

PRIMARY DYSMENORRHEA

What is a primary dysmenorrhea?

Dysmenorrhea is the technical term for menstrual pain that is severe enough to interfere with and limit the activities of women of childbearing age.

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How do you get a primary dysmenorrhea?

Primary dysmenorrhea affects 45-95% of women at some point in their life. Contributing factors are prostaglandins, chemicals produced all over the body that cause smooth muscle contractions; pain-spasm cycle, when the uterus is in sustained contraction, oxygen cannot easily supply the muscle, causing pain, which reinforces the spasm, and so on; or ligament irritation.

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What are the signs and symptoms?

Signs and symptoms of primary dysmenorrhea vary. They can include dull aches in the abdomen and low back or sharp pains and cramping in the pelvis and abdomen. These usually happen early in menstruation, but some women have symptoms during their whole period. Headaches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and constipation are all possibilities, along with a frequent need to urinate.

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How do you know if you've got a primary dysmenorrhea?

If you display any of the symptoms above without any other menstrual problems like, irregular or heavy menstrual flow; pain medication helps alleviate the symptoms, then you may be experiencing primary dysmenorrhea.

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How is a primary dysmenorrhea treated?

For most cases of dysmenorrhea, painkillers such as ibuprofen or naproxen work by inhibiting the secretion of prostaglandins.

Fortunately, it is also frequently responsive to many alternative treatment options. A thorough nutritional analysis may reveal strategies for dealing with menstrual pain. Vitamin K injections with acupuncture has been seen to reduce perceived pain with a very high success rate.

Women with regular painful periods, without any other pelvic pathologies, are good candidates for abdominal massage when not menstruating.

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Are there any complications?

For most women, the pain usually starts shortly before or during their menstrual period, peaks after 24 hours, and subsides after 2 to 3 days. Sometimes clots or pieces of bloody tissue from the lining of the uterus are expelled from the uterus, causing pain.

http://chealth.canoe.ca/channel_condition_info_details.asp?diasease_id=225&channel_id=16&relation_id=55900#Symptoms

How can I avoid getting a primary dysmenorrhea?

Get plenty of rest. If you become unusually tired, nervous, or constipated, you may be more likely to experience menstrual pain. Exercise regularly, such as walking, swimming, or cycling may improve blood flow and ease menstrual pain. Eat a diet rich in whole grains and green leafy vegetables. Drink plenty of fluids.

<http://www.cumc.columbia.edu/student/health/pdf/D/Dysmenorrhea.pdf>

This fact sheet is designed to provide you with information on primary dysmenorrhea. It is not intended to replace the need for a consultation with your doctor. All clients are strongly advised to check with their doctor about any specific questions or concerns they may have. Every effort has been taken to ensure that the information in this pamphlet is correct at the time of printing.

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