

Menstruation

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Menstrual cycle

Between the first period (menarche) and the last period (menopause), woman's fertility is regulated with the menstrual cycle. At an interval of approximately 4 weeks an ovary unit matures under the influence of follicular-stimulation hormone (FSH), which secretes estrogen. Ovulation is secretion of the mature ovary unit from the ovary, capable for fertilization 1-2 days after the ovulation.

The diameter of a mature ovary unit is approximately as the diameter of a hair and it is at the edge of visibility with the human eye.

Ovulation always occurs about 14 days before the following period.

After ovulation, under the influence of the luteinising hormone (LH), the hormone progesterone is secreted. Both progesterone and estrogens widen the mucous of the uterus and prepare it for taking over the fertile egg. Progesterone additionally protects pregnancy, if it had occurred. But if the egg hasn't been fertilized, in about 14 days after the ovulation the swollen mucous will peel off and come out of the body through the vagina. This is a period. A period is cyclic monthly bleeding from the uterus when the mucous of the uterus peels off after the previous ovulation.

Premenstrual syndrome

(PMS) is a group of unpleasant physical and emotional symptoms that have an influence on the woman before the period, and they can be: difficulties in the lower part of the stomach, tension and pain inside the breasts, headache, dizziness, irritation, tiredness and other. These symptoms occur about ten days before the first period, and by its occurrence they disappear. Treatment isn't necessary, but if strong difficulties occur, it's recommended to consult a doctor (gynecologist).

During a painful period (dysmenorrhoei), strong pain occurs in the lower part of the stomach before and during the period, along with difficulties, vomiting, diarrhea, constipation and irritation. The most common reason of a painful period is secretion of the substance prostaglandin in the mucous of the uterus, which causes strong cramps of the uterus and significant pain. Some girls experience painful periods since the first one, but to some of them the period became painful a few years later with the occurrence of ovulation.

During treatment of a painful period, except for the general measures (proper nourishment, physical activity, walking, gymnastics, sport, rest), drugs against pain and cramps are used or even hormone therapy.

Some girls, during the middle of the cycle, feel strong pain in the lower stomach at the left or right side, which lasts for a few hours, and sometimes meager bleeding occurs. This is the ovulation pain and/or ovulation bleeding that usually doesn't require any treatment.

A woman's period misses out gradually, and the interval until the last period is named perimenopause.

Perimenopause can last for even a few years, and because of reduced secretion of the ovary hormone, a lot of physical and emotional changes occur including a higher risk of atherosclerosis development, raised blood pressure, heart attack and stroke, raised degradation of bones and development of osteoporosis.

For preventing health problems and to alleviate the difficulties today we use hormone substitute therapy in various ways (tablets, crèmes, plasters, skin gels, injections).