



What is the secret about the Female Cycle

There is hardly a newspaper or journal on this planet for the target group "women" without an article about the female cycle, where problems are discussed at length and solutions offered. A high proportion of women get frightened by any irregularity in their cycle and this will often make them opt for the most invasive management offered by the medical industry. Hence, it is our responsibility as professionals to explain the facts and reassure patients that there is nothing to worry about. Often the simplest approach, known as "expectant management" or "watchful waiting", will solve the problem and allay patients' fears.

People generally think that the length of a cycle is 28 days from the first day of bleeding until the next first day of bleeding. However, statistics in medical literature show that as little as 3% of women – others mention numbers ranging between 10 and 15% – have a 28-day cycle. The majority will be anything between 25 and 35 days – already one less reason to worry. Furthermore, until the age of 20 years, no regular cycle should be expected – another box to be ticked off on the list of worries, especially for mothers having to deal with the problems of their adolescent daughters. Concerning women from the age of 45 years and up, experiencing irregularities in the bleeding pattern and length of the cycle is normal due to the natural onset of perimenopause, causing a diminishing number of follicles in their ovaries.

The amount and length of the menstrual flow will differ due to several reasons. The size of the uterus, and whether having been pregnant or not, is of utmost importance. Other inner surface-increasing factors such as mucosal polyps or fibroids also play a major role in changing the amount or length of your period. A normal length would be up to seven days. The amount is considered normal if you do not have more than three tampons (bleed-throughs) on a day. Obviously, with

any abnormal length or amount of cyclical bleeding you might have to obtain a specialist's opinion. If you had your regular routine smear test done, a severe cervical disease can be excluded. Therapeutic treatment steps are offered through modern medicine. A conservative approach will, under normal circumstances, be entirely sufficient. There are many natural remedies available.

If your problems cannot be solved through over-the-counter medication, your specialist might consider prescribing bleeding-reductive medication, hormones or local treatment via progesterone-releasing long-acting contraceptive devices. Even the contraceptive pill might sometimes be the solution.

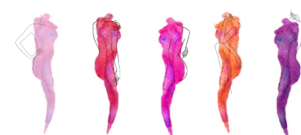
Small operations like hysteroscopy (camera introduced through the cervical canal), or the removal of polyps or fibroids are possible. Depending on the patient's age and family planning, removal of the lining of the uterus might also be an option.

Do ask your medical professional for an individualised treatment plan if you can relate to any of the concerns above. ☺

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