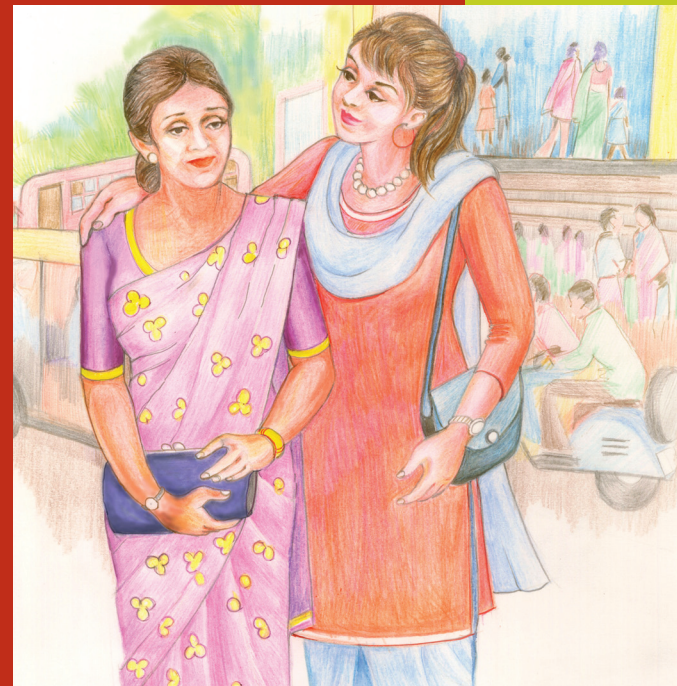


Remember – don't be shy. Tell your doctor if you have:

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding, such as bleeding after sex, bleeding after menopause, bleeding and spotting between periods, and having menses that are longer or heavier than usual
- An unusual discharge from the vagina – the discharge may contain some blood and may occur between your menses or after menopause
- Pain during sexual relations

If you have any of these signs or other symptoms, see your doctor right away. And remember to get a Pap test every 3 years. Don't wait until you have symptoms.

Don't Be Shy: Tell Your Doctor about Your Symptoms



Creation of this material was made possible in part by a pioneering grant from CBCC-USA.

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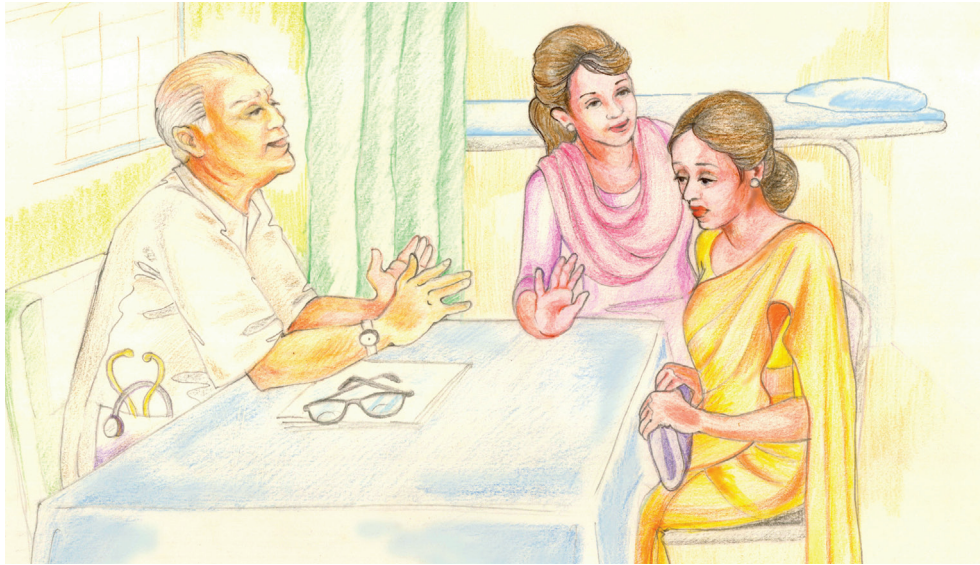
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Doctor: Hello, Mrs. M. What brings you here? I hope everything is fine.

Mrs. M: Well, it's just a small problem, nothing much really ...

Mrs. S: Go on M, don't be shy.

Mrs. M: I don't know how to tell you, but, there seems to be a problem with my monthly menses.

Doctor: Tell me the problem so I can help you.

Mrs. M: It is just that I have been getting my periods more often. Oh, this is so embarrassing.

Mrs. S: There is nothing to be embarrassed about. It is a medical problem, and you need to tell the doctor about it so he can help you.

Mrs. M: Well, I sometimes have bleeding twice a month; and sometimes it is 3 times. Sometimes I think I have bleeding almost daily.

Doctor: How long has this been happening?

Mrs. M: Almost 4 months now. But I know many women have problems with their menses.

Doctor: Yes, but bleeding in between menses and at times without stopping is not normal. Let me ask you something very personal, Mrs. M. Do you have bleeding after sexual relations?

Mrs. M: Yes, I have noticed that.

Doctor: In that case, I think we need to get a Pap test so we can find the cause of the bleeding.

Mrs. M: Pap test? I have heard that this is a test for cancer. Does that mean I have cervical cancer?

Doctor: Do not panic! A Pap test is done to find out what kind of problem there is. It may not be cancer at all, but we will not know without the test.

Mrs. M: I don't know how it is done. Does it hurt? Will there be more bleeding? Do I need to be hospitalized?

Doctor: Getting a Pap test is very simple. I will do a pelvic exam. During the exam, I will use a small plastic or wooden spatula – something that looks like an ice cream spoon – to take a sample from the outer part of the cervix. I will send this sample to the pathologist, who will examine it under a microscope and will let us know what the problem is. It will not hurt, and it might cause just mild bleeding. This test is done in the clinic, and it takes only a few minutes.

Mrs. M: I am worried about the results.

Doctor: Most Pap tests often show a simple infection or inflammation. Sometimes, a Pap test may show some abnormal cells. A Pap test may find these abnormal cells before they go on to grow into a full-blown cancer. A Pap test can help us find cancer in a very early stage, when it can be cured with treatment.

Mrs. M: How much will the test cost?

Doctor: A Pap test costs about Rs 150-200/-. Some hospitals conduct screening camps where this test is done free of cost. You should not delay, though, since you have a symptom.