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EXCESSIVE MENSTRUAL BLEEDING

Fact Sheet

What is menstruation?

Menstruation is the result of the shedding of the lining of the uterus (endometrium), and is a cycle that repeats itself approximately every 28 days in a woman who is not pregnant.

What is excessive menstrual bleeding?

Excessive menstrual bleeding, also known as menorrhagia, is defined as blood loss of more than 80mL during a menstrual cycle. This translates into bleeding for more than seven days or using more than 10 pads or tampons per day during the menstrual cycle. Excessive menstrual bleeding is a common cause of iron deficiency anemia. More than two-thirds (67 percent) of patients who have excessive menstrual bleeding also suffer from anemia.

What are the symptoms?

Women describe the symptoms of excessive menstrual bleeding as unmanageable bleeding and constant need to change soaked pads or tampons. They often complain of fatigue and worry about embarrassing accidents.

What are the causes of excessive menstrual bleeding?

- **Hormonal imbalance.** Causes dysfunctional uterine bleeding (DUB) and accounts for approximately 20 percent of hysterectomies.
- **Fibroids and polyps.** Causes structural uterine bleeding, and accounts for 30 percent of hysterectomies performed.
- **Infection or disease.** Infection of the uterus or cervix and certain types of cancer, such as cancer of the uterus, cervix or vagina.

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