

PELVIC PAIN / PAINFUL MENSTRUATION

Most women will experience pelvic pain at some point in their lives. It is important to discuss any pain in the pelvis with your physician. The type and nature of the pain, as well as associated factors, may help in the diagnosis of the cause of pain. There may be many reasons for pain, and there often may be more than one cause. The following is a description of some of the causes of pelvic pain:

- **Infection** This can be related to infections of the bladder, bowel, or appendix, but may also be an infection of the uterus and fallopian tubes, known as PID (pelvic inflammatory disease). PID may be caused by a sexually transmitted disease. Vaginitis, or infection of the vagina, can cause vaginal pain as well as pain with intercourse. These infections will need to be properly diagnosed and treated by your physician.
- **Ovarian cysts** An ovarian cyst is a fluid filled sac on the ovary which forms from the normal process of ovulation (the formation and release of the egg from the ovary). They usually go away within a few days, but can enlarge and become quite painful. Rarely, they may need to be removed with surgery. They can be diagnosed with examination of the pelvis, as well as ultrasound of the pelvic structures.
- **Ectopic pregnancy** This involves a pregnancy which begins outside the uterus, often in the tube, and needs prompt medical or surgical treatment, as it can be life threatening. It is often associated with one-sided pain, irregular bleeding, and a positive pregnancy test.
- **Dysmenorrhea** Painful periods.
- **Endometriosis / Adenomyosis** These usually lead to menstrual cramping or painful sex, as well as pressure or bloating in the lower pelvis.
- **Ovulation pain** Pain associated with ovulation, and occurring at the middle of the menstrual cycle, about 2 weeks after a period starts.
- **Adhesions** This is scar tissue which has formed in the pelvis, often the result of prior pelvic surgery, infections, or even endometriosis.
- **Uterine fibroids** These are tumors which form within the uterus, and are a common cause of pain and irregular and heavy bleeding
- **Interstitial Cystitis:** Interstitial cystitis is an often unrecognized, chronic inflammation of the bladder wall which can lead to pelvic pain. Please see information in this website on this condition.

Please discuss any pain with your physician. More information on pelvic pain can be obtained at [http:// www.webmd.com/hw/chronic_pelvic_pain.tv2265.asp](http://www.webmd.com/hw/chronic_pelvic_pain.tv2265.asp)