

Cervical cancer symptoms awareness among women – an area in need of more education

In 2012 Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust commissioned a survey to measure awareness around cervical cancer symptoms. We know that levels of symptoms awareness are low as a separate piece of research by the charity in 2012 showed that 70% of women who had cervical cancer and experienced symptoms were not aware that they indicated cervical cancer. Of the different symptoms, 70% of women experienced abnormal bleeding and almost 40% experienced unusual or unpleasant discharge. As well as understanding symptom awareness the charity also wanted to understand whether, and how quickly, women would take action when experiencing symptoms of cervical cancer.

Key findings include:

- 79% of women said they would see a doctor for a cold that lasted more than 3 weeks, compared to only 50% if they bled outside of a period
- 53% of women would delay going to the doctor if they thought something might be wrong with their body, to see if it got any better or worse
- Over 1 in 3 women surveyed would put off going to the doctor if they felt something was wrong to see if it got any better or worse
- 1 in 5 women have experienced bleeding in between periods; pain or discomfort during sex; or unusual or unpleasant vaginal discharge. Over 1 in 3 did nothing when last experiencing these symptoms
- 63% of women were not aware that post menopausal bleeding is a symptom of cervical cancer
- Over half (52%) of women do not know bleeding during or after sex is a symptom of cervical cancer

Every day in the UK eight women are diagnosed and nearly three women die from the disease. Early detection is key to improving survival rates and quality of life. Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust aims to make the public fully aware of all the symptoms of the disease as well as encourage women to feel confident enough to visit their doctor if they notice anything unusual with their body. Similarly, we are asking medical professionals to make their patients aware of the symptoms through face to face contact and by displaying our awareness materials.

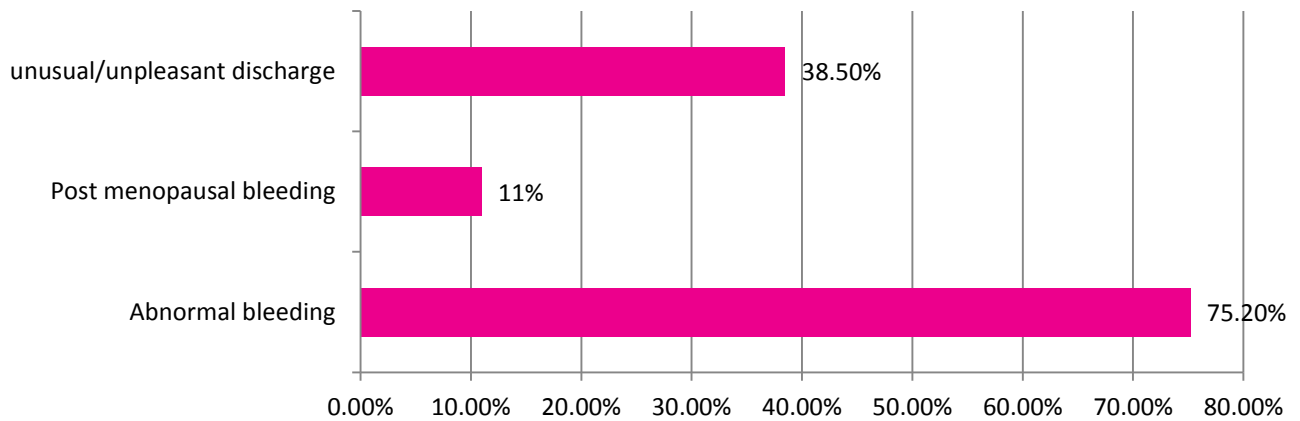
All figures, unless otherwise stated, are taken from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,669 women aged 18+. Fieldwork was undertaken between 3 and 6 December 2012 and was carried out online.

For more information on symptoms click [here](#)

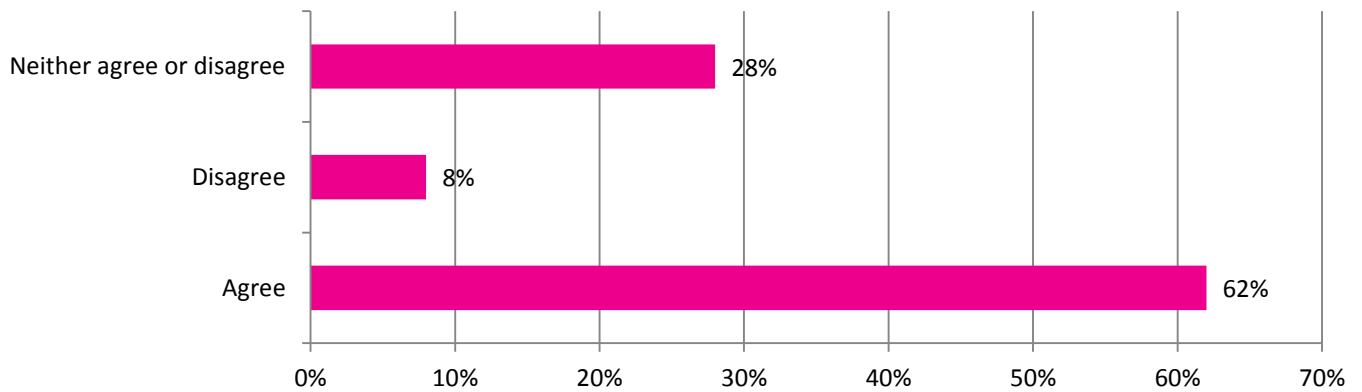
For more information on cervical screening click [here](#)

Below are some of the most relevant result from the survey. For more results please get in touch with media@jostrust.org.uk

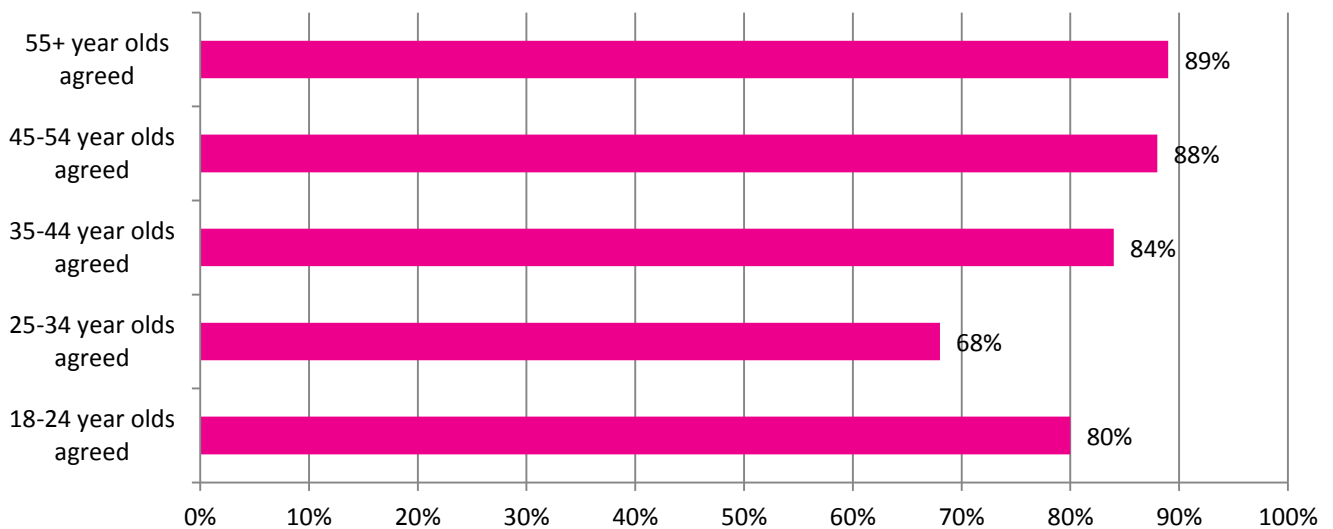
70% of women diagnosed with cervical cancer had experienced symptoms. Of those:



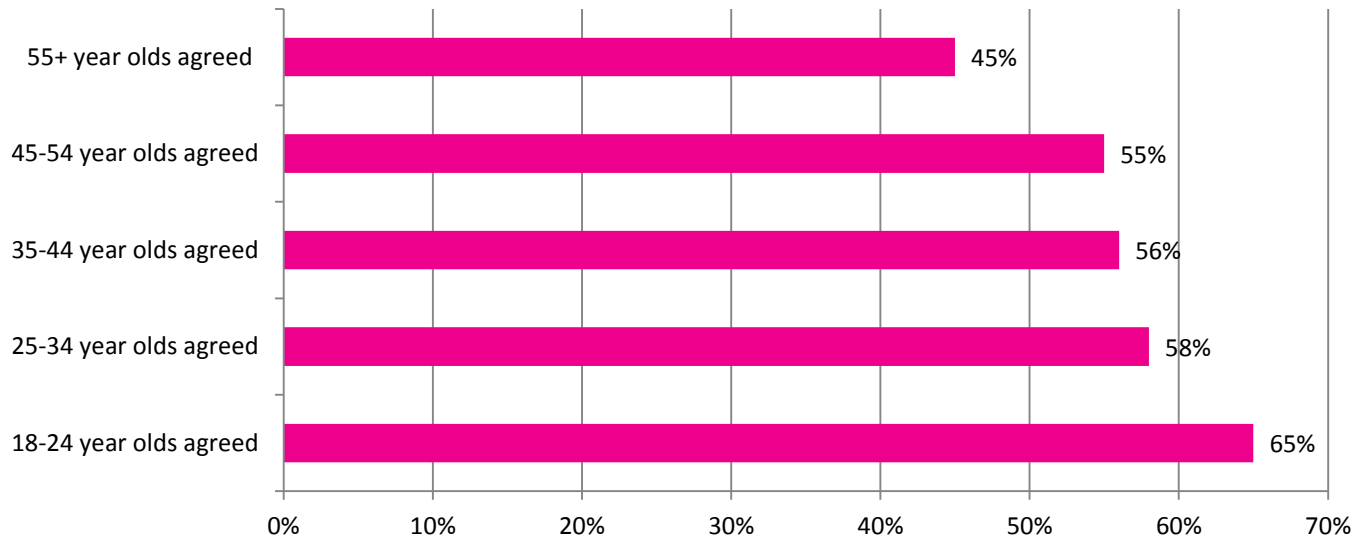
I feel in tune with my body



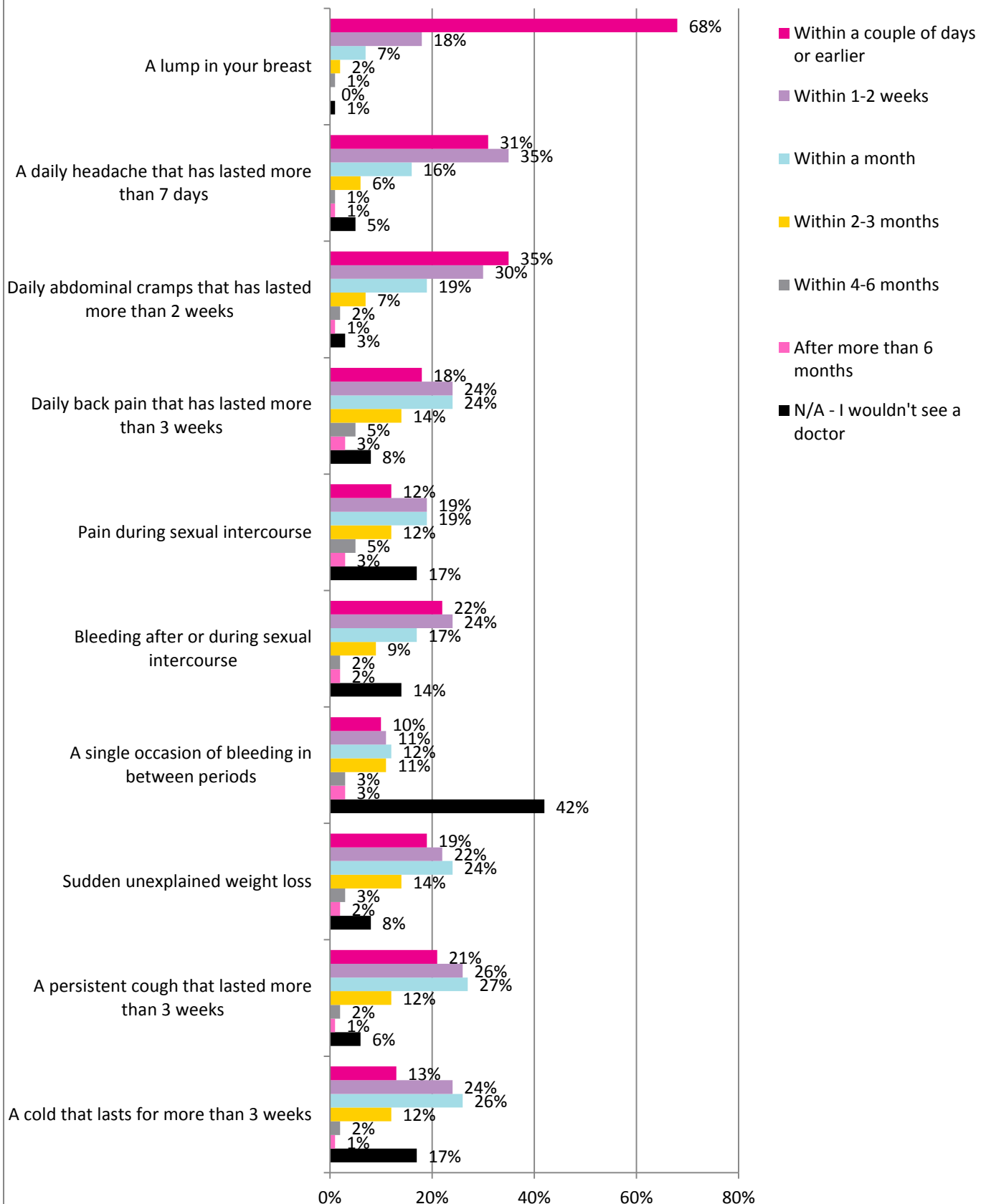
I prefer to go to a doctor when I think something might be wrong with my body, rather than trying to diagnose myself



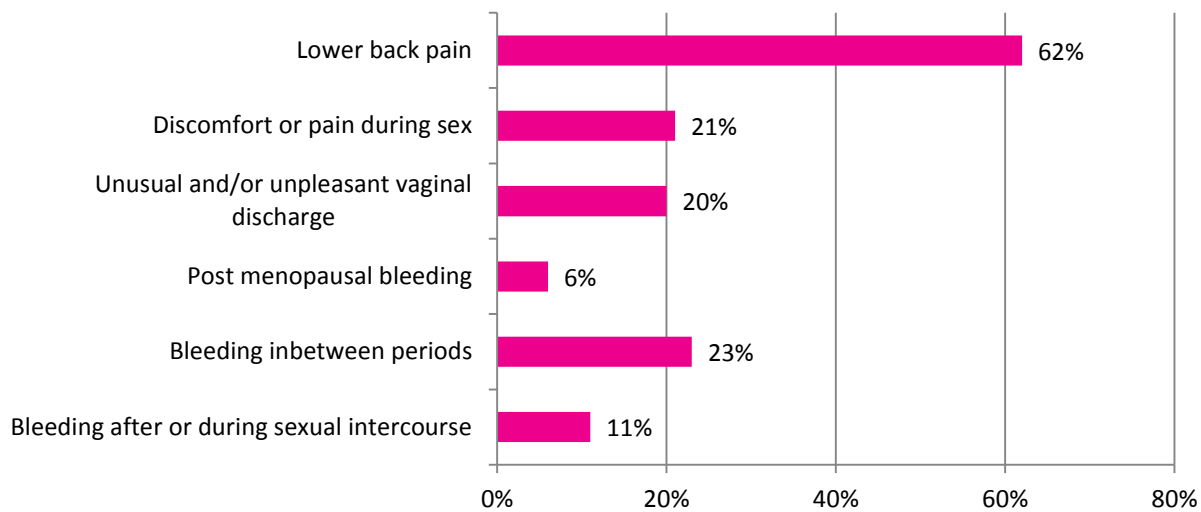
If I thought something might be wrong with my body I would put off going to the doctor to see if it got any better or worse



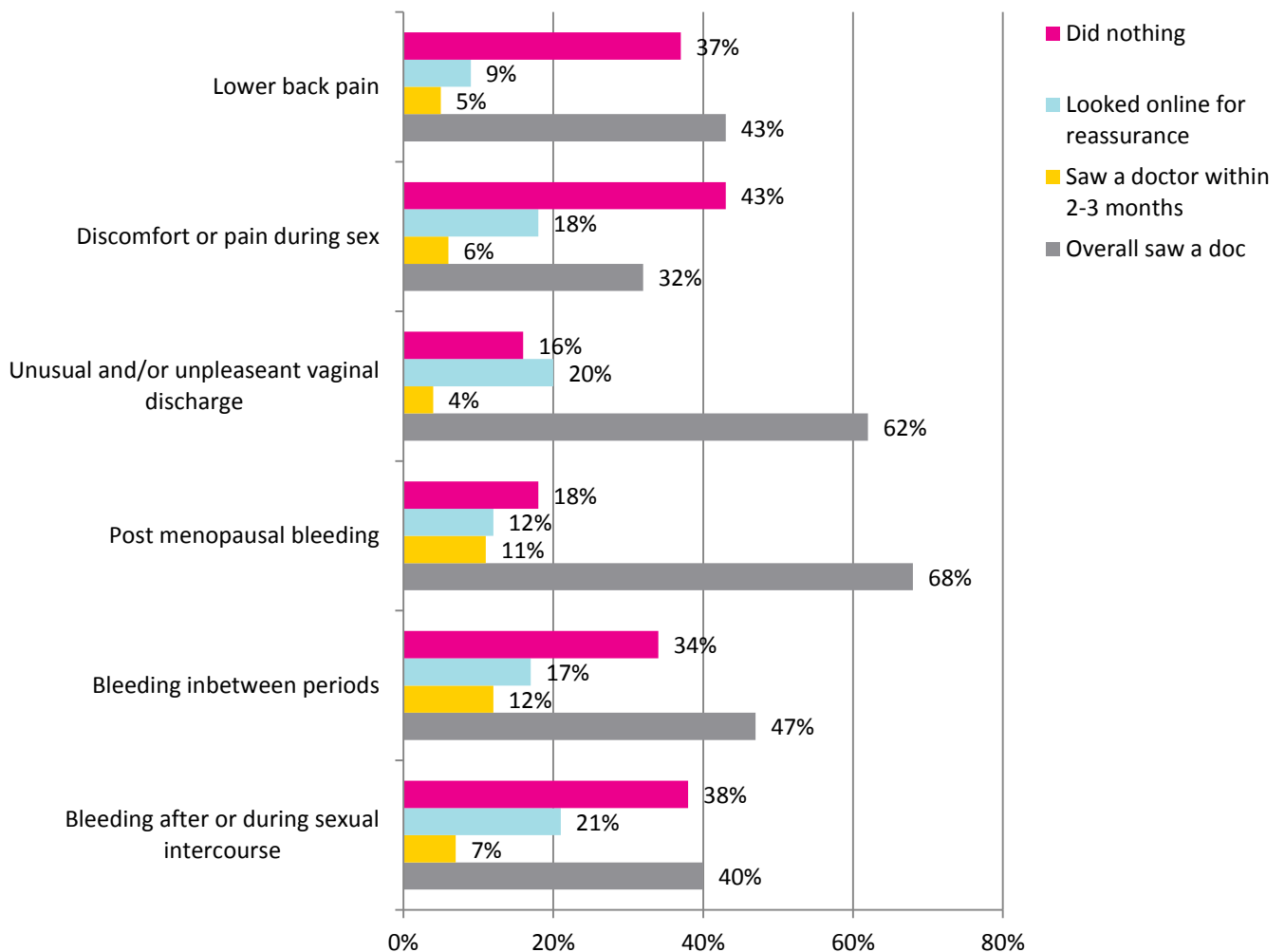
How long after having experienced each of the ailments below would you make an appointment with a doctor? (all ages)



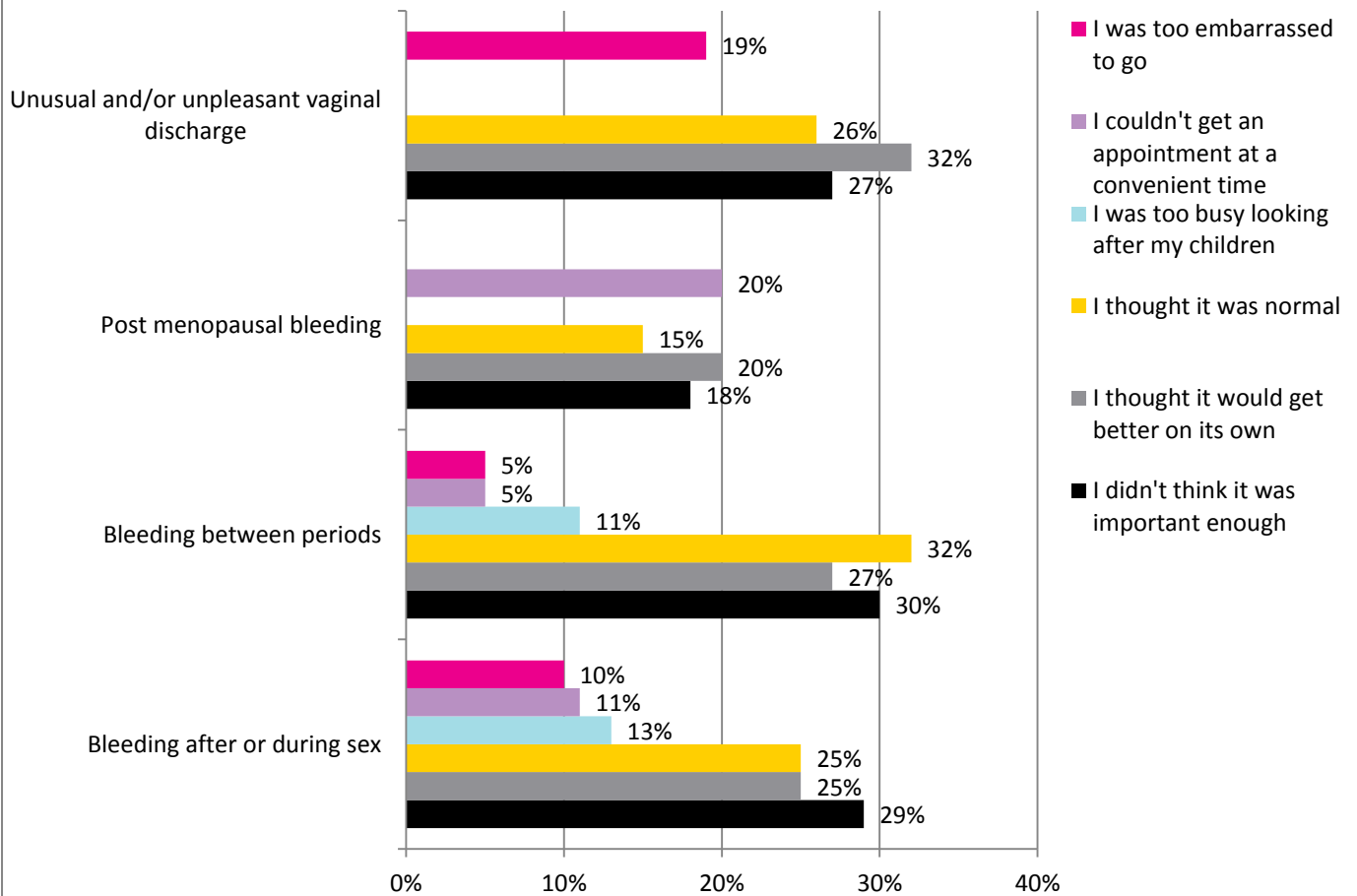
Which, if any of the following have you ever experienced? (all ages)



Thinking about when you last experienced each of these symptoms, what actions, if any, did you take? (all ages)



Why didn't you see a doctor/other health professional within a couple of days when you last experienced each of these symptoms?



Which, if any, of the following do you think are symptoms of cervical cancer?

