

## Information for students and caregivers:

### WHO ARE WE

The Periods, Pain and Endometriosis Program (PPEP Talk<sup>®</sup>) is an initiative of the Pelvic Pain Foundation of Australia (PPFA).

PPEP Talk is:

- Jointly funded by the Federal and State Governments
- Developed jointly by medical and education professionals
- Curriculum linked
- Evidence-based
- Utilising the latest knowledge and neuroscience of pain

The program educates all students about period pain, pelvic pain and endometriosis to raise awareness and promote effective management, early diagnosis and support for those affected. PPEP Talk<sup>®</sup> delivers on the objectives of the National Action Plan for Endometriosis (2018) with its emphasis on raising community awareness through education.

PPEP Talk<sup>®</sup> is for everyone. It helps those who experience pelvic pain better understand their pain and find tools to reduce it. It also helps those who care for people with pain to better understand how to support them.



### 8 IN 10

teenagers assigned female at birth (AFAB) have period pain, but it shouldn't be severe or interfere with daily life

### COULD SOMEONE I KNOW HAVE ENDOMETRIOSIS?

These symptoms don't always mean someone has endometriosis but make endometriosis more likely:

- Pelvic pain that is present for more than three days per month.
- Pelvic pain that starts before a period.
- Period pain that may not improve with the use of the contraceptive pill or anti-inflammatory medications.
- A mix of pelvic pains that may include the bladder or bowel.
- Pain with sexual activity.
- A family history of severe period pain or diagnosed endometriosis.

### 1 IN 7

AFAB teenagers will develop a medical condition called endometriosis, where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus. Endometriosis may be associated with pain and for some people, difficulty becoming pregnant.

Managing pain early and improving pelvic health can help teens reach their full potential and help prevent pain becoming more complex.

If someone you know has severe pain, we recommend they discuss this with a doctor who is interested in women's health or pelvic pain and with whom they feel comfortable.

# EVERYONE CAN EXPERIENCE PELVIC PAIN

1 in 12 people assigned male at birth can experience pelvic pain.

- Pain with bladder, bowel or sexual function is not normal for anyone.
- Pain may affect social relationships and academic performance.
- Pain may be felt in the pelvis (and/or penis, the area between the legs and testicles).
- If you or someone you know is experiencing distressing pelvic pain, it is important to speak to a doctor.



## TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS OF TEENS WITH PERSISTENT PAIN

1. Help your child live as normally as possible. Keep up family routines, encourage your child to do their share and be involved in family activities.
2. Help your child develop a good support team around them. This team includes you, your family, their friends, their school, your family GP and other health care professionals.
3. Shift the focus away from pain. Acknowledge that pain is present and encourage your child to use helpful pain management strategies such as getting involved in a favourite activity, music, sport, dance, art, meditation etc.
4. Recognise persistent pain's adverse effects on your child's thoughts and emotions. Anxiety and depression are common, as are anger, fear and worry. Professional help from your GP, a Clinical Psychologist or a Counsellor may help make a positive difference.
5. Encourage your child to go to school every day. Getting behind in school can add more stress. Work with your child's teachers to make a pain management plan for school, which may include giving medication, limited time-out or rest periods and modified physical activities, and sending work home for days your child can't get to school.
6. Discourage resting in bed or on the couch for long periods of the day. This can worsen pelvic muscle pain (the aching or stabbing pain) and cause sleeping problems at night.
7. Help your child develop a plan for a bad pain day. Planning can help your child worry less about flare-ups and manage the pain better.



## PPEP TALK NEXT STEPS

PPEP Talk® Next Steps is facilitated by Gynaecologist, Pain Specialist Assoc./Prof. Susan Evans and a Pelvic Physiotherapist. It is

- FREE
- Online and live
- After hours

Building on the knowledge students have gained at our school sessions, PPEP Talk® Next Steps is an opportunity for young people experiencing pelvic pain and their families to ask questions and seek support for the next steps to take.

Follow the QR code or visit [www.pelvicpain.org.au](http://www.pelvicpain.org.au) to register and for more information.



## FURTHER RESOURCES

- A copy of 'Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain' by Dr Susan Evans and Deborah Bush QSM has been given to your school library for you to read.
- Visit the Pelvic Pain Foundation of Australia website, [www.pelvicpain.org.au](http://www.pelvicpain.org.au) You can also access a free copy of the Introduction to Pelvic Pain booklet.



*Easy Stretches to Relax the Pelvis Free Download*