

Amenorrhoea – Absent period

When a woman has not had a period for longer than 6 months it is called amenorrhoea. It can be caused by a wide range of hormonal, physical and metabolic conditions. Oligomenorrhoea is the term to describe light bleeding and/or irregular frequency and can be a result of similar causes.

The most common causes-

Hypothalamic cause

- **Stress** – affecting the hypothalamus secretion of GnRH
- **Weight loss** – fat drops below 25%
- **Rigorous exercise** – negatively affects GnRH
- **Severe chronic illness** – renal and liver involvement
- Post oral contraceptive pill (**OCP**)
- **Pregnancy** or phantom pregnancy
- **Hypothalamic lesions** – reducing FSH and LH

Pituitary cause

- Pituitary lesion – malignant or non-malignant tumor
- Pituitary insufficiency
- Empty sella syndrome – congenital, tumor, surgery

Failure to ovulate

- Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (**PCOS**)
- **Breastfeeding**
- **Thyroid conditions** – underactive thyroid lowers SHBG
- **Cushing's syndrome** – excessive corticosteroids
- Congenital adrenal growth
- Androgen-secreting adrenal and ovarian tumors
- Premature ovarian failure
- Destruction of ovarian tissue
- **Pharmaceutical drugs** – largactil, stemetil, blood pressure, chemotherapy, etc

