

# Heavy Isn't 'Normal'

## Check Your Flow.

Heavy menstrual bleeding (HMB) can affect a girl's or woman's quality of life—early diagnosis and treatment reduce complications. About one in four women with heavy menstrual bleeding has an underlying bleeding disorder.<sup>1</sup> The EHC Women and Bleeding Disorders Committee puts the spotlight on this topic to improve awareness.

### What is heavy?

Heavy menstrual bleeding (HMB) is often defined as losing more than 80 ml of blood during one menstrual period. The bleeding may still be considered heavy if it affects your daily activities, well-being, or quality of life, even when blood loss is lower than 80 ml. It can occur with regular or irregular periods.<sup>2,3</sup>

If you want to check your flow, have a look at the **7-2-1 rule** and **assess your period** with our bleeding diary.

Heavy blood loss can also lead to **iron deficiency** and anaemia. Keep an eye on iron your levels! Goal: Ferritin >30µg/L<sup>4</sup>

### How to treat it?

If you feel like your period is too heavy, talk to your doctor about investigation and treatment. You have options!<sup>2</sup>

- Medications to reduce bleeding (e.g. Tranexamic acid or DDAVP)
- Factor replacement therapy
- Hormonal contraception (e.g. the pill, patch, ring)
- Progestins ("mini pill")
- Hormonal IUD (coil)
- In some cases, surgery

**Tip #1:** Try different menstrual products—such as pads, tampons, menstrual cups, or period underwear—to find what works best for you. Combining methods (e.g. a tampon or cup with a pad or period underwear) can give extra protection, especially on heavy days. Look for chemical and/or plastic free products.

**Tip #2:** Think "outside the box" and consider products designed for incontinence, such as incontinence underwear or bed pads. They can provide extra absorbency and protection, especially on very heavy days or at night.

**Tip #3:** Rinse blood stains with cold water, as warm water can cause the proteins to bind and set the stain. Additionally try hydrogen peroxide.

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Check Your Flow.

**HEAVY MENSTRUAL BLEEDING (HMB)**  
**7-2-1 rule**

Duration: days or longer  
**7**

Change of sanitary products: every hours or more often  
**2**

Size of blood clots: bigger than a Euro coin  
**1**

What else is too much?  
• Bleeding for more than 2 days during ovulation  
• If the blood loss interferes with your everyday life (physical, emotional, social and mental quality of life e.g. being absent from school/work, constancy tired, having severe cramps)

May 28, 2026  
Menstrual Hygiene Day

Women & Bleeding Disorders Committee

**BLOOD LOSS ASSESSMENT CHART**

Day	Duration	Quantity	Pain
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			

### Did you know?

More than 50% of women with inherited bleeding disorders suffer from HMB.

It occurs in about 64% of haemophilia carriers/mild haemophilia patients.<sup>5</sup>



1 European principles of care for women and girls with inherited bleeding disorders

2 Sriprasert, I et al. Heavy menstrual bleeding diagnosis and medical management. *Contracept Reprod Med* 2, 20 (2017).

3 van Galen K et al. European principles of care for women and girls with inherited bleeding disorders. *Haemophilia*. 2021 Sep;27(5):837-847.

4 Jäger L et al. Ferritin Cutoffs and Diagnosis of Iron Deficiency in Primary Care. *JAMA Netw Open*. 2024;7(8):e2425692.

5 Weyand AC et al. Health Issues in Women and Girls Affected by Hemophilia with a Focus on Nomenclature, Heavy Menstrual Bleeding, and Musculoskeletal Issues. *Haemophilia*. 2022;28(Suppl. 4):18-25.

