



Mino
Care

Pain Logbook

THE PURPOSE OF THIS RESOURCE IS FOR
DOCUMENTING PERIOD PAIN & CHRONIC PELVIC PAIN

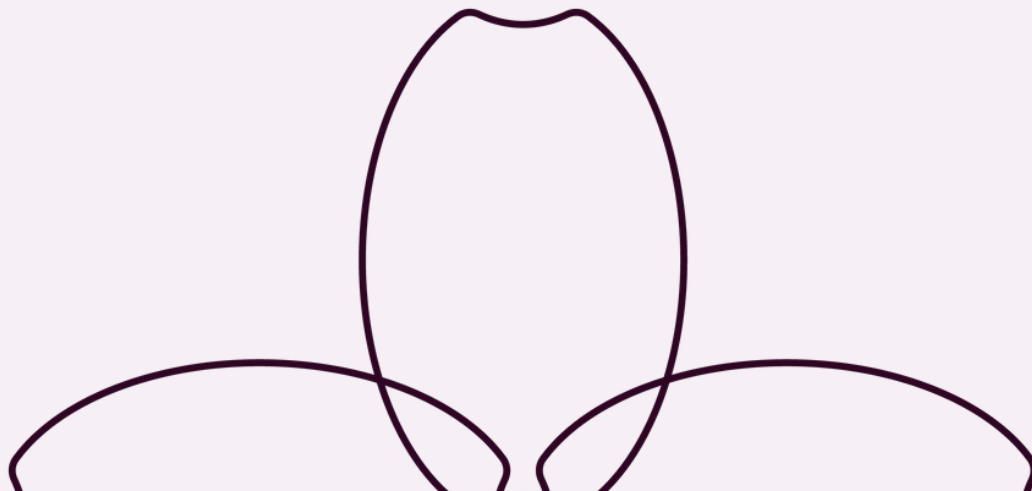



Understanding Your Pain

Most women experience period pain at some point during their lives. Your pain could feel like a small ache or strong quick cramps that happen on day 1 or 2 of your period. Pain is a personal experience and is not easily identified by anyone but you because it is your body. Also, there is no clinical test that can evaluate your pain. So, the best thing to do for period pain is to talk about how it feels with friends and/or family, share with your care provider, and track how the pain feels.

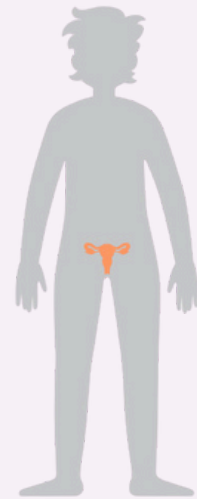
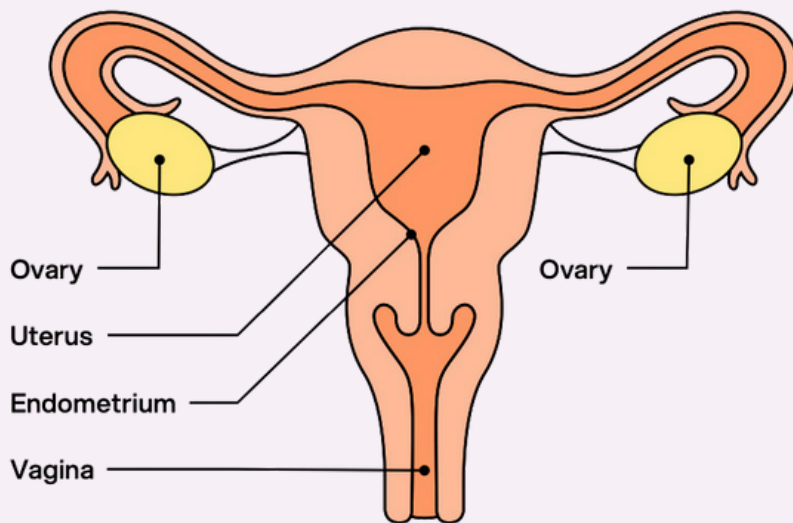
Typical Period Pain

When you have your period, the lining of your uterus builds up with blood and tissue preparing for pregnancy. If you do not become pregnant, your lining sheds and you get your period. The muscles in your uterus then get tighter (contract) and when this happens, it cuts off the blood supply and oxygen to your uterus. The loss of oxygen causes a release of chemicals that cause the pain you feel during your period.

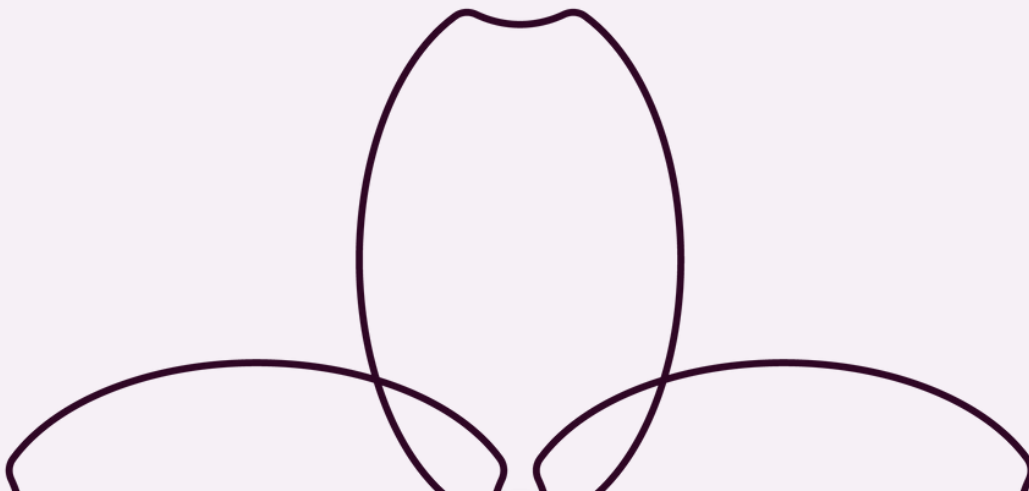


A typical period:

- lasts 3-5 days or even 8 days
- happens once every month or every 21-35 days
- allows you to have an idea of when it is coming next based on your cycle
- comes with pain that gets better with pain relief medication
- produces around 2-3 tablespoons of blood (and bleeding may be lighter or heavier)




The Endometriosis Network Canada (2023) What you need to know. Period.Pg.4






Types Of Period Pain

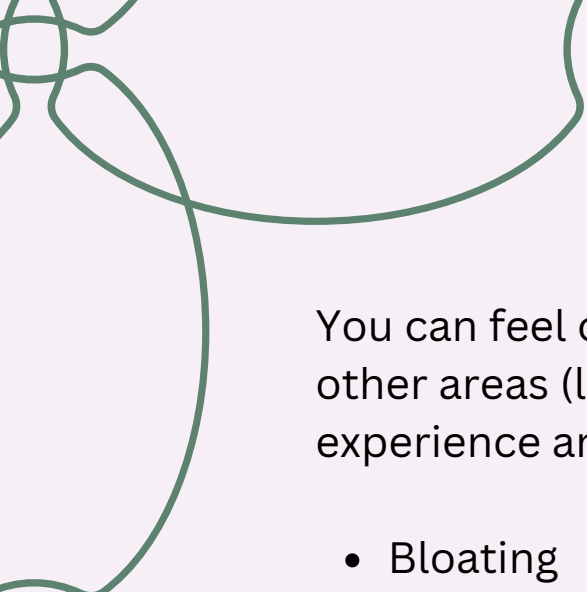
There are different types of period pain

- **Primary Dysmenorrhea:** Cramping pain that comes before and during a period in an otherwise “normal” uterus
 - **Secondary Dysmenorrhea:** Period pain that is caused due to another health condition like uterine fibroids, endometriosis, pelvic inflammatory disease, tumors, scarring from previous surgeries or adenomyosis (tissue that would line the uterus grows into the uterine muscles). This pain can increase and worsen over time.
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What Period Pain Can Feel like

Period pain is different for everyone, depending on how you experience pain. Patients without a uterus who have ovaries may have monthly pain that is similar to period pain.

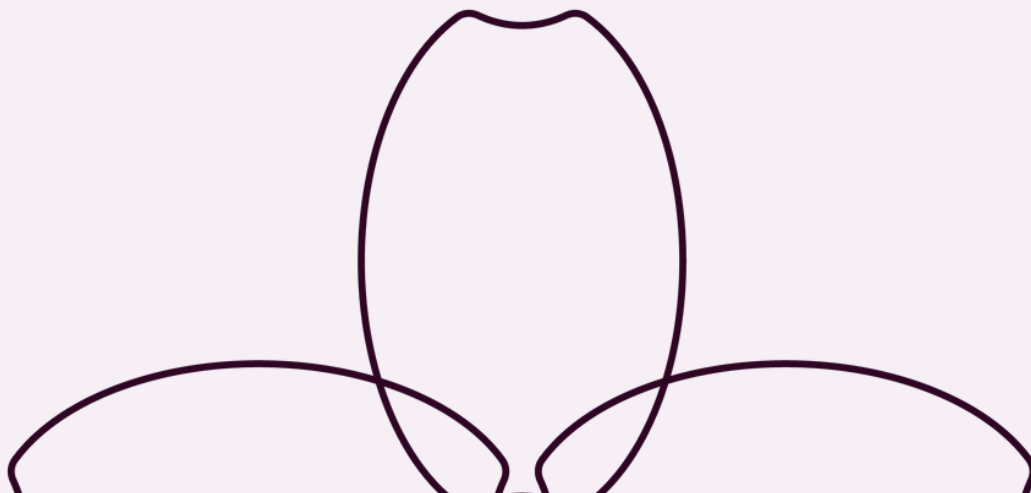





You can feel cramps in your lower back, stomach or other areas (like your bowels and rectum). You may experience any of the following symptoms:

- Bloating
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Constipation
- Nausea and vomiting
- Lower back pain
- Irritability

If your period pain becomes so bad that it affects your quality of life (if you are laying in the fetal position in pain, cannot stand up or feeling pain in your shoulder or chest), speak to your doctor, nurse, and/or pelvic floor therapist immediately to seek help!



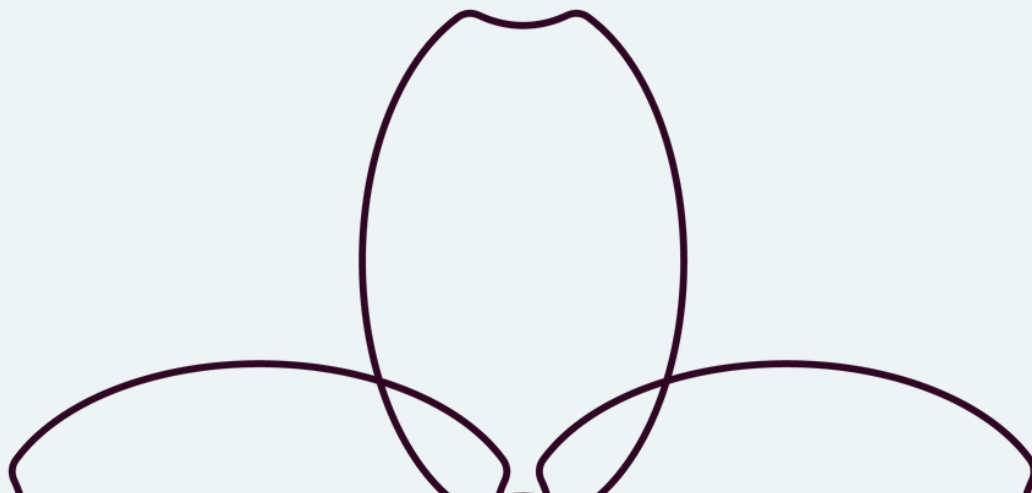

Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Period Pain

Are your periods regular every month?	Yes or No
How long does your period last?	0-7 days 7-14 days 14+ days
Would you describe it as light, medium, heavy or more than heavy?	Light Medium Heavy Very Heavy
Do you get pain during your period?	Yes or No
Have you had severe period pain?	Yes or No
Has your period pain impacted your usual daily activities?	Yes or No
Have you experienced bowel or bladder pain?	Yes or No
Do you often miss school or work because of your period?	Yes or No
Do you feel there is something wrong with your periods?	Yes or No
Do you feel pain during or after intercourse?	Yes or No
Does any activity (walking, exercise, etc.) make the pain worse?	Yes or No



Types of Pelvic And Period Pain Associated With An Illness

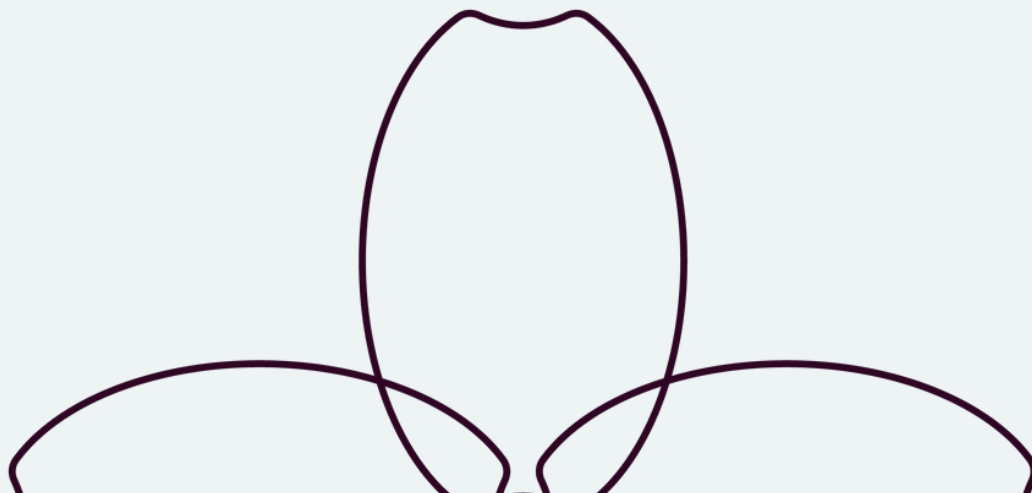

Endometriosis Related Pain: Endometriosis is a condition when the endometrial-like tissue (tissue that lines the inside of the uterus) grows outside of the womb, rather than inside. It usually happens in the pelvic area but can also happen in other areas of the body. These cells ‘bleed’ during menstruation and, since the blood has no means of leaving that area of the body, will build up and cause inflammation or more scarring. This can affect how your body functions and cause very painful cramping or stabbing pain in the stomach area, especially during your period. It can continue and become chronic pain. Severe sharp pain is another symptom that may be experienced during sex or when passing urine or feces. If you have any of these symptoms, please consult a doctor, nurse, or any other licensed health care professional.





Types of Pelvic And Period Pain Associated With An Illness

Fibroid Related Pain: Fibroids are noncancerous growths in the uterus. Fibroids are very common but people are typically unaware because some people may not have any symptoms. The size of the fibroid, location, and the number of them can cause symptoms like heavy and painful periods, pelvic pain, frequent urination, backaches, and leg pain. Fibroid pain can be worse during your period and it can cause severe period cramps. For some people, it can also be less painful, but can cause a long lasting feeling of heaviness, bloating, or discomfort in your stomach.






Types of Pelvic And Period Pain Associated With An Illness

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Related Pain:

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a hormonal condition where the ovaries produce an abnormal amount of male sex hormones (androgens) that are usually found in women in a small amount and also produce a number of small cysts. PCOS often presents with irregular periods along with (but not always) excess hair growth on the abdomen or face. Ultrasound may help with the diagnosis of PCOS but not always. Periods of those with PCOS often include heavy bleeding, clots, severe pain, and irregular periods, which may be infrequent and/or prolonged. As PCOS progresses, symptoms like period pain may worsen. PCOS has many other symptoms including: weight gain, fatigue, painful intercourse, excess facial and body hair growth, acne, male-pattern baldness, ovarian cysts, and infertility. Treatment is provided through medication and lifestyle changes such as weight loss, exercise, and dietary changes. Though treatment can help to reduce symptoms, it cannot cure PCOS.



Personal Pain Assessment

While pain is typically considered to be at its greatest during menstruation, some people may report experiencing pain throughout the entire menstrual cycle (including pre-menstrual pain, menstrual pain, post-menstrual pain and non-menstrual pain).

To help understand more about the pain you may be experiencing, we have a few questions to learn more. Circle your chosen answer below.

Do you get pain during your period? **Yes** **No**

Do you get pain at other times of the month?

Yes **No** If yes, when?

First week
.....

Second week
.....

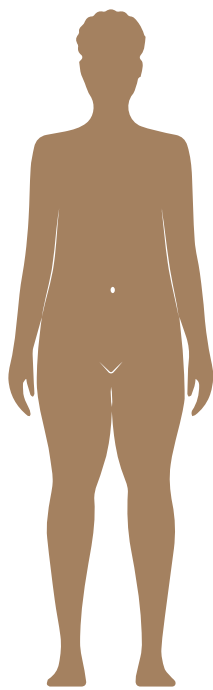
Third week
.....

Fourth week
.....

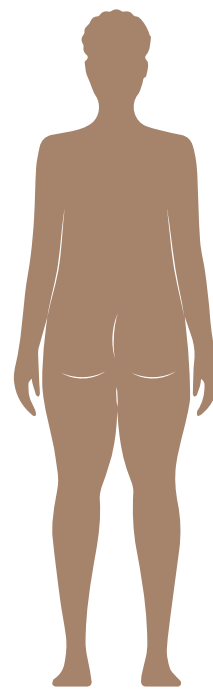
Personal Pain Assessment

Date		Day of week	
Time started		Time ended	
Total duration			

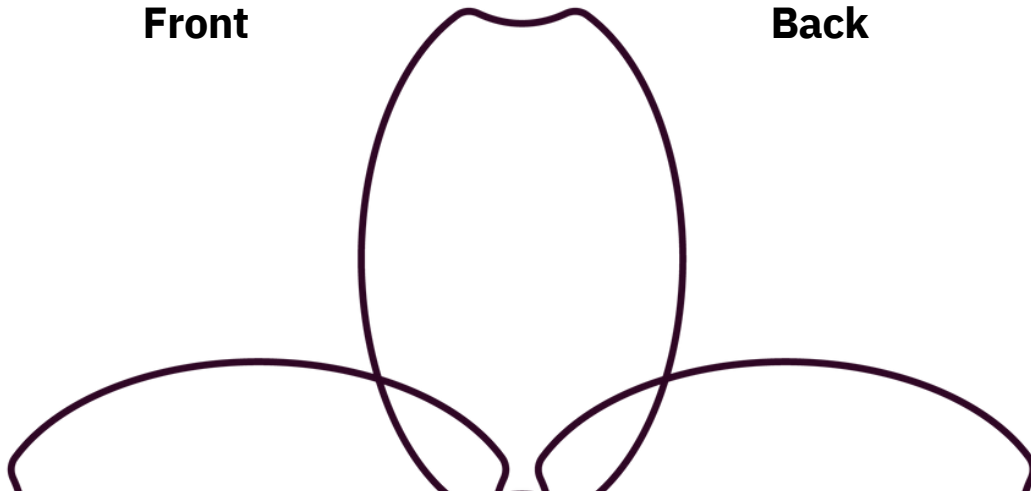
Use this body below to show where you feel pain. Draw an **X** on the area where you are experiencing pain.



Front



Back



Personal Pain Assessment

Describe how long you have experienced period pain or pelvic pain below. Put an **X** near the time length that you can relate to.

Less than 6 months

6-12 months

1-3 years

More than 3 years

Describe any environmental factors that are impacting your pain experience.

Lack of resources	Socioeconomic	Issues with Housing
Pesticide Exposure	Access to healthcare	Climate
Nutrition	Racism	Cultural
Individual behaviors	Religious	Diet
Geographical	Disease (genetic)	Tradition
Political	Access to information	Harmful substances

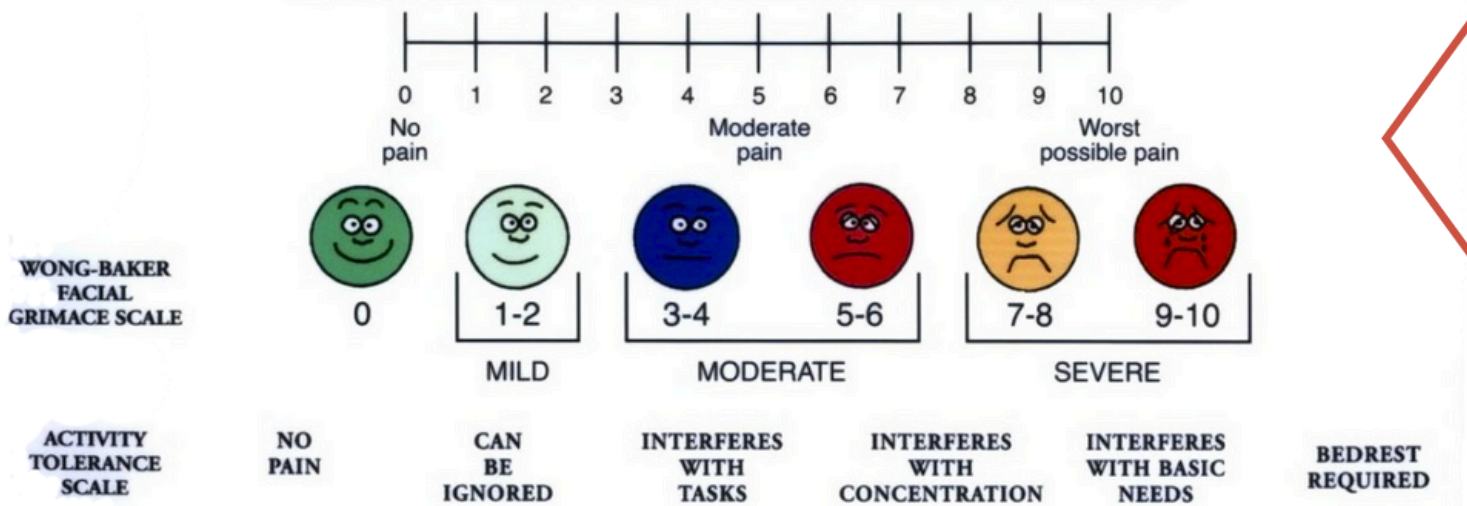
Personal Pain Assessment

Circle on the scale how your pain feels. Use the Universal Pain Assessment Tool below to understand how to measure your pain.



UNIVERSAL PAIN ASSESSMENT TOOL

This pain assessment tool is intended to help patient care providers assess pain according to individual patient needs. Explain and use 0-10 Scale for patient self-assessment. Use the faces or behavioral observations to interpret expressed pain when patient cannot communicate his/her pain intensity.



Source: Wong DL, Baker MC, Comparison of Assessment Scale, 1988, *Pediatric Nursing*; 14; 1-9



Personal Pain Assessment

Describe the type of period pain or pelvic pain you feel below. Circle the words that you relate to.

<i>Sharp</i>	<i>Stabbing</i>	<i>Constant pain</i>
<i>Burning</i>	<i>Shooting</i>	<i>Random/Weird</i>
<i>Cramping</i>	<i>Pain with bowel movements</i>	<i>Nauseous</i>
<i>Aching</i>	<i>Dull</i>	<i>Pain & bleeding with urine</i>

Describe how you feel emotionally because of the period pain or pelvic pain. Circle the words that you can relate to.

- Sad* *Angry* *Relaxed* *Depressed* *Happy* *Moody*
Exhausted *Stressed* *Annoyed* *Amused* *Content*
Fatigued *Sensitive* *Isolated* *Irritable*
Uncomfortable *Reactive* *Desire*
Attachment *Warm* *Affectionate*
Strong

Personal Pain Assessment

List any other factors impacting your pain experience here:

List any thing that you feel triggers your pain:

Have any of the following daily activities been impacted by your period pain? Circle all that apply.

Walking Exercise Cleaning Cooking Driving Sports

Lifting Sitting Others:

Social Leisure

Sleep Work/Study



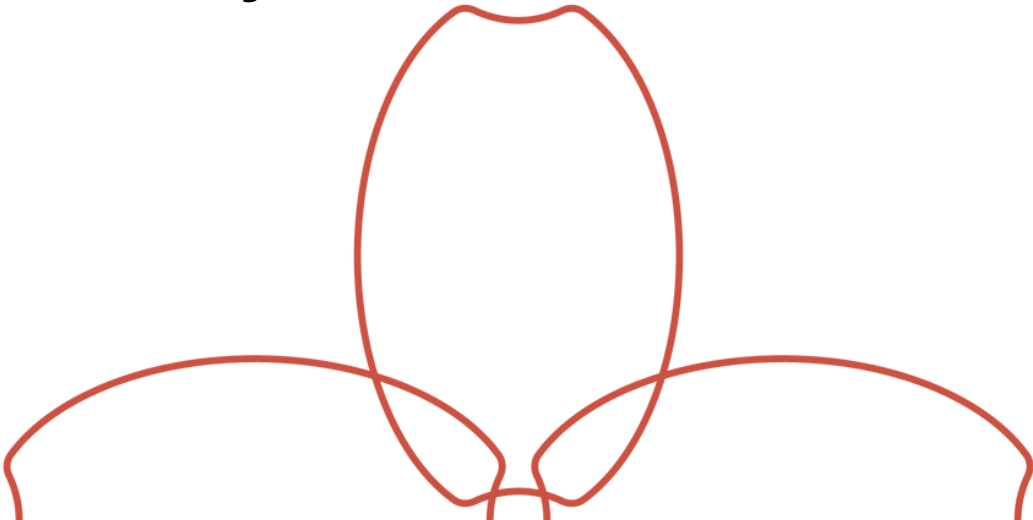
Personal Pain Assessment

Did you take any medications or use other methods to help your pain?

List any medications used here:

Explain how it affected you here:

Note: To manage pain, it may take a combination of treatment approaches before you find what works best for you!





Managing Your Period & Pelvic Pain


Diagnosis

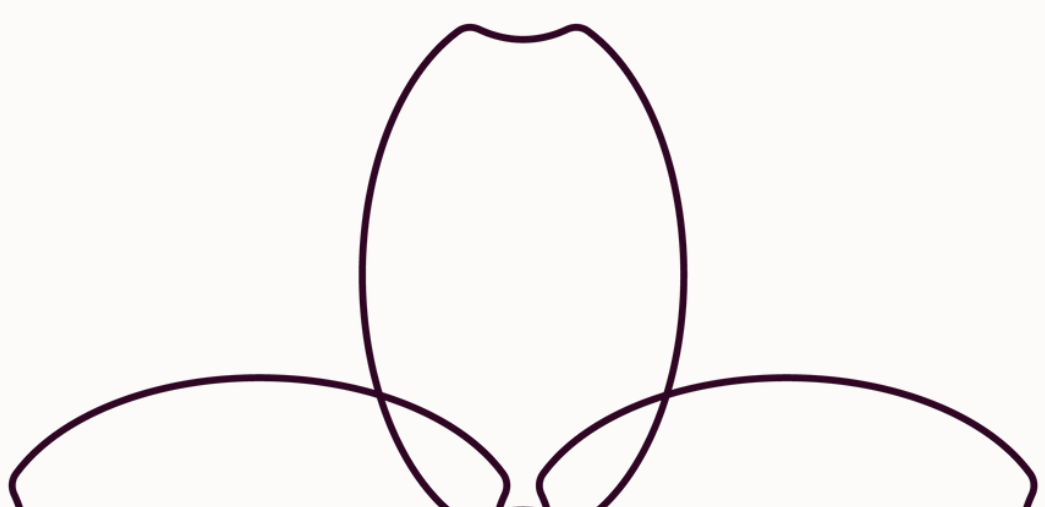
- Ultrasound
- Other imaging tests (such as MRI)
- Laparoscopy

Treatment

- Pain relievers
- Hormonal birth control
- Surgery
- History and examination with your healthcare provider

Self Care

- Sleep
 - Exercise
 - Heat (heating pads, hot baths or water bottle)
 - Dietary supplements (such as magnesium)
 - Reduce stress (try mental health support, activities you enjoy, etc)
 - Diet (as many options exist, this will require an individualistic approach)
 - Acupuncture
 - Acupressure
 - Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM)
 - Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS)
- 




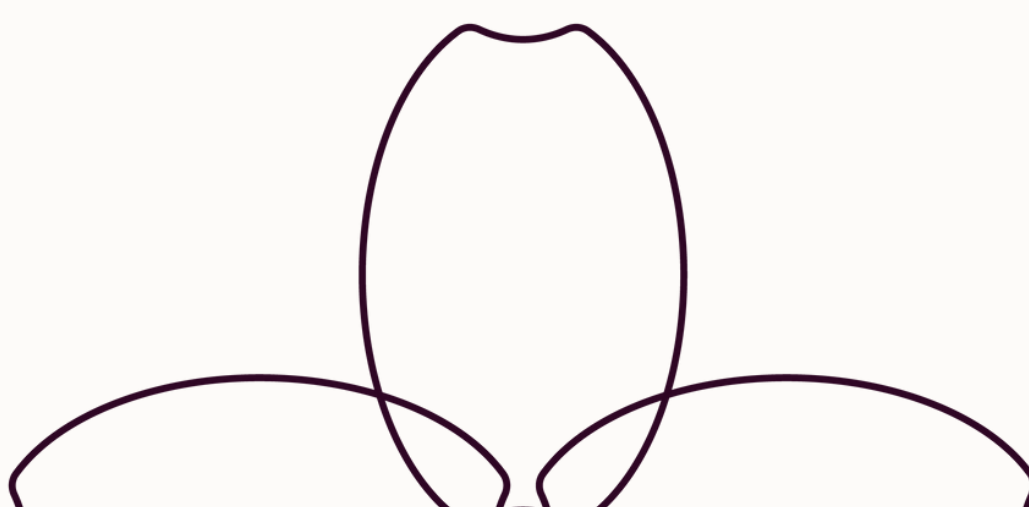


Speaking To Your Doctor/Care Provider

The health care system does not usually provide great experiences for the African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) community. It continues to be discriminative—plagued with structural racism and unconscious bias, which are all very real issues that tend to present at times when we are most vulnerable and in need of professional help. To improve our health care outcomes and experiences, a part of the journey is empowering **YOU** to take control of aspects of your own care that can help to create long term change.

Taking control of your health can begin with:

- **Having an agenda:** Organize the things you want to say, the questions you have, and the minimum information you want to leave with
 - **Share with the care professional any previous experiences** in health care (it helps to have a care professional from the ACB community request for that as well)
- 

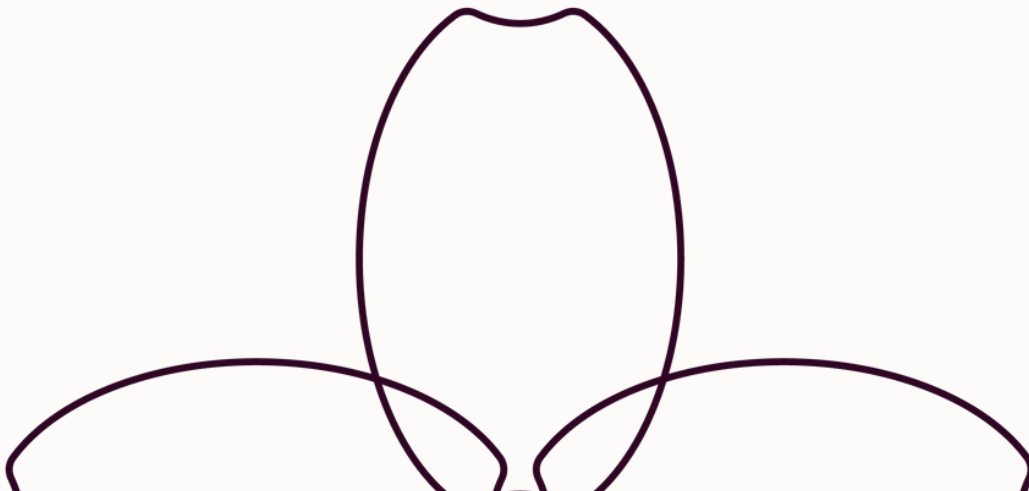





Speaking To Your Doctor/Care Provider

- **Keep a diary, record a video/audio or take photos (with permission), or write notes** on your phone to track symptoms and any information shared
- **Find out about any illnesses** in the family history
- **If you need interpretation, ask** a relative or friend who you trust to speak on your behalf
- **Ask questions and seek clarification** if needed from your care provider


You are entitled to medical care that meets your needs. It is okay to ask healthcare providers for what you need. It is also okay to have strong preferences for how you receive medical care. Practicing exactly what to say will help you feel confident as you prepare.

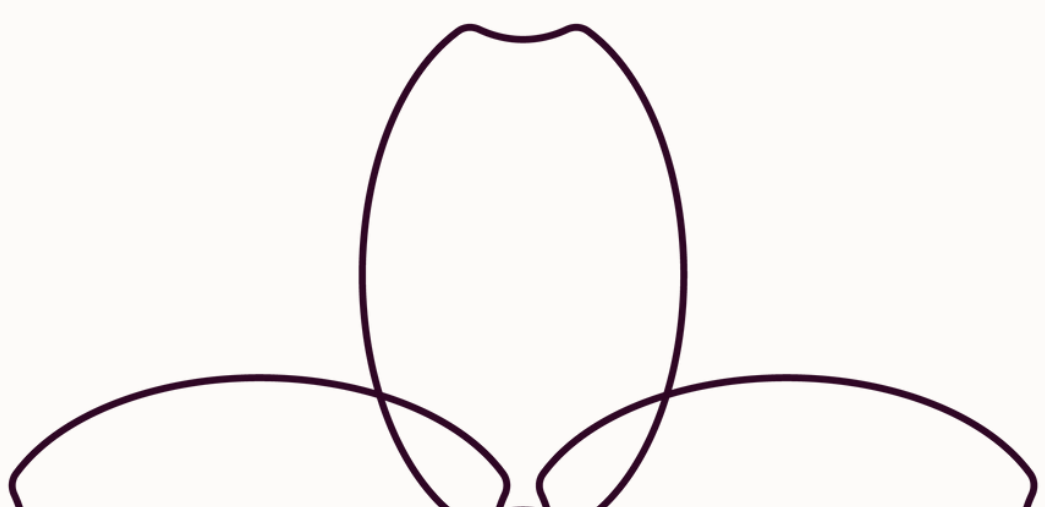




What to Ask Your Care Provider


Below are sample questions to ask your provider. Some of these may sound like something you'd never say, and some may feel more comfortable to you. Feel free to mix and match to suit your way of speaking.

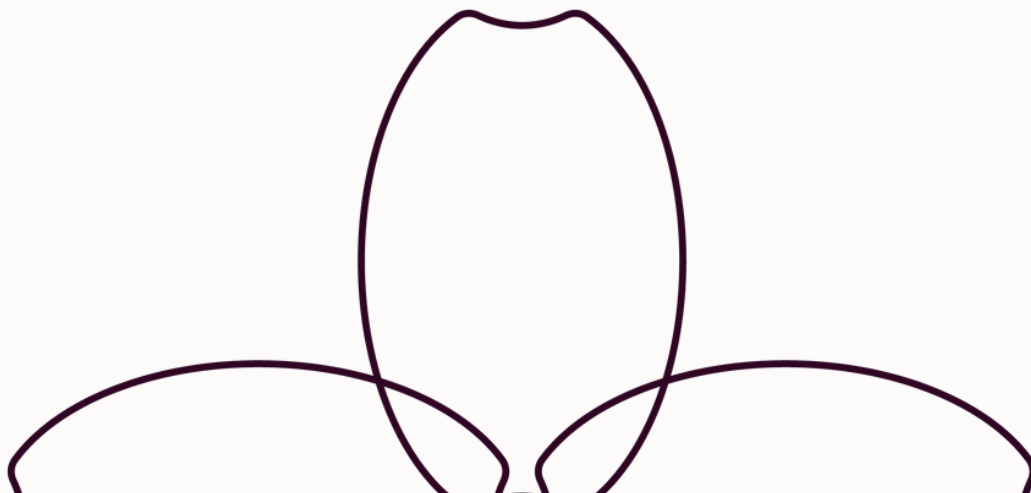
- Are you open to considering my opinion and answering my questions?
 - How do you communicate with your patients? (email, phone)
 - What is the best way to get a hold of you if I have an urgent matter?
 - Am I up to date with any tests that need to be taken for my condition?
 - What preventative services do I need and what do you recommend for my age?
 - What test is being ordered? Why?
- 






What to Ask Your Care Provider

- What is my treatment plan? What medication is being prescribed? Why? What are common side effects? What are the benefits and risks? What are the alternatives (surgical vs medical)?
 - Will this treatment affect my fertility? If so, how will we treat that?
 - What are your family planning needs?
 - How will you address my other gynaecologic concerns (i.e., bleeding, dyspareunia)
 - Can you reiterate back to me what my concerns are?
 - Can you refer me to a specialist?
- 





Advocate For Yourself When Communicating With Your Care Provider

Questions to ask after telling your doctor how you are feeling and when you would like a diagnosis from them:

- **What is your differential diagnosis for (name of condition)?**

Wait for their answer and listen to know what they rule out as not being the issue.

- **How have you ruled those other conditions out?**

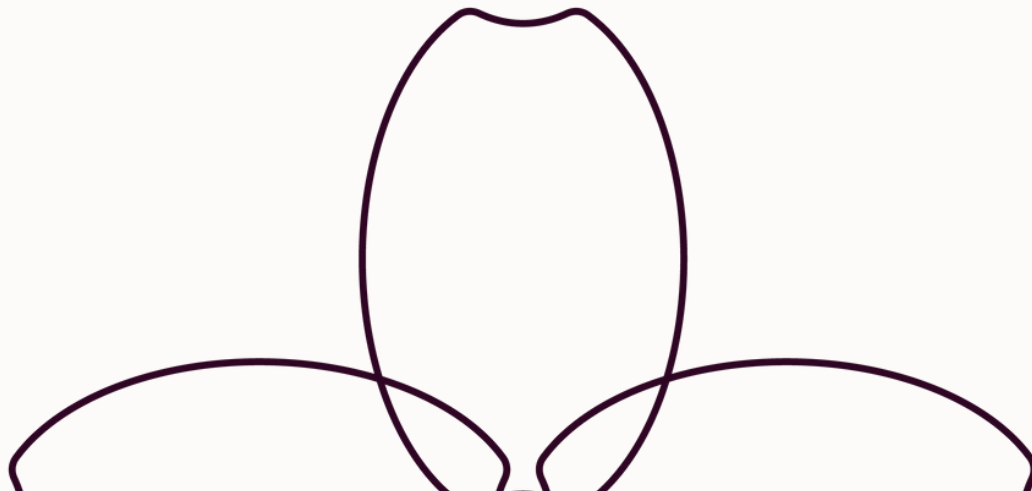
Listen again as they go through all of the possible diagnosis'

- **What is the evidence for and against that differential?**

Wait for the final diagnosis and tests to help figure it out

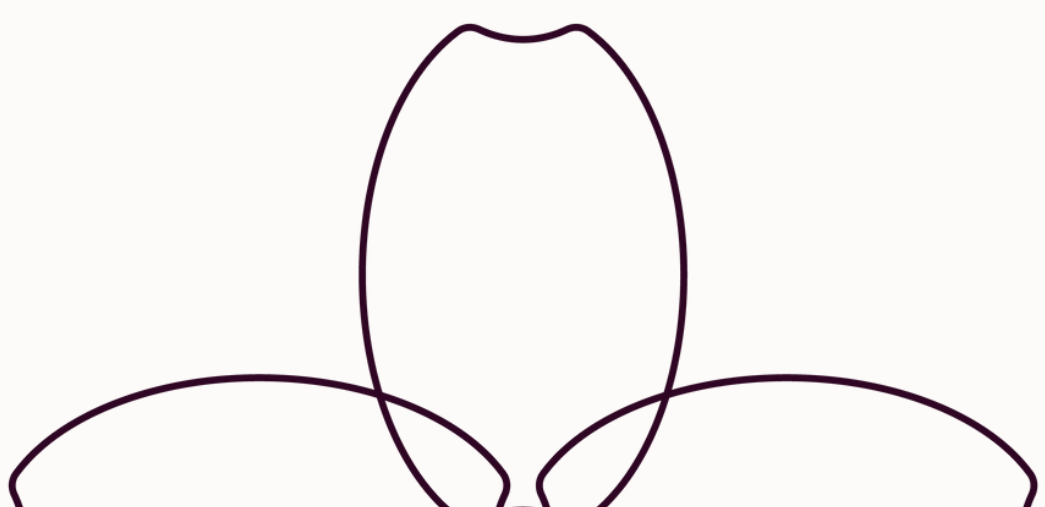
The key to advocating for yourself is asking a lot of questions!

@Joelbervell (2023); How to advocate for yourself if your doctor blows off your symptoms. TikTok Video



Remember Your Own History!

Prescription Medication		
Procedures		
Diagnosis		
Healthcare Provider Appointments		



Track Your Experience

Use this calendar on a weekly basis to track your period pain. Keep this information and share it with your care provider to help with your care and diagnosis.

Week beginning DD / MM / YY	Are you on your period?	Describe your pain* and where it is	How does it feel** and how long does it last? e.g. 3 hours	Do you have any other symptoms? e.g. bloating, bleeding, bowel or urinary problems	Did you take or do anything to help with the pain or symptoms? If so, what did it help?	What affect did it have on you?***
Mon						
Tues						
Wed						
Thurs						
Fri						
Sat						
Sun						

* Please rate your pain on a scale of 1-10. Where 1 = tolerable and 10 = the worst pain imaginable

** Please use the words listed on question 6 under "pain", or add your own

*** Please state whether these symptoms affected your work, education, relationships, social activities, sleep, exercise, food intake, sex life, stress levels, quality of life that day

Endometriosis uk.; Pain & symptom diary. < https://www.endometriosis-uk.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/pain-symptoms-diary_0.pdf>

Your Journey Is Just Beginning!

Period and pelvic pain is a journey and choosing to take initiative on your health can save your life and also give you a more happy and healthy experience. As a person from the African, Caribbean, Black (ACB) community, you deserve a health care experience that is comfortable and safe. Take control of your life, learn more about your body, and change your experience.



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