

LEARN ABOUT

HEAVY MENSTRUAL BLEEDING



This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.

What is a Heavy Period?

A heavy period means you bleed a lot during your period



Symptoms

- Soaking through one or more pads or tampons every hour for several hours
- Using two pads at once
- Menstrual bleeding that lasts longer than 7 days
- Bleeding through clothing or bedding
- Passing blood clots larger than a quarter
- Limiting daily activities due to bleeding
- Feeling very tired or short of breath

Possible Causes

- Hormone imbalances
- Fibroids: Non-cancerous growths in the uterus
- Polyps: Small growths in the uterus
- Other medical conditions such as kidney, liver, or thyroid disease
- Hormone-free intrauterine devices (IUDs)

How Do Doctors Find Out What's Wrong?

Doctors use several tests to find out why heavy menstrual bleeding is happening:

- Blood test. Checks for low iron or anemia
- Pap test. Screens for cervical issues.
- Ultrasound. Shows images of the uterus and nearby tissues
- Uterine biopsy (sometimes). Tests a small tissue sample for problems

How Is It Treated?

- Iron supplements help if you feel tired or weak from blood loss
- Hormonal treatments like birth control pills or a progesterone IUD to reduce bleeding
- Medications such as ibuprofen for pain and bleeding
- Surgery, if other treatments don't work, to remove fibroids or fix underlying issues