

LUTEAL PHASE (POST-OVULATORY PHASE)

During the luteal (post-ovulatory) phase, the secondary oocyte will travel through the fallopian tubes toward the uterus. If fertilized by a sperm, the fertilized secondary oocyte or ovum may implant there 6–12 days later.

- ❖ The follicle proper has met the end of its lifespan. Without the oocyte, the follicle folds inward on itself, transforming into the corpus luteum, a steroidogenic cluster of cells that produces estrogen and progesterone.
- ❖ These hormones induce the endometrial glands to begin production of the proliferative endometrium and later into secretory endometrium, the site of embryonic growth if implantation occurs.
- ❖ The corpus luteum continues this paracrine action for the remainder of the menstrual cycle, maintaining the endometrium, before disintegrating into scar tissue during menses.