**CHS 232**

**Women's health**

**Dysmenorrhea** (Menstrual Cramps):

Most women experience period problems at least once during their reproductive years

Menstrual cramps may be primary or secondary

**Primary dysmenorrhea** occurs most often in [young women](http://womenshealth.about.com/msubteen.htm) who have just begun their [menstrual cycles](http://womenshealth.about.com/msub31.htm) and often becomes less severe when a woman reaches her mid-twenties or after she has given birth

**Secondary dysmenorrhea** is diagnosed when menstrual cramps are caused by other conditions such as [endometriosis](http://womenshealth.about.com/msub24.htm), [fibroid tumors](http://womenshealth.about.com/library/weekly/aa052698.htm), pelvic adhesions, and [ovarian cysts](http://womenshealth.about.com/library/weekly/aa111998.htm) or by the use of an [interuterine device (IUD)](http://contraception.about.com/od/iud/p/IUD.htm) for birth control.

Menstrual cramps are thought to be related to a hormone-like, naturally occurring substance called **prostaglandin**, which causes the [uterus](http://womenshealth.about.com/library/blcmnutcd.htm) to contract.

**Treatment of Menstrual Cramps:**

* Over-the-counter pain relievers, such as ibuprofen can be used as soon as you notice the first sign of your period. They can help to reduce the severity of cramps in many women by inhibiting the release of prostaglandins.
* Supplementing your diet with zinc and calcium has been found to reduce cramps
* Try taking a warm bath or a heating pad on your lower abdomen or back. If you don't have a heating pad, a heating pad substitute can be made at home.
* **Taking a 20- to 30-minute walk just three times weekly provides several benefits to your health including:**

1. helping to reduce menstrual cramping
2. Increasing the chemicals in your brain which are responsible for mood and energy
3. Decreasing levels of stress and anxiety
4. Improving sleep quality
5. Reducing your risk for a number of diseases including heart disease and several types of cancer.

**Breast cancer:**

**Breast cancer** ([malignant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malignant) [breast neoplasm](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breast_neoplasm)) is a type of [cancer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cancer) originating from [breast](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breast) tissue, most commonly from the inner lining of [milk](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milk) [ducts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duct_(anatomy)) or the [lobules](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobules) that supply the ducts with milk

Cancers originating from ducts are known as [ductal carcinomas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mammary_ductal_carcinoma); those originating from lobules are known as [lobular carcinomas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobular_carcinoma)

**Risk factors of breast cancer:**

1. [Smoking](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smoking) tobacco may increase the risk of breast cancer with the greater the amount of smoking and the earlier in life smoking begins the higher the risk.
2. later age at first birth and [not having children](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nulliparity)
3. family history of breast cancer
4. a high-fat diet
5. alcohol intake
6. obesity
7. environmental factors such as passive smoking, radiation
8. Although the radiation from mammography is a low dose, the cumulative effect can cause cancer
9. Personal history of breast cancer: A woman who had breast cancer in one breast has an increased risk of getting a second breast cancer.

**Prevention**:

1. [Exercise](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exercise) may decrease breast cancer risk
2. Maintaining a healthy weight,
3. stop drinking alcohol,
4. being physically active
5. and breastfeeding their children
6. **Periodic clinical or self** [**breast exam**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breast_exam)

Involves feeling the breast for [lumps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breast_lump) or other abnormalities

Research evidence does not support the effectiveness of either type of breast exam, because by the time a lump is large enough to be found it is likely to have been growing for several years and will soon be large enough to be found without an exam

7- [**Mammographic screening**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mammography) for breast cancer uses [x-rays](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/X-ray) to examine the breast for any uncharacteristic masses or lumps. Mammograms reduce mortality from breast cancer by 15 percent but also result in unnecessary surgery and anxiety, resulting in their view that it is not clear whether mammography screening does more good or harm

Many national organizations recommend regular mammography, nevertheless. For the average woman, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends mammography every two years in women between the ages of 50 and 74

**Respiratory Health**

**From the previous lectures taken in that course summarize the harmful effects of smoking on:**

**Smoking**