Menorrhagia, Heavy Periods

Dysfunctional uterine bleeding is different from a normal menstrual period. When periods are heavy or there is more bleeding than is usual for you, it is called menorrhagia. It may be caused by hormonal imbalance, or physical, metabolic, or other problems. Examination is necessary in order that your caregiver may treat treatable causes. If this is a continuing problem, a D&C may be needed. That means that the *cervix* (the opening of the uterus or womb) is *dilated* (stretched larger) and the lining of the uterus is scraped out. The tissue scraped out is then examined under a microscope by a specialist *(pathologist)* to make sure there is nothing of concern that needs further or more extensive treatment.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If medications were prescribed, take exactly as directed. Do not change or switch medications without consulting your caregiver.
- Long term heavy bleeding may result in iron deficiency. Your caregiver may have prescribed iron pills. They help replace the iron your body lost from heavy bleeding. Take exactly as directed. Iron may cause constipation. If this becomes a problem, increase the bran, fruits, and roughage in your diet.
- Do not take aspirin or medicines that contain aspirin one week before or during your menstrual period. Aspirin may make the bleeding worse.
- If you need to change your sanitary pad or tampon more than once every 2 hours, stay in bed and rest as much as possible until the bleeding stops.
- Eat well-balanced meals. Eat foods high in iron. Examples are leafy green vegetables, meat, liver, eggs, and whole grain breads and cereals. Do not try to lose weight until the abnormal bleeding has stopped and your blood iron level is back to normal.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You need to change your sanitary pad or tampon more than once an hour.
- You develop *nausea* (feeling sick to your stomach) and vomiting, dizziness, or diarrhea while you are taking your medicine.
- You have any problems that may be related to the medicine you are taking.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- An oral temperature above 102º F (38.9º C) develops.
- You develop chills.
- You develop severe bleeding or start to pass blood clots.
- You feel dizzy or faint.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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