

# Health and Well Being

## TREATING HEAVY PERIODS IN YOUR DOCTOR'S OFFICE



Find out more about abnormal uterine bleeding.

Contact Dr. Robert Howe at  
413-525-5160

**Learn how a single treatment in your doctor's office can relieve symptoms of abnormal uterine bleeding.**

Most girls learning about menstruation are taught that a normal period occurs about every 28 days and lasts four to five days. But for millions of women, the reality of menstruation may be very different. For these women, periods may last longer than seven days and may be accompanied by hemorrhaging, profuse bleeding, clotting and severe cramping.

"Abnormal uterine bleeding has an affect on quality of life and also takes an emotional toll," explains Dr. Howe. "It also can lead to iron deficiency anemia, a condition in which blood becomes low on healthy red blood cells that carry oxygen to tissues."

It is estimated that abnormal uterine bleeding affects 25% of women in the United States. One study found excessive menstrual bleeding is the main complaint in almost two-thirds of all referrals to gynecology outpatient clinics and that many of these women will undergo hysterectomies as a treatment.

While hysterectomy is one treatment option for abnormal uterine bleeding, there are other more conservative approaches that can provide significant long-term relief. Cryoablation is one such treatment.

Cryoablation uses sub-zero temperatures to reduce or eliminate excessive menstrual periods. The cold temperatures destroy the uterine lining, which is responsible for menstrual bleeding.

"When the endometrium is eliminated, there is less tissue to shed each period, and therefore, dramatically less or no menstrual bleeding," explains Dr. Howe. "And unlike hysterectomy, cryoablation allows you to keep your uterus and natural hormones."

**Most women are able to resume normal activities the day after receiving in-office cryoablation therapy.**

Dr. Howe uses a cryoablation process called Her Option®. The treatment is available in his office—rather than a hospital—and generally takes about 20 minutes.

The Her Option treatment involves inserting a slim probe vaginally through the cervix and into the uterus. No cervical dilation is required. Once in place, the cooling process begins, and the probe freezes tissue symmetrically around its tip.

"Most women do not experience pain during the procedure because of the natural analgesic effect of the cold temperature," says Dr. Howe. "Sometimes there is mild pressure or a cramping sensation."

The results of Her Option office cryoablation therapy are encouraging. At 24 months, 91% of patients were very or extremely satisfied with treatment results. A full 96% of patients would recommend Her Option to a friend.

"Cryoablation is a safe and effective step toward controlling abnormal uterine bleeding and potentially avoiding hysterectomy," says Dr. Howe. "Best of all, it is available in the comfort of the physician's office."

Her Option® is not recommended for everyone. You will need to be evaluated by your doctor to find out if it is right for you. You will not be a candidate if you intend to become pregnant, use an IUD or suffer from uterine cancer, an active urinary tract infection, pelvic inflammatory disease, or if you have certain types of uterine abnormalities. Every medical treatment has risks and complications. Talk to your doctor.