

Comparison of level of stress and menstrual disorders in medical and non medical students

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OBJECTIVES

To determine the prevalence of menstrual abnormalities and irregularities among medical students and to correlate it with the level of stress perceived by medicos, compared to the same in non medicos.

METHODS

A case control study was conducted among age matched 50 medical students(cases) and 50 non medical students(control). Each group was administered sets of validated questionnaires evaluating for variations in menstrual pattern such as duration of bleeding period, regularity, dysmenorrhea, pre menstrual tension and level of perceived stress.

RESULTS

Both groups were similar in baseline characteristics. Significantly higher number

($p=0.046$) of medicos suffered from premenstrual symptoms as compared to non medical students. Medical students also reported higher level of stress ($p=0.439$) and menstrual problems like passage of clots($p=0.171$), missed periods($p=0.822$) and dysmenorrhea($p=0.840$).

CONCLUSION

The level of professional stress is more in medicos which may be unknowingly manifested as disturbances in menstruation and premenstrual tension. Hence there is an urgent need to increase awareness of these variations, which if undiagnosed and untreated may lead to greater problems such as infertility later on. Further investigation of the biological mechanisms that mediate the stress effect is warranted.