

The PIPPA Tool

Our colleagues at the Canberra Endometriosis Centre have developed a five-question screening tool called the **Period Impact and Pain Assessment (PIPPA)** tool. These questions relate to the impact that your period symptoms have on your life. If you are having period symptoms (like pain) that are bothering you, it's worth checking your PIPPA score to see if you should go and see your doctor.

Over the last six months have you:

1. had regular severe period pain?
2. had significant interference to your usual daily activities because of your period?
3. experienced bowel or bladder pain?
4. regularly missed school or work because of your period?
5. felt sure there is something wrong with your periods?

For **each** question you answer 'Yes' to, give yourself 1 point. So if you answered Yes to three of these questions, you would have a score of three. Your score can range from **zero to five**.

So what does it mean ?

Based on previous research just under 12% of young Australian women score a **4 or 5**. So a score of **4 or 5** means your symptoms probably aren't 'normal'; the higher the score, the more likely it is that you could have an underlying issue (such as endometriosis) that is causing your symptoms.

No website or tool (even **PIPPA**) can accurately diagnose endometriosis (or any other menstrual disorder). There may be **absolutely nothing wrong**, but your doctor is the best person to help determine the next steps. It's important to speak to your doctor sooner rather than later, as most research shows it often takes more than five years for women to get help, even when they have severe pain.

We suggest the following depending on your score:

If you score a **0**: You don't really have any bothersome symptoms with your period. You can still try the self-care on the website if you are having occasional minor symptoms.

If you score **1 or 2**: Your symptoms are probably annoying but most likely 'normal'. You should be able to manage any symptoms through the self-care provided on this website.

If you score **3** : It is probably worth speaking to your doctor next time you see them, but the self-care strategies we discuss may help reduce the impact of your symptoms.

If you score **4 or 5**: This means your period pain (and other symptoms) have a pretty big impact on your life. This isn't something that is 'normal' or that you should ignore. We suggest you make an appointment to speak to your doctor in the near future. They will be able to investigate further and see if there is anything that might be causing these symptoms.

Even if you scored low on PIPPA, if you think something is wrong, speak to your doctor.