

NEW HOPE FOR WOMEN SUFFERING FROM HEAVY PERIOD DISORDERS

News Release :

Research into platelet function disorders for women undergoing hysterectomy or endometrial ablation for severe menorrhagia (extremely heavy periods)

25th March 2015

A groundbreaking new study for women with heavy period disorders, known medically as severe menorrhagia, has been awarded a grant from The Platelet Charity.

The grant was awarded to Dr Clare Samuelson at the UK Comprehensive Care Haemophilia Centre in Sheffield. The study is a collaboration between the gynaecology and haematology departments at the Royal Hallamshire Hospital in Sheffield. The other collaborators are Dr Rhona Maclean, Dr Ted Baxter and Prof Mike Makris.

Current treatment for heavy periods include a number of treatment protocols, including prostaglandin synthesis inhibitors, endometrial ablation or most radically, hysterectomy.

It is not always clear for some women what the reason is for such heavy bleeding.

Dr Samuelson and the team will be working on the hypothesis that severe heavy periods in a proportion of women are caused by a blood platelet disorder. If the research outcome is proven, it could lead to groundbreaking new treatments for patients, focusing on the treatment of the blood platelet disorder and preventing the need for surgical intervention.

For many, the prospect of severe heavy bleeding each month can have devastating effects on their general health, including extreme tiredness, anaemia and the inability to perform their work and everyday tasks adequately. Whilst endometrial ablation works for some, many women will need to go on to have a full more invasive hysterectomy, with sometimes lengthy recovery periods.

Helping people with bleeding disorders

www.plateletcharity.co.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1151168

Registered Address : Curo House, Greenbox, Westonhall Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, B60 4AL.

The Platelet Charity Grant Panel, presently chaired by Professor Jeremy Pearson (Deputy Medical Director, British Heart Foundation) made the decision amongst a number of other excellent grant applications.

Dr Samuelson says "We are delighted to have received support from The Platelet Charity. Bleeding disorders are often not considered by gynaecologists managing women with menorrhagia – even those scheduled to undergo surgical intervention. We hope that our study will prove that a bleeding disorder diagnosis should be considered in order to optimise the management of treatment."

Professor Michael Makris comments "this is an important clinical problem. At present it is unclear as to how many of these women have abnormalities of their platelet function and this research project aims to determine this"

Janet Richards - The Platelet Charity CEO adds: "The objectives of the charity are to raise awareness and funds for research into platelet or bleeding function disorders and we are delighted that the Grant Panel recognised the benefits that this study can make to a significant population of women."

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The Platelet Charity is a registered charity supporting people with bleeding disorders. We raise funds for; ground breaking medical research; improving diagnosis; support for treatment centres.

Bleeding disorders refers to a wide range of disorders which result in excessive bleeding. Where a bleeding disorder is caused by the platelets not working properly, this is called a Platelet Function Disorder or PFD for short. They are caused by a failure of platelets to generate normal blood clots. PFDs are genetic

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(or inherited) disorders – they are passed on from our parents and are not caused by lifestyle factors such as diet or smoking.

Professor Michael Makris is currently Professor of Haemostasis and Thrombosis at the University of Sheffield. He also holds two appointments as an Honorary Consultant Haematologist, Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and as Director of the Sheffield Haemophilia and Thrombosis Centre which is a UK Comprehensive Haemophilia Centre. Professor Makris also holds two editorial posts; as Editor : Haemophilia and on the Editorial Board for: British Journal of Haematology, Acta Haematologica and Blood Transfusion.

Dr Clare Samuelson MBChBHons MRCPCH MA is currently a speciality registrar in haematology at South Yorkshire and the Humber Deanery as well as a part time tutor in healthcare ethics at the University of Leeds. Her most recent publication was 'Treatment of relapsed myelodysplastic syndrome following double umbilical cord blood transplantation with interferon alpha and 5-azacytidine'. (1st author)
British Journal of Haematology, vol 159, issue 5, Dec 2012

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