

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PELVIC PAIN

Are you experiencing the following symptoms?

- Painful periods
- Pelvic or lower back pain between periods
- Pain with bowel movements or urination
- Heavy menstrual bleeding
- Irregular periods or bleeding between periods

Many girls have irregular cycles and experience unusual pains during the first two years of their period before they become more regular (every 4–5 weeks). However, if your periods are so painful that you are missing school and social events, or your

pain medication isn't working well, it is important to talk to a trusted adult or your health care provider about your experience.

One potential cause for frequent and severe pain during and between periods is **endometriosis**—a chronic gynecological disease in which tissue that resembles the lining of the uterus (the **endometrium**) grows outside the uterus where it does not belong. These lesions most often cause pelvic pain and/or irregular menstrual bleeding. People with endometriosis are also more likely to experience trouble sleeping, migraine, irritable bowel syndrome, and fatigue.

Endometriosis Affects...

individuals of all races and ethnicities.

190 MILLION
women worldwide

6.5 MILLION
women and girls
ages 15–44 in the U.S.

Endometriosis is not uncommon in girls, ages 10–19 years old. In fact, it is the cause of chronic pelvic pain for 64% of teens during their periods.¹ Because endometriosis is a condition that progresses over time, many people do not know they have it until their symptoms become severe.

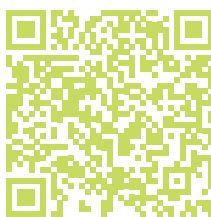


2 out of 3

people diagnosed with endometriosis said they experienced symptoms as an adolescent.²

Tracking your periods every month (dates, symptoms, and flow) and when you experience pain can help you determine what is normal for you. You can use a calendar, write it down in a notebook, or use an app.

Check out this list of resources to help keep track of your periods from the Menstrual Health and Stigma section of SWHR's Endometriosis Toolkit.



You should note activities or things that seem to trigger or help to reduce pain.

Consider:

- Foods
- Exercise or activities
- Sleep (hours and time of day)
- Stress

**Remember: You do not have to manage your endometriosis alone.
Talk with people you trust about getting the care and support you need.**

¹ <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpain.2020.07.011> | ² <https://doi.org/10.4293/jsls.2015.00019>