undergo partial cornification. Although hormone induced changes occur in the other tissues and organs of the female reproductive system, the vaginal epithelium is more sensitive and its structure is an indicator of estrogen levels. During the luteal and follicular phases of the estrous cycle the structure of the vaginal epithelium varies. The number of cell layers vary during the days of the estrous cycle:

Day 10- 22 layers

Days 12 to 14- 46 layers

Day 19- 32 layers

Day 24- 24 layers

The glycogen levels in the cells is at its highest immediately before ovulation.