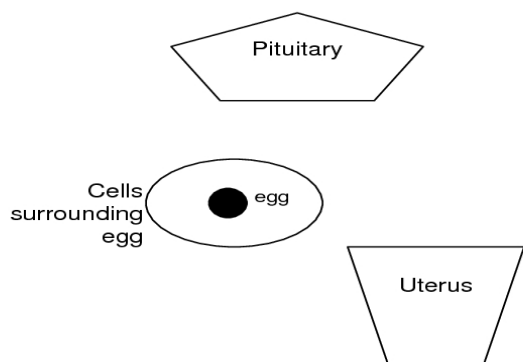
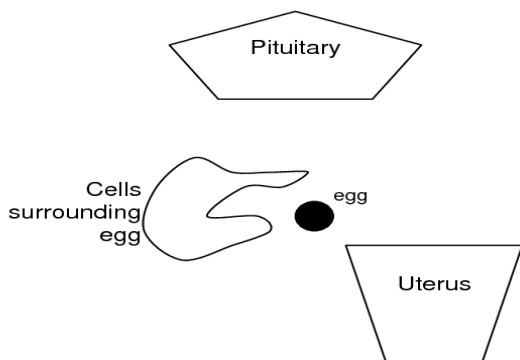


HORMONAL REGULATION OF THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE



I. Follicular Phase (Day 1-14)

1. **FSH** is secreted by the pituitary and causes an egg to begin maturing in one of the ovaries.
2. Cells surrounding the developing egg begin to secrete the hormone **estrogen**.
3. **Estrogen** stimulates growth of the lining of the uterus.
4. **Estrogen** feeds back to the pituitary to inhibit the production of **FSH** and stimulate the production of another pituitary hormone called **LH**.



II. Ovulation

5. A high level of **LH** causes release of a mature egg from an ovary.
6. **LH** causes the cells formerly surrounding the egg to produce the hormone **progesterone**. **Estrogen** is slightly inhibited.

III. Luteal Phase (Day 14-28)

7. **Progesterone** helps the lining of the uterus grow.
8. **Progesterone** also inhibits **LH** and **FSH** production in the pituitary.

IV. Menstruation

9. If the egg is not fertilized, the cells producing **progesterone** die. **Progesterone** and **estrogen** secretion drops dramatically.
10. The drop in **progesterone** and **estrogen** causes shedding of the uterine lining (menstruation). It also allows **FSH** production to increase, and the cycle starts over again with a new developing egg.