香港紅十字會
HONG KONG RED CROSS

2025-May

Health Express
Issue165

PERIODS MYTHS

Entering puberty, women experience cyclical bleeding in the uterus due to hormonal influences, known as menstruation, which is a normal phenomenon. Stimulated by hormones, around tens of eggs begin to grow each month. Typically, only one egg matures each time and is released from the uterus in preparation for conception.

Menstrual Cycle: Typically 21-35 days
(The number of days between the first day of one period and the first day of the next)
Duration: Lasts 2 to 7 days
Onset of Menstruation: Usually begins around age 11-12
Menopause: Typically occurs around ages 45-55
Volume of Menstrual Blood: Approximately 50-150 milliliters

If any of the following conditions occur:

- No first menstrual period by age 16
- Menopause at age 45 or younger
- Sudden irregularity in menstrual cycles
- Vaginal bleeding between two menstrual periods
- Vaginal bleeding after sexual intercourse
- Any vaginal bleeding occurring after a year of no periods
- Menstrual pain appearing at age 40 or later
- Menstrual cycles shorter than 21 days
- Excessive menstrual bleeding
- Severe menstrual/abdominal pain
- Foul-smelling vaginal discharge

Please consult a healthcare professional !!

Menstrual Pain

- Menstrual pain often occurs before or during menstruation, manifesting as mild to severe pain in the lower abdomen.
- It is common in adolescent girls who have just started menstruating.
- As individuals age or after giving birth, the pain often diminishes or disappears.
- Applying heat pads or taking over-the-counter pain relievers, maintaining a relaxed mindset, and ensuring adequate rest can help alleviate the pain.

Preventive measures:

- Establish a regular exercise routine

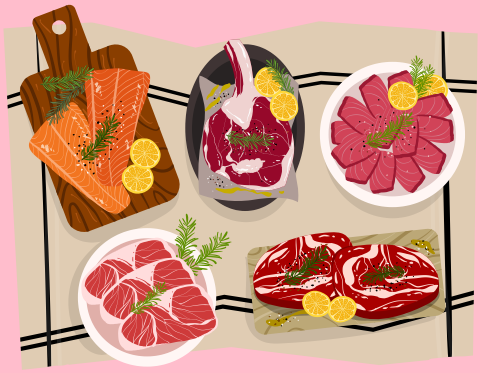
(associated with less occurrence of menstrual pain)

The following women are more likely to experience irregular periods:

- Girls who have just started menstruating
- Women approaching menopause
- Hormonal imbalances
  - Being overweight or underweight
  - Eating disorders
  - Intense exercise
  - Stress
- Certain medications
  - Such as hormonal contraceptives like the birth control shot
- Substance abuse
- Breastfeeding
- Chronic illnesses, endocrine disorders
  - Such as polycystic ovary syndrome, thyroid disorders
- Changes in ovarian function

IRON SUPPLEMENTATION TIPS

Iron is an essential element for hemoglobin production. Insufficient iron absorption can affect red blood cell production, leading to anemia. In daily life, it's crucial to pay attention to iron absorption, especially for pregnant women and women of childbearing age who experience a significant increase in iron requirements. Here are some tips to increase iron intake:



- Avoid drinking tea and coffee during meals.
- Consume iron-rich foods along with fruits and vegetables high in vitamin C during meals, such as kiwi, citrus fruits
  - (e.g., oranges, grapefruits, mandarins), broccoli, tomatoes, and bitter gourd.
- Include moderate amounts of meat, fish, and seafood in your diet.
- Opt for dark green vegetables, legumes, and nuts.

References:
Family Health Service (FHS) of the Department of Health
The Family Planning Association of Hong Kong

Editor:
M Y Man

The above information is for reference only.
Updated on 30-5-2024