

## Understanding Abnormal Uterine Bleeding (AUB)

What is abnormal uterine bleeding?

Abnormal uterine bleeding refers to bleeding from the uterus that is different from a normal menstrual period.

This may include:

- Periods that are very heavy
- Bleeding between periods
- Periods that last longer than 7–8 days
- Very frequent periods (less than 21 days apart)
- Irregular or unpredictable bleeding
- Bleeding after menopause

Many people experience abnormal bleeding at some point in their lives. While it is often caused by a benign condition, it is important to evaluate it properly.

### Common Causes

Abnormal bleeding can occur for many reasons. Doctors often classify causes into several groups:

#### Hormonal causes

- Irregular ovulation
- Perimenopause
- Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- Thyroid disorders
- Hormonal contraception

#### Structural causes in the uterus

- Uterine fibroids
- Endometrial polyps
- Adenomyosis
- Thickened uterine lining

#### Medical conditions

- Pregnancy-related issues
- Bleeding disorders
- Certain medications (e.g., blood thinners)

#### Less common causes

- Precancerous changes of the uterine lining
- Endometrial cancer

## Evaluation

Your gynecologist will take several steps to determine the cause.

### 1. Medical history

You may be asked about:

- Your menstrual cycle pattern
- Pregnancy history
- Birth control use
- Medications
- Symptoms such as pelvic pain or fatigue

### 2. Physical examination

This may include:

- Abdominal exam
- Pelvic exam
- Cervical screening if needed

### 3. Laboratory tests

Possible tests include:

- Pregnancy test
- Blood count (to check for anemia)
- Thyroid testing
- Hormone tests if indicated

### 4. Imaging

A pelvic ultrasound is often the first imaging test. It helps evaluate:

- Uterus size and shape
- Fibroids
- Ovaries
- Thickness of the uterine lining

### 5. Endometrial sampling (sometimes needed)

In some patients, a small sample of the uterine lining is taken to rule out abnormal or precancerous cells. This may be done in the office.

### 6. Additional procedures (if needed)

- Hysteroscopy (camera inside the uterus)

## Treatment Options

Treatment depends on:

- The cause of the bleeding
- Your age
- Your overall health
- Whether you wish to become pregnant

Medical treatments:

Options may include:

- Hormonal birth control (pill, patch, ring)
- Progesterone therapy
- Hormonal IUD
- Anti-inflammatory medications
- Medications that reduce menstrual bleeding

Minimally invasive surgical procedures:

Examples include:

- Removal of uterine polyps
- Fibroid removal (myomectomy)
- Endometrial ablation (in selected patients)

Your gynecologist will discuss the most appropriate options for your individual situation.

## When to Seek Urgent Care

You should seek medical attention urgently if you experience:

- Bleeding that soaks a pad or tampon every hour for several hours
- Dizziness, fainting, or severe weakness
- Bleeding during pregnancy
- Bleeding after menopause

## Important Notes

Abnormal uterine bleeding is common and treatable. A proper evaluation helps ensure that serious causes are not missed and that you receive the most appropriate care.

If you have concerns about your bleeding pattern, please contact your healthcare provide