

EVERYONE CAN EXPERIENCE PELVIC PAIN

1 in 12 people assigned male at birth can experience pelvic pain.

- Pain with bladder, bowel or sexual function is not normal.
- Pain may affect social relationships and academic performance.
- Pain can be steady or come and go. It may be mild, moderate or severe. It may feel like cramps, stabbing or burning pain or a dull ache in the pelvis (and/or penis, the area between the legs and testicles).
- Pain with sexual activity is not normal for anyone.
- If you or someone you know is experiencing pelvic pain, it is important to speak to a doctor.

PPEP TALK® NEXT STEPS

PPEP Talk® Next Steps is a FREE online information session held monthly by Gynaecologist, Pain Specialist and author of 'Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain' Associate Professor Susan Evans.

Building on the knowledge students have gained at our school sessions, PPEP Talk® Next Steps is an opportunity for young people experiencing pelvic pain and their families to ask questions and seek support for the next steps to take.

Follow the QR code or visit www.pelvicpain.org.au to register and for more information.



FURTHER READINGS & RESOURCES

- A copy of 'Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain' by Dr Susan Evans and Deborah Bush QSM has been given to your school library for you to read.
- Visit the Pelvic Pain Foundation of Australia website, www.pelvicpain.org.au, for further information and resources, including a free copy of the Introduction to Pelvic Pain booklet.



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INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND CAREGIVERS





WHO ARE WE?

The Periods, Pain and Endometriosis Program (PPEP Talk®) is an initiative of the Pelvic Pain Foundation of Australia (PPFA), jointly funded by the Federal and State Governments.

PPEP Talk® is a curriculum-linked health and wellbeing program for Australian Students in Year 10 and above, educating them on the latest in modern knowledge and the new neuroscience of pain.

Developed jointly by medical and education professionals, the program educates all students about endometriosis and pelvic pain to raise awareness and promote early diagnosis and support for those affected. PPEP Talk® delivers on the objectives of the National Action Plan for Endometriosis (2018) with its emphasis on raising community awareness through education.

PPEP Talk® is for everyone. It helps those who experience pelvic pain better understand their pain and find tools to reduce it. It helps those who support people with pain to better understand what they go through and how to assist them best.



COULD SOMEONE I KNOW HAVE ENDOMETRIOSIS?

If someone you know has these symptoms, they may have endometriosis:

- Period pain that is present for more than three days per month and starts in the days before a period.
- Period pain that doesn't improve with the use of the contraceptive pill or anti-inflammatory medications such as Ibuprofen or Naproxen.
- A mix of pelvic pains that may include the bladder or bowel.
- Pain with sexual activity.
- A family history of severe period pain or diagnosed endometriosis.

PERIOD PAIN AND ENDOMETRIOSIS

- 8 in 10 teenagers assigned female at birth (AFAB) have period pain, but it shouldn't be severe or interfere with their daily life.
- 1 in 9 AFAB teenagers will develop a medical condition called endometriosis, where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus and causes pain.
- 4 in 10 AFAB teenagers with endometriosis may experience difficulty becoming pregnant later in life.
- Managing period pain early can help AFAB teenagers reach their full potential with less pain. It can also help those with endometriosis get diagnosed early when treatment is most effective.
- If someone you know has severe pain, we recommend that they discuss this with a doctor who is interested in women's health or pelvic pain and with whom they feel comfortable.



TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS OF TEENAGERS LIVING WITH PERSISTENT PAIN

1. Help your child live as normally as possible. Keep up family routines, encourage your child to do their share and be involved in family activities.
2. Help your child develop a good support team around them. This team includes you, your family, their friends, their school, your family GP and other health care professionals.
3. Shift the focus away from pain. You can acknowledge that pain is present and encourage your child to use helpful pain management strategies such as getting involved in a favourite activity, music, sport, dance, art, meditation etc.
4. Recognise persistent pain's adverse effects on your child's thoughts and emotions. Anxiety and depression are common, as are anger, fear and worry. Professional help from your GP, a Psychologist or a Counsellor may help make a positive difference.
5. Encourage your child to go to school every day. Getting behind in school can add more stress. Work with your child's teachers to make a pain management plan for school, which may include giving medication, limited time-out or rest periods and modified physical activities, and sending work home for days your child can't get to school.
6. Discourage resting in bed or on the couch for long periods of the day. This can worsen pelvic muscle pain (the aching or stabbing pain) and cause sleeping problems at night.
7. Help your child develop a plan for a bad pain day. Planning can help your child worry less about flare-ups and manage the pain better.