Definition

✓ (Novak) Primary amenorrhea
  : Absence of menses at age 13 years + no visible development of secondary sexual characteristics
  : Age 15 years in the presence of normal secondary sexual characteristic

✓ (Speroff)
  : No menses by age 14 in the absence of growth or development of secondary sexual characteristics
  : No menses by age 16 regardless of the presence of normal growth and development of secondary sexual characteristics
  : No menses for an interval of time equivalent to a total of at least three previous cycles, or 6 months

Causes of Amenorrhea

✓ Disorders of the genital outflow tract and uterus
✓ Disorders of the ovary
✓ Disorders of the anterior pituitary
✓ Disorders of the hypothalamus or central nervous system
Medical History

✓ The menstrual history is key

✓ **Primary amenorrhea**: Cyclic pelvic or lower abdominal pain or urinary complaints can be caused by developmental anomalies resulting in obstructed menstrual flow

✓ **Secondary amenorrhea**: The history surrounding the onset of amenorrhea can provide important diagnostic clues

Medical History

✓ Onset following curettage or other uterine surgery clearly suggests the possibility of damage to the reproductive tract

✓ Women with PCOS classically present with infrequent and irregular menses dating from menarche or early adulthood, and gradually progressive hirsutism

✓ In most with hypothalamic amenorrhea, the onset of amenorrhea temporally relates to events resulting in severe nutritional, physical, or emotional stress

✓ Women with hyperprolactinemia or premature ovarian failure commonly notice a gradual decrease in their regular intermenstrual interval, followed by increasing oligomenorrhea, and finally, amenorrhea, one sometimes accompanied by galactorrhea, and the other by hot flushes

Physical Examination

✓ Breast development is a reliable indicator of estrogen production or exposure to exogenous estrogens

✓ Secretions that result from hormonal stimulation typically emerge from multiple duct openings in the nipple, whereas a discharge relating to breast pathology usually arises from a single duct

✓ The presence of pubic hair growth reliably reflects androgen production or exposure