



**GV Basavaraja**  
National President 2024

**Yogesh Parikh**  
Secretary 2024–25

**Atanu Bhadra**  
Treasurer 2024–25

*Advisor*

**Gnanamurthy Narasimha**

*National Scientific Convenor*  
**Sumitha Nayak**

#### **Core Team Members**

**B Rajsekhar**  
**Janani Shankar**  
**Kripasindhu Chatterjee**  
**Nehal Patel**  
**Rupesh Masand**

*Section Editor*  
**Kripasindhu Chatterjee**

*Section Co-Editors*  
**Atanu Bhadra**  
**Ashim Ghosh**

# **An Algorithm Approach to Pediatric Diagnosis**

# Dysmenorrhea

69

Pavithra Nagaraj

## Introduction

- Dysmenorrhea is a Greek word meaning “painful monthly bleeding”. This is the most common cause of pelvic pain in young girls, with a prevalence of around 80% in Indian adolescents. It is associated with significant emotional, psychological, and functional health problems resulting in school absenteeism and impaired quality of life.
- No adolescent should leave the clinic without understanding that dysmenorrhea is potentially harmful and that no girl “needs to put up with it”.

## Etiology

- *Primary dysmenorrhea*: When adolescents attain ovulatory cycles, i.e., within 6–12 months of menarche with no underlying cause.
- *Secondary dysmenorrhea*: Painful menstrual cycle secondary to a pelvic pathology/any other medical condition, inside or outside the uterus.

### BOX 1: Causes of secondary dysmenorrhea.

- Endometriosis
- Adenomyosis
- *Infections*: Genital Koch's, STD, pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)
- Congenital obstructive mullerian malformations, cervical stenosis
- Ovarian cysts
- Fibroid uterus (endometriomas)
- Uterine polyps

(STD: sexually transmitted disease)

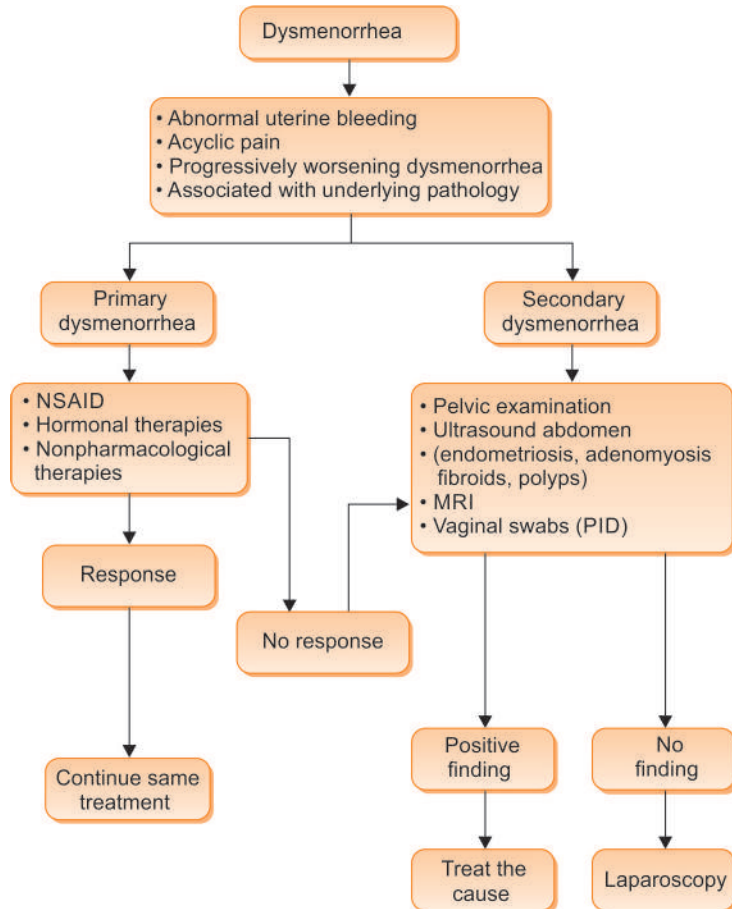
## Associated Symptoms

- Gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, bloating
- Irritability, headache, muscle cramps
- Poor sleep quality
- School absenteeism

## Red Flags

- High body mass index
- Early menarche
- Family history of dysmenorrhea
- Depression/anxiety
- Smoking
- Nulliparity

## Algorithm for Approach



(NSAID: nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug; PID: pelvic inflammatory disease)

## Suggested Reading

- Chauhan G, Kodnani A. A study of prevalence and impact of dysmenorrhea and its associated symptoms among adolescent girls residing in slum areas of Vadodara City, Gujarat. *Int J Med Sci Public Health*. 2016;5(3):510.
- Gantt PA, McDonough PG. Adolescent dysmenorrhea. *Pediatr Clin North Am*. 1981;28(2):389-95.
- Harel Z. Dysmenorrhea in adolescents. *Ann NY Acad Sci*. 2008;1135:185-95.
- Sharghi M, Mansurkhani SM, Larky DA, Kooti W, Niksefat M, Firoozbakht M, et al. An update and systematic review on the treatment of primary dysmenorrhea. *JBRA Assist Reprod*. 2019;23(1):51-7.