Menorrhagia
(Heavy Periods)

During a normal menstrual period, most women lose about 2 ounces of blood or less. If there is a lot more blood loss than this, it is called menorrhagia.

HOME CARE

- Only take medicine as directed by your doctor.
- Heavy bleeding may cause you to lack iron in your body. Your doctor may prescribe iron pills. Take as told to you by your doctor.
- **Do not** take aspirin one week before or during your period. Aspirin can make the bleeding worse.
- If you change your tampon or pad more than once every 2 hours, stay in bed for a while. This may help lessen the bleeding.
- Eat a healthy diet. Eat foods with iron. These foods include leafy green vegetables, meat, liver, eggs and whole grain breads and cereals.
- Eat foods that are high in Vitamin C. These include oranges, orange juice, and grapefruits. Vitamin C can help your body take in more iron.
- **Do not** try to lose weight. Wait until the heavy bleeding has stopped and your iron level is normal.

CAUSES

- Women who are going through menopause (periods stop) may have heavy bleeding at times.
- Having more than 5 pregnancies.
- Having growths (*fibroids or polyps*) in the uterus.
- Endometriosis. This is when pieces of the uterus lining grow outside the uterus or in the belly (stomach).
- Adenomyosis. This is when pieces of the uterus lining grow into the uterus muscle.
- Uterus cancer or infections in the vagina or ovaries.
- Blood disease. Blood does not clot as it should.

TREATMENT

The doctor may:
- Have you take birth control pills.
- Put a special IUD (*Intrauterine Device*) into your uterus.
- Have you take a hormone such as Provera.
- Give you a hormone by needle (*injection*) such as Depo-Provera.

GET HELP IF:

- You need to change your tampon or pad more than once an hour.
- You feel sick to your stomach, throw up and have watery poop (*diarrhea*).
- You have problems from any medicine the doctor has you on.

GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF YOU:

- Get a fever.
- Have trouble breathing.

- Bleed even more heavily than usual and pass blood clots.
- Feel dizzy, weak 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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