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## Heavy Menses

Today I want to talk about heavy periods. For many women, that time of the month can be a dreadful ordeal. It is often filled with embarrassment, uncertainty and fear that an accident will happen.

Heavy periods may also be accompanied with cramping and low iron. Low iron causes fatigue and hair loss. If you are experiencing difficulties waking up in the morning and your periods are heavy, you most likely have low iron stores.

If you have had your iron levels tested, you may not have received a call from your doctor indicating that your levels are low. The reason for that is that stored iron (ferritin) has a large reference range. You may be in the range but this may not be ideal for you. In addition, there are many different kinds of iron supplements and many of them are difficult to absorb causing constipation.

Now back to heavy periods. There are many possible causes. The most common cause is what is referred to as estrogen dominance. This means that relatively speaking, there is more estrogen than progesterone in the system. Estrogen is an anabolic hormone. This means it likes to build things. For example, fibroids, which is a growth of the uterine wall, is usually due to an estrogen dominance and causes heavy periods. The main cause of this phenomenon is a “sluggish” liver.

The liver is the largest detoxification organ in our body. It detoxifies what we eat, drink, breath and put on our skin. It is constantly working and can commonly become “sluggish”. The liver also metabolizes our hormones. If it is not working properly, it will not be able to break down the estrogen hormone adequately and thus create a build-up. On top of that, if you are suffering from constipation, the broken down hormones cannot escape the body easily and will be reabsorbed through the bowels.

As a naturopathic doctor my first goal is to help the liver work properly in order to detoxify the hormones properly. I do this by primarily utilizing herbs and homeopathic remedies. When the liver is detoxifying correctly, the lymphatic system is what carries toxins away and so ensuring that this system is working well, is crucial. Next, I make sure that the digestive system is functioning well in order to eliminate toxins appropriately. Once this is all in place, my patients no longer dread their period.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask me by emailing me at [Cecilia@drcecilia.ca](mailto:Cecilia@drcecilia.ca)

