



## Menorrhagia

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Menorrhagia is a condition characterised by abnormally heavy or extended menstrual bleeding.

### Symptoms

The most common symptoms of menorrhagia are:

- Menstrual flow that soaks one or more pads per hour for several consecutive hours
- Needing to change your pad frequently during the night
- Menstrual periods that last longer than seven days
- Menstrual flow that includes large blood clots
- Menstrual flow that is so heavy that it affects your ability to conduct normal day-to-day activities
- Fatigue, weakness or shortness of breath (symptoms of anaemia that can be brought on due to the heavy blood loss)

### Causes

The cause of menorrhagia is not always known; however, there are certain conditions that predispose a person to menorrhagia, for example:

- Hormonal imbalance
- Ovarian dysfunction
- Uterine fibroids
- Uterine polyps
- Adenomyosis (where endometrial glands are found in the muscular wall of the uterus)
- Intrauterine devices (IUDs)
- Pregnancy complications
- Cancer

- Inherited blood disorders
- Certain medications (anti-inflammatory medications and anticoagulants)
- Other medical conditions such as pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), thyroid problems, endometriosis, and liver or kidney disease.

### Diagnosis

Your doctor can perform a pelvic examination and may recommend other tests or procedures such as a pelvic ultrasound, biopsy, or hysteroscopy.

### Treatment

Treatment options will depend on the underlying cause of menorrhagia, the severity of the condition and the overall health of the patient. Some common treatments include:

- Iron supplements if the blood loss has caused iron deficiency
- Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) to blood flow and cramping
- Oral contraceptives may be prescribed to help reduce bleeding and regulate menstrual cycles
- Oral progesterone may be given to help correct hormonal imbalance and reduce blood loss
- The insertion of an intrauterine device such as Mirena, which thins the uterine lining and reduces the blood flow
- Surgery may be needed if medication therapy is not successful. Some treatments for menorrhagia can affect fertility so consultation with a gynaecologist is essential if you plan to have children in the future.