

# PSA: These are the 7 period symptoms you should be concerned about

PSA: These are the 7 period symptoms you should be concerned about



Dealing with typical [period symptoms](#), such as moodiness, cramps, and headaches, is bad enough. But if you feel like death is coming for you every single time Aunt Flow stops by, that may be cause for concern. So how can you tell if your [period symptoms](#) are normal or something you should talk to your doctor about?

Everyone experiences their period differently, so it's important to differentiate between period symptoms that are "normal" and ones that are not.

As Dr. Nita Landry, OB/GYN and co-host of CBS's [The](#)

[Doctors](#) (who goes by “Dr. Nita”), tells HelloGiggles, [typical period symptoms include](#) things like breast swelling and tenderness, tension, bloating, mild acne breakouts, and mild leg, back, or stomach cramps. While none of these symptoms could be classified as fun, they’re pretty manageable.

But, says Dr. Nita, “If your period symptoms are severe or if they’re disrupting your daily life, that could be a sign of something more serious.”

“For example, severe cramps and pain – sometimes bad enough to cause diarrhea, nausea, or vomiting—could be cause for concern. You should also tell a doctor about heavy bleeding, irregular bleeding, abnormal vaginal discharge and odor, or pain during intercourse.”

If any unusual period symptoms are left untreated, you could potentially be dealing with a much bigger health problem. So here some period symptoms you should be concerned about, according to doctors.

#### 1. Extremely painful periods

“Women should be concerned about pain that causes them to miss work or school each month,” Dr. Latasha Murphy, an OB/GYN at [Mercy Medical Center](#), tells HelloGiggles.

Mild cramps are normal. But if your pain requires you to take narcotic medication or causes nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, you shouldn’t brush it off. As Murphy says, that sort of severe pain may [be a sign of endometriosis](#) or adenomyosis, where cells in the inner-most layer of the uterus grow into the muscle of the uterus.

Painful abdominal cramps can also be a sign of pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). It’s a serious infection of the uterus, ovaries, and/or fallopian tubes that is caused by an untreated sexually transmitted infection, such as chlamydia or gonorrhea. According to Dr. Nita, PID causes stomach cramps

that get worse around your period.

## 2. Heavy bleeding

How much is too much? “If you are soaking through two or more super-absorbency pads or tampons in an hour, that is too heavy,” Dr. [Cindy M.P. Duke](#), medical director at the Nevada Fertility Institute, tells HelloGiggles.

Unusually heavy bleeding may indicate bigger health issues, such as endometriosis, adenomyosis, hyperplasia (overgrowth of the uterine lining), or endometrial polyps.

## 3. An increase or darkening of body hair

Polycystic ovary syndrome, or [PCOS](#), is a common hormonal disorder that’s associated with high male hormone levels.

“People with PCOS may experience infrequent or prolonged menstrual periods or symptoms of high male hormone levels (i.e. excess body hair or severe acne),” Dr. Nita says.

The condition is also a leading cause of infertility among women of child-bearing age.

## 4. Prolonged menstrual periods

[Menstruation](#) lasts about two to seven days, on average. Any longer than that can be cause for concern. As Dr. Nita says, prolonged periods may be a sign of uterine fibroids, which are noncancerous growths of the uterus that can affect up to 80% of women at some point in their lives. They can cause heavy and prolonged menstrual periods, as well as intense cramping.

## 5. Severe blood clotting

If you’re over 25 and are having severe clotting with your periods, you may need to be checked for benign growths in the uterus called fibroids, says Dr. Marra Francis, chief medical

officer at [EverlyWell](#) and board-certified OB/GYN.

She adds, “If a woman is over 40 and is having irregular bleeding, especially bleeding between cycles, and her hormones are balanced, then she may be having benign or cancerous changes in the lining of her uterus and should get a further work-up to determine the cause.”

## 6. Abnormal discharge

[Vaginal discharge](#) varies in amount, odor, and color depending on where you are in your menstrual cycle. But according to Dr. Duke, if you notice that your discharge is unusual in the way it smells or looks, you might want to check in with your doctor.

“Sexually transmitted infections can cause pain or formation of abscesses, which can cause fevers or foul-smelling periods and/or vaginal discharge,” she says.

## 7. No bleeding at all

To get the obvious out of the way, if it’s been over 35 days since your last period, take a pregnancy test first. “If the pregnancy test is negative, contact your healthcare provider,” Dr. Duke says.

Besides pregnancy, there are other things that may cause you to have no period at all. According to Dr. Duke, not having a period can indicate thyroid disease, kidney or liver problems, or even [prolactinoma, which is a type of brain tumor](#).

Your period can get pretty bad, and sometimes it can feel like fighting through the pain or ignoring any unusual symptoms is just easier than making an appointment with your doctor. But don’t automatically assume nothing’s wrong.

“If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, do not write them off as just a ‘bad period,’” Dr. Nita says. “Call your doctor and have an honest conversation about all your

symptoms. Tell them what is going on so they can take the next steps to diagnose you.”

Chances are, you’ll be thankful you did.

The post [PSA: These are the 7 period symptoms you should be concerned about](#) appeared first on [HelloGiggles](#).

Read more: [hellogiggles.com](http://hellogiggles.com)