

MEDICAL STUDENT'S MENSTRUAL CYCLE: THE UNKNOWN UNKNOWN

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ABSTRACT

Background: The menstrual cycle is a health indicator in women. The change in health makes female students feel less confident in communicating, studying, and living. Therefore, the study on the characteristics of the menstrual cycle in female medical students brings many practical meanings by figuring conclusions and solutions to improve both physiological and mental discomforts for women during menstruation. **Objectives:** Can Tho University of Medicine and Pharmacy (CTUMP) 3rd year medical students were studied for the characteristics, the abnormalities of the menstrual cycle, and the premenstrual syndrome. **Materials and methods:** The design of a cross-sectional descriptive study with analysis by direct interview method was conducted on 126 female 3rd year medical students at CTUMP. **Results:** Long menstrual cycle time accounted for 38.1% of subjects, while short menstrual cycle time accounted for 0.8%. The study also found that the average menstrual period was 5.00 ± 1.34 days. The premenstrual syndrome was observed in 47.3% of students, with abdominal pain and low back pain accounted for the highest rate (63.5%), and headache accounted for the lowest rate (9.5%). Menorrhagia had a low prevalence (7.1%), whereas menstrual cramp was much more common (60.3%). **Conclusions:** Long menstrual cycles occurred at a high rate among medical students. Abdominal pain and low back pain were the most common symptoms before menstruation. Menstrual cramp was the most common abnormality of the menstrual cycle among CTUMP female medical students.

Keywords: girls; menstrual cycle; medical student; Can Tho.