

What causes it?

There is often no actual cause, said Dr Wee Horng Yen, a consultant gynaecologist at KK Womens and Children's Hospital. In other cases, it could be due to hormonal imbalance, such as the polycystic ovary syndrome.

"When imbalance occurs, the lining of the uterus develops in excess and eventually sheds by way of heavy periods," he said. Other possibilities include fibroids which are non-cancerous growths that affect about 25 per cent of women.

Dr Tan Eng Loy, an associate consultant gynaecologist at the Singapore General Hospital, said: "Heavy periods may be due to the presence of uterine fibroids, especially if they protrude into the womb cavity.

"Or it could be adenomyosis, where the walls of the womb are abnormally thick."

Blood clotting, thyroid and ovary disorders are contributing factors as well.

Contraceptives, such as the intra-uterine device, may also cause excessive bleeding.

However, bleeding in-between periods or after menopause may indicate cancer, said Dr Tan.

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