

What a normal Menstrual Cycle should be like

Is your cycle normal?

From the time that many women first menstruate, over 50% of them will experience some sort of symptoms that are now known as PMS (Pre-menstrual Syndrome), or PMT. Symptoms such as menstrual cramps, back ache, breast soreness, fluctuation in the moods, changes in the bowel habits and upset to the digestive system. Some women suffer extremely heavy menstrual flow or dark and clotted menstrual blood, with severe and extreme symptoms of pain, nausea, headache and even faintness.

Either way, most women will tell you that these symptoms are normal to them, and many physicians will tell them that these symptoms are normal and that it is something that women have to put up with. The problem is, all these symptoms are not normal and you don't have to put up with them.

In western medical terms, when a problem presents itself on a large scale regularly, it then becomes known as a normal occurrence. In Chinese Medicine, the above symptoms are not considered normal. They are actually caused from the body being in a state of disharmony and need to be treated. PMS, according to Chinese medicine, is considered a symptom of a bigger cause. The reason that western medicine has trouble treating PMS, and debilitating gynaecological problems, such as endometriosis, is that they treat everything symptomatically. In Chinese Medicine, we always treat the cause first, and then the symptoms will be addressed anyway. This is why Chinese Medicine is so effective in treating gynaecological conditions. It treats the cause, not just the symptoms, thereby fixing a problem, not masking it.

So what should a proper menstrual cycle be like?

A proper menstrual cycle should be 26 - 32 days in length. The flow should be 4 days, 5 at the most. Any longer is seen as too long, and a woman can lose too much blood and become blood deficient, or low in iron. Any shorter than 4 days, means that the body isn't producing enough blood to nourish the uterus. This could bring about problems with eggs, or a fertilised egg not being able to implant itself and grow due to lack of circulation.

The blood flow should be a nice red consistency without any stopping and starting. A proper menstrual cycle shouldn't have any clotting, pre-menstrual breast soreness, changes in the moods (irritability or teariness), changes in the bowel habits (constipation or diarrhoea), or changes to the digestive system such as bloating and fluid retention. These symptoms are all not normal and mean blockages in the system. In Chinese Medicine this pathology would be called "Liver Qi Stagnation" which then leads to "Liver Blood Stasis"

In Chinese Medicine the menstrual cycle comes under the control of the Liver. The Liver also controls the free flow of emotions according to Chinese Medicine. The liver also governs the free flow of Qi in the body and stores the blood at night. Since the Qi makes the blood move, if the Qi is to stop, then the blood stops. This means if the Qi is to stop, and become stagnant, then the blood will eventually become static. Just like damming a river, early stages are hard to see anything wrong. But given time, the water becomes stagnant and then becomes static and nothing can live in it. Qi Stagnation and Blood Stasis often go hand in hand and cause many of the imbalances seen in the menstrual cycle. Together they can cause such problems such as Endometriosis, Ovarian Cysts and Uterine Fibroids and infertility.

All of the above symptoms mean that the body is in a state of imbalance, or disharmony, and must be treated. Most of the above symptoms start because of poor dietary habits and emotional factors. Not enough protein and essential fats in the diet, coupled with emotional factors such as resentment, frustration, anger and bottled up emotions, all lead to the pathology that is seen above. High levels of stress can also cause ill health and also be a major factor in fertility and menstrual problems. Also drinking alcohol regularly can cause problems with the menstrual cycle

too. This is why many of you have suffered unusual or exacerbated menstrual symptoms after Christmas & New Year. At Christmas the diet goes out the window and also the alcohol consumption is definitely more. This then equates to bad a menstrual cycle. The moon also has an effect on the menstrual cycle. When the moon is full it can give women strange menstrual symptoms.

If you are not getting a perfect period or are experiencing any of the many problems seen above, you definitely need to call us to help you rectify the problem. This way we can tailor a treatment plan for you and select the formulas that you will need. We look forward to helping you with a pain free, symptom free, regular menstrual cycle.