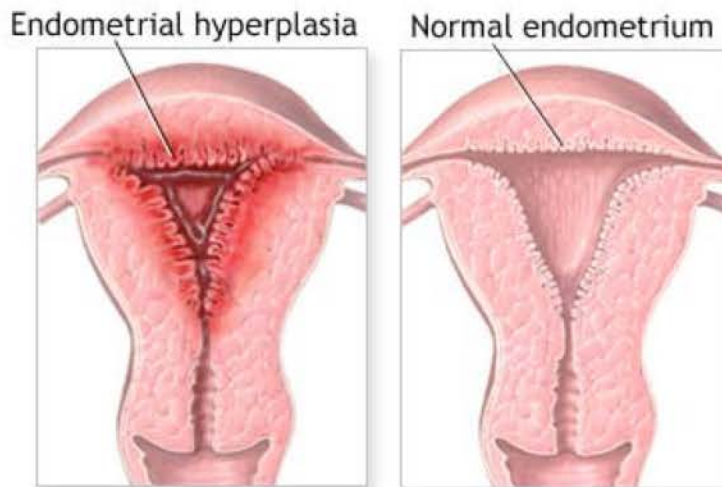


Menorrhagia

Abnormal menstrual periods



ADAM.

Abnormal menstrual periods may have a variety of causes, such as endometrial hyperplasia, endometrial polyps, uterine fibroids, and abnormal thyroid or pituitary function. The endometrium is the tissue lining the uterus. When the endometrium becomes unusually thick it is called endometrial hyperplasia. Hyperplasia may cause profuse or extended menstrual bleeding.

Alternative names [Return to top](#)

Periods - heavy or prolonged; Menorrhagia

Definition [Return to top](#)

Profuse or extended menstrual bleeding.

Considerations [Return to top](#)

The menstrual cycle is not the same for every woman. Normal menstrual flow occurs about every 28 days, lasts about 4 days, and produces a total blood loss of 30 to 80 milliliters (2 tablespoons to about 1 cup). Periods may be regular, irregular, light, heavy, painful, pain-free, long, or short, and still be normal. Variation in the menstrual cycle is medically less significant than bleeding, pain, or discharge between periods.

Bleeding may be something to worry about for women over age 50 (postmenopausal). The risk of [malignancy](#) increases with age.

Make sure that bleeding is coming from the [vagina](#) and not from the rectum or in the urine. This can be accomplished by inserting a tampon into the vagina to confirm that the vagina is the source of the bleeding. A serious problem can best be detected by a health care provider.

Common Causes [Return to top](#)

- Anovulation (failure of ovaries to produce, mature, or release eggs)
- Endometrial polyps
- Endometrial hyperplasia and cancers
- Uterine fibroids
- Abnormal thyroid or pituitary function
- Pregnancy complications (miscarriage or ectopic)