

Review Article

Period Pain in Adolescents and Therapeutics in Homeopathy

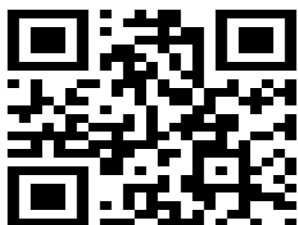
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ABSTRACT

Many girls and women have problems like abdominal cramps and pain during their menstrual period. The medical term for painful periods is “dysmenorrhea.” Although menstruation is a normal part of a woman's life, severe period pain need not be. Women don't have to simply put up with it – menstrual pain can usually be treated effectively. If you have very painful periods or the pain keeps getting worse over time, it can be a good idea to see a doctor.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transition period from childhood to adulthood and is characterized by a spurt in physical, endocrinal, emotional, and mental growth, with a change from complete dependence to relative independence. The period of adolescence for a girl is a period of physical and psychological preparation for safe motherhood. As the direct reproducers of future generations, the health of adolescent girls influences not only their own health, but also the health of the future population. Almost a quarter of India's population comprises of girls below 20 years.

One of the major physiological changes that take place in adolescent girls is the onset of menarche, which is often associated with problems of irregular menstruation, excessive bleeding, and dysmenorrhea. Of these, dysmenorrhea is one of the common problems experienced by many adolescent girls.

Every month the lining of a woman's womb builds up and is then shed again at the end of the menstrual cycle, when she has her period – unless she is pregnant. To shed the lining during the monthly period, the muscles of

the womb tighten (contract) and relax in an irregular rhythm. This helps the tissue lining the womb to detach and flow out of the body, together with blood, through the neck of the womb (cervix) and the vagina.

The muscle contractions are sometimes not noticeable or only cause mild discomfort, but they're also sometimes felt as painful cramps. Period pain might only affect the lower abdomen, or it might be felt in the back or legs too. It can cause nausea, vomiting or diarrhea in some women, as well as headaches or general discomfort. Women who have heavier periods often have more intense pain too.

Two types of period pain, called primary and secondary dysmenorrhea.

Primary dysmenorrhea is where the period pain is caused by the womb muscle contractions alone. Hormone-like substances called prostaglandins play an important role here. They influence the perception of pain and cause the muscles in the womb to tighten, helping to shed the lining of the womb. Primary dysmenorrhea is more common in women under the age of 30 and women with heavy periods. It can run in

families, and stress can play a role too.

Period pain that is caused by something other than the muscle contractions is called secondary dysmenorrhea. Benign (non-cancerous) growths in the womb, such as fibroids or polyps, are often responsible for secondary dysmenorrhea. Severe period pain may also be caused by endometriosis. In endometriosis, the kind of tissue that lines the womb (endometrium) grows elsewhere in the abdomen too. Sometimes contraceptive coils (IUDs: intrauterine devices) used for birth control can also cause secondary dysmenorrhea.

Women and girls get a lot of (sometimes contradictory) advice from doctors and other women. Painkillers such as ibuprofen and naproxen are effective. These belong to a group of medications known as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). They can relieve period pain by reducing the production of prostaglandins. Although NSAIDs are usually well tolerated, they sometimes have side effects, especially stomach-related problems.

The birth control pill can relieve period pain too because it prevents ovulation. This reduces the production of prostaglandins. It also means that the lining of the woman's womb doesn't become as thick as usual, and she has a lighter period. The birth control pill can have side effects too, such as headaches and nausea. It also increases the risk of thrombosis.

Some evidence suggests that applying warmth, for instance with heat packs, can relieve period pain. A few studies have also suggested that physical activity such as jogging, yoga and exercises can help.

Other treatments – like acupuncture, dietary supplements or herbal products – haven't been proven to help. Although these approaches have been tested in a number of studies, the study results were contradictory or the studies weren't done properly.

Sometimes the pain is so bad that psychological treatment is considered. This may include things like talks with a psychotherapist and learning techniques that can reduce pain (such as relaxation and

mindfulness exercises).

If the pain is caused by fibroids or endometriosis, other treatment options can be considered – perhaps surgery, too.

Sometimes friends, relatives, colleagues and even doctors don't take period pain seriously. And some women think they just have to put up with the pain because it's a normal part of being a woman. But severe pain that affects your everyday activities on several days a month, maybe even preventing you from working, isn't something that you just have to live with because it's "natural." Advice like this can make it difficult to feel comfortable about withdrawing from activities to get some rest, and might stop women from seeking professional help or treatment.

It may be possible to find ways to deal with the "painful" days so they are less of a problem. For example, many women try to take things a bit easier on those days. It may be helpful to avoid having demanding appointments and activities during that time of month. Some find that relaxation techniques, breathing exercises, yoga or tai chi help them feel more relaxed and reduce stress. Getting a lot of exercise also helps relieve period pain in some women. Warm baths and saunas can be soothing too.

Women who are often unable to go to work because of bad pain and cramps may face problems at work, as well as feeling guilty and ashamed. Having a partner, relatives or friends who are understanding and supportive can make an important difference.

Therapeutics for primary dysmenorrhea Pulsatilla

Menses painful, too late, scanty, changeable in character. Irregular, intermittent flow, with chilliness. Pains rapidly shifting, appear suddenly, leaves gradually. Flows more during the day. Never well since puberty. Delayed first menses. Menses suppressed from getting the feet wet. Leucorrhoea thick, acrid, excoriating. Women fair, good looking, slow, indecisive, mild, gentle, easily weeping., consolation >. Dryness of mouth without thirst. Gastric derangements from eating rich food, fat, pastry. < warm room,

evening, on beginning to move. > open air, cold application, lying on painful side.

Actea Racemosa

During menses, sharp lancinating, electric like pains in uterine region and various parts, dart from side to side., with chorea, hysteria or mania, increase of mental symptoms during menses. The more profuse the flow, the greater the suffering. Menses irregular, exhausting, delayed or suppressed by mental emotions. Severe left sided inframamary pains. Rheumatic dysmenorrhoea. Excessive muscular soreness, rheumatic pains in bellies of muscles. Sensation as if a heavy black cloud had settled over her so that all is in darkness.

Caulophyllum

Pains intermittent, paroxysmal, spasmodic, across lower abdomen extending to groins; erratic pains changing place every few minutes. Chorea, hysteria or epilepsy at puberty, during establishment of menstrual function. Leucorrhoea acrid, exhausting, in little girls, preventing pregnancy. Habitual abortion from uterine debility. Rheumatism of small joints, fingers, toes, wrists.

Sepia

Dysmenorrhoea with violent stitches upward in the vagina, lancinating pains from uterus to umbilicus. Pain extends from other parts to back. Menstrual irregularities- early or late, scanty or profuse, menorrhagia or metrorrhagia. Bearing down sensation as if everything would protrude through the vagina, must sit with crossed legs. Sensation of a ball in inner parts during menses. Great sadness & weeping, dread of men, of being alone. Indifferent to those whom she loved best. Headache at menstrual nixus with scanty flow. Tongue foul, clears at each menstrual nixus. < cold weather, laundry work, at rest. > warmth, violent exercise.

Nux vomica

Menses: too early, profuse, lasts too long; or keeping on several days longer, with complaints at onset and remaining after. Menses every two weeks, irregular never at right time, stopping & starting again. Violent spasmodic pains in sacrum. Labour like pains, causing urging to stool or to urinate.

Backache, lumbago, must sit up or turn over in bed. Hypochondriac, literary, studious women. Irritable, quarrelsome, impatient, oversensitive to all external impressions. Bad effects of highly spiced food, alcohol, coffee, tobacco, overeating, sedentary habits, mental overexertion. > while at rest, lying down, damp weather.

Calcarea carb

Menses too early, too profuse, long lasting. Dysmenorrhoea with headache, chilliness, toothache & vertigo. Feet habitually cold & damp, as if they had cold stockings on. Breasts swollen & tender during menses. The least mental excitement causes profuse return of menstrual flow. Profuse perspiration. Leucophlegmatic, blond, fair, tendency to obesity in youth. Takes cold easily. Great longing for eggs, aversion to milk & meat. Feels better in every way when constipated. > lying on painful side, dry weather.

Sabina

Menses too early, profuse, protracted, partly fluid, partly clotted, in persons who menstruated very early in life; with colic & labour like pains. Drawing pains in small of back, extending from sacrum to pubes. Discharge of blood between periods, with sexual excitement. Chronic ailments of women; arthritic pains, tendency to miscarriages, especially at third month. Menorrhagia at climacteric. Music is unbearable. < from least motion, warm room. > walking, cool open air.

Natrum mur

Headache, nausea & vomiting before, during & after menses. Menses irregular, profuse or scanty. Left sided clavus. Anaemic & cachectic women, great emaciation, losing flesh while eating well. Weeping disposition, consolation <. Bad effects of grief, vexation, anger, excessive use of salt. Aversion to bread. Tongue mapped with red insular patches. < at 10 or 11 am, at sea shore, heat of sun. > open air, lying on right side, cold bathing, perspiration.

Kali carb

Feels badly week before menses. Backache before & during menses. Wants the back to be pressed. Back gives way, with great

debility & sweating. While walking feels as if she must give up & lie down. Pains stitching < during rest, lying on affected side. Cannot bear to be touched. Persons inclined to obesity, takes cold easily. Aversion to being alone.

Cyclamen

Membranous & congestive dysmenorrhoea. Menses too early, too profuse, black & clotted, accompanied by vertigo, headache, dim vision. Pains pressive, drawing or tearing of parts where bones lie near the surface. Better during flow. < sitting & lying at night. > by walking. Leucophlegmatic persons with anaemic or chlorotic conditions, easily fatigued. Ailments from suppressed grief & terrors of conscience. Great sadness & peevishness, irritable, morose, inclined to weep, desire for solitude, aversion to open air.

Ammonium carb

Menses preceded by gripping colic, too early, profuse, acrid makes the thighs sore, copious at night & while sitting. With toothache, sadness, fatigue, yawning & chilliness. Cholera like symptoms at the commencement of menses. Stout fleshy women leading a sedentary life. Readily catch cold in winter, dislikes washing. Haemorrhagic diathesis. < during menses. > lying on abdomen, on painful side.

Lachesis

Congestive dysmenorrhoea. Pains all relieved by the flow. Always better during menses. Menses at regular time, too short, scanty. Complaints at climacteric. Thin emaciated persons, hot flushes, hot perspiration. Pains go from left to right, worse after sleep. Great sensitiveness to touch, intolerance of tight clothings. Great loquacity, suspicious, jealous. < warmth, heat of sun, hot drinks.

Borax

Membranous dysmenorrhoea. Menses too soon, profuse, with gripping colic, nausea & pain in stomach extending to small of back. Leucorrhoea albuminous, starchy, sensation as if warm water were flowing. Dread of downward motion, excessively nervous, easily frightened by the slightest noise.

Bovista

Menses flow only at night, not in day time. Diarrhoea before & during menses; occasional show every few days between periods, every two weeks, dark & clotted with painful bearing down. Great weakness of joints & weariness of hands & feet. Awkwardness. Sweat in axilla smells like onions.

Kreosote

Menses too early, profuse, protracted, pain during but < after it. Flow < on lying down, ceases on sitting. Flow intermits, cold drinks > menstrual pains. Severe headache before & during menses. Leucorrhoea acrid, offensive, odour of green corn. Women who are over grown, very tall for her age, old looking, wrinkled., post climacteric ailments.

Cactus

Pulsating pains in uterus & ovaries. Menstrual flow ceases when lying down. Whole body feels as if caged, each wire being twisted tighter & tighter. Constriction of chest, uterus, vagina, as if clasped by an iron band. Congestive, periodic, right sided, neuralgic, throbbing pains.

Mag carb

Menses with labour like pains, cutting colic, backache, weakness, chilliness, flows only at night or when lying down, acrid, dark pitch like, difficult to wash out. Menses preceded by sorethroat. Sour smell of the whole body. Craves meat.

Mag mur

Menses with great excitement at every period, flow black, clotted, spasms & pains in back when walking, extends to thighs. < at night in bed. Leucorrhoea after exercise, two weeks after menses. Pain in liver region < lying on right side. Constipation stool hard dry crumbling at the verge of anus.

Mag phos

Menstrual colic, membranous dysmenorrhoea. Flow dark, stringy, pains < before, > when flow begins. Congestive dysmenorrhoea. Pains shooting, lightning like, coming & going suddenly, rapidly changing place < right side. > heat, bending double, pressure. Thin emaciated persons. Great dread of cold air, of uncovering, of

touching.

Colocynth

Dysmenorrhoea, agonizing pain in abdomen, compelling the patient to bend double, with restlessness. Twists & turns to obtain relief. > by hard pressure. Menses suppressed by anger, indignation, chagrin. Pains like lightning shocks, crampy pain in hips. Extremely irritable, impatient throws things out of hands.

Dioscorea

Menstrual colic, pains < by bending forwards & while lying down. > by standing erect or bending backwards. Violent twisting colic, occurring in regular paroxysms, as if intestines were grasped & twisted by a powerful hand. Pains suddenly shift to different parts, appear in remote localities as fingers & toes.

Lac caninum

Menses too early, profuse, flow in gushes, bright red viscid & stringy. Breasts swollen, painful before & during menses. Erratic pains flying from one part to another, side to side. Sorethroat & cough begin & end with menses. Pains begin on left & goes to right. Very forgetful, absent minded, thinks her disease incurable.

Veratrum album

Dysmenorrhoea with vomiting & purging, is so weak can scarcely stand for two days at each menstrual menses. Cholera like symptoms at the commencement of menses. Rapid sinking of vital forces, complete prostration, collapse. Cold perspiration on forehead. Face, pale, Hippocratic, sunken. Thirst for large quantities of cold water, craves acids. Mania with desire to cut & tear, lascivious talks.

Aconite

Pains are intolerable, drives her crazy, becomes very restless, must change position often. Great fear & anxiety of mind with great nervous excitability. Afraid to go out, to go in to a crowd, fear of death. Young girls of a full plethoric habit who led a sedentary life. Amenorrhoea after fright, exposure to cold. Music is unbearable. <warm room, evening & night, lying on affected side, dry cold air. > open air.

Belladonna

Pains usually in short attacks, comes suddenly & ceases suddenly. Menses too early, profuse, bright red & hot, with bearing down sensation. Breasts feel heavy & painful. Women with light hair & blue eyes, plethoric, lymphatic constitutions. Congested red face with throbbing of brain & carotids. Head hot & painful, pulse full & bounding like buck shots. Violent delirium. <touch, noise, sun, least jar.> rest, standing & sitting erect, pressure.

Chamomilla

Profuse discharge of dark clotted blood with labour like pains. Pains seems unendurable, drives to despair, with heat, thirst, fainting with numbness, eructations <. Pains drive her out of bed at night, compels to walk about. Peevish, irritable, oversensitive to pain & touch. Complaints from anger. Milk runs out in nursing women, nipples inflamed, tender. Toothache during menses if anything warm is taken. Cannot endure anyone near her, cross, averse to talking.

Coffea

Pains felt intensely, almost insupportable, driving to despair, tossing about in anguish. Large clots of black blood, hypersensitive vagina. Tall lean stooping persons, dark complexion. Bad effects of sudden emotions, pleasurable surprises. Unusual activity of mind & body, full of ideas. Sleepless, wide awake at night. Oversensitiveness.

Calcarea phos

Menses too early, excessive, bright red, if late, it is dark. Sometimes first bright then dark with violent backache. Girls at puberty, tall growing rapidly, anaemic, dark complexioned, emaciated. Ailments from grief, disappointed love. Complaints < when thinking about them. At puberty, acne & headache in school girls.

Cocculus

During the effort to menstruate, she is so weak, scarcely able to stand from weakness of lower limbs. Leucorrhoea in place of menses, like washings of meat. Women & children who suffer severely during menses. Sensitive romantic girls, unmarried childless women. Bad effects of loss of sleep, night

watching. Time passes too quickly.

Crocus sativus

Dysmenorrhoea, blood black, viscid, clotted forming in to long black strings. Nervous or menstrual headaches, before, during & after flow. Chorea, hysteria, spasms of single set of muscles. Sensation as if something alive in abdomen. Frequent & extreme changes in emotions, sudden from the greatest hilarity to the deepest despondency.

Ignatia

Women of a sensitive, nervous temperament, mentally & physically exhausted by long continued grief. Mental conditions rapidly change from joy to sorrow. Involuntary sighing, desires to be alone. Bad effects of anger, grief, disappointed love. Oversensitive to pain, pain in small spots. Hysterical pains.

Zincum met

Congestive dysmenorrhoea, pains better by appearance of menses. Menses too late, suppressed, flow more at night. Breasts painful. Violent fidgety feeling in feet. Burning whole length of spine, backache < sitting. Defective vitality, nervous exhaustion, too weak to menstruate.

Secale cor

Menses irregular, copious, dark fluid with labour like pains in abdomen. Continuous discharge of watery blood until next period. Habitual abortion. Skin feels cold to touch, yet patient cannot tolerate coverings. Women of thin, cachectic, scrawny appearance. Face, pale, ashy, sunken, Hippocratic. Craves acids, lemonades. Burning in all parts.

Medorrhinum

Intense menstrual colic with drawing up of knees, labour like pains, must press feet against support. Menses profuse, dark, clotted, stains difficult to wash off. Breasts & nipples sore & sensitive to touch. Breasts icy cold, rest of body warm. Chronic ovaritis, salpingitis, fibroids, cysts, carcinomas. Maltreated & suppressed gonorrhoea. Craves liquor, acids, salt, sweets, ice. Burning of hands & feet. Weakness of memory. < thinking of complaints, sunset to sunrise, warmth. > at seashore, lying on abdomen.

Tuberculinum

Frightful dysmenorrhoea in women with a

tubercular history. Menses early, profuse, long lasting, tardy in starting. Tall slim, blonde, narrow chested, takes cold easily. Emaciation, losing flesh while eating well. Symptoms ever changing.

Viburnum opulus

Menses too late, scanty, lasting a few hours with crampy pains, cramps extend down the anterior muscles of thighs. Spasmodic & membranous dysmenorrhoea. Aching in sacrum & pubes. Pain from back to loins & womb. Frequent miscarriage. Severe bearing down pains before menses. < lying down > movements.

Xanthoxylum

Neuralgic dysmenorrhoea with pain in back & down the legs. Menses too early, thick, almost black, in strings. Pain in loins & lower abdomen, worse left side extending down the thigh, along the genito crural nerves. Desire to take deep breath during pain. Wants to sit or lie down. Ovarian neuralgia. Thin emaciated chlorotic women with oedema of face & legs.

Erigeron

Dysmenorrhoea with violent irritation of bladder & rectum. Bright red blood. Nose bleed instead of menses. Pain in left ovary & hip. Persistent haemorrhages.

Trillium pendulum

Dysmenorrhoea with sensation as if hips & back were falling to pieces, better by tight bandaging. < least movement. Flooding with fainting, menorrhagia. Uterine fibroids. Gushing of bright red blood.

Thlaspi

Menses too early, profuse, protracted, tardy in starting, first day merely a show, second day colic & vomiting. Profuse, dark, clotted blood with violent cramps, scarcely recovers from one period before another begins.

Ustilago

Menses too scanty with ovarian irritation or too profuse & too early. Extreme pain during the period, flow profuse & do not cease until next period, most of the time confined to bed. Between periods, constant suffering under left breast at margin of ribs. Oozing of dark, highly coagulated blood, long black strings.

Senecio aureus

Anaemic dysmenorrhoea. Before menses, inflammation of throat, chest & bladder which improve after menses. Functional amenorrhoea in young girls with backache. Great heat & constant urge for urination. Scanty bloody urine with much mucus & tenesmus.

Eupion

Congestive dysmenorrhoea. Pains > by appearance of menses. Nose bleed when flow intermits. Abdominal pain > by bending backwards. During menses irritable & disinclined to talk. Menses too early, copious. Uterine displacements.

Piscidia

Neuralgic & spasmodic dysmenorrhoea. Irregular menses. Insomnia due to worry, nervous excitement. A nerve sedative.

Fraxinus americanus

Dysmenorrhoea from uterine tumours, fibroids, uterine enlargements. Cramps in feet with bearing down sensation.

Aletris farinosa

Dysmenorrhoea with labour like pains. Menses scanty, retarded. Prolapse of uterus. Anaemic, chlorotic girls with great debility. Tired all the time. Sensation of weight in uterus. China of uterine system.

Jonosia asoka

Delayed or irregular menses. Headache due to suppressed menses. Menses scanty, pale, foul smelling, blackish, with, pain, palpitation, hysteria & loss of appetite.

Mercurialis perennis

Dysmenorrhoea with scanty menses, pain & swelling of breasts. Amenorrhoea. Great dryness of mouth & throat. Burning of tongue & lips.

Zincum valerianicum

Neuralgic dysmenorrhoea, ovaralgia, pains shoot down the limbs, even to the foot. Becomes almost insane with pain, sleeplessness from pain. Hysterical women.

Rosmarinus

Violent pains followed by uterine haemorrhage, menses too early. Head heavy, drowsy. Chilly with icy coldness of lower extremities without thirst, followed by heat

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