

# Breast Pain Before Periods

## Definition

- Breast pain and swelling during the week before menstrual periods
- Normal in 10% of teens and 50% of adult women

## Health Information

### Breast Pain and Swelling Before Menstrual Periods

- **Main Symptoms:** breast pain and fullness. The breasts are also tender to touch. Present on both sides.
- **Cause:** fluid buildup before periods from female hormone cycles.
- Breast pain starts in the week prior to period.
- Goes away soon after period starts.
- **Key:** Pain and swelling goes away between periods.
- **Age of Onset:** About 2 years after onset of periods, like when menstrual cramps start. Reason for change: the start of egg release from the ovaries.

## Care Advice

### 1. Overview:

- Breast pain and fullness before periods is common. Occurs in 10% of teens.
- The pain can range from mild to moderate. The breasts are also tender.
- The pain starts several days before period begins.
- It goes away soon after bleeding begins.
- Pain and swelling is gone between periods.
- Cause: fluid buildup from normal hormone cycles.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

### 2. Pain Medicine:

- Ibuprofen is best for this type of pain. Give ibuprofen every 6 hours as needed,
- If you don't have ibuprofen, use acetaminophen. Give as needed every 4 hours until you can get ibuprofen.

### 3. Other Treatment:

- If breast pain is not helped by ibuprofen, most can be improved by birth control pills. Ask your doctor about this.
- Diet. Avoid salty foods while your breasts are swollen.
- Getting enough sleep also helps.

### 4. Wear a Support Bra:

- Wear a support bra or sports bra that fits well when breast pain occurs.
- Some women with large breasts are more comfortable wearing a bra even when sleeping.

### 5. Caffeine and Breast Pain:

- Some women report increased breast pain after drinking coffee or colas.
- If that applies to you, reduce your caffeine intake.
- Otherwise, no change is needed.

6. **What to Expect:**

- Pain should go away between periods.
- If it does not, see your doctor.

7. **Breast Pain from Exercise:**

- Breast pain during or after hard exercise is also a common problem.
- Cause: Stretching of ligaments inside the breast.
- Most common in girls with large breasts.
- Large breasts may also cause back pain.
- The pain most often lasts 1 or 2 days after the workout.
- Can prevent by wearing a good sports bra when you exercise.
- Breast pain before periods may also become worse with exercise.

## Call Your Doctor If

- Breast pain doesn't go away between periods
- You miss a period or pregnancy test is positive
- You feel a lump
- You think you need to be seen
- Your symptoms become worse

### Pediatric Care Advice

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