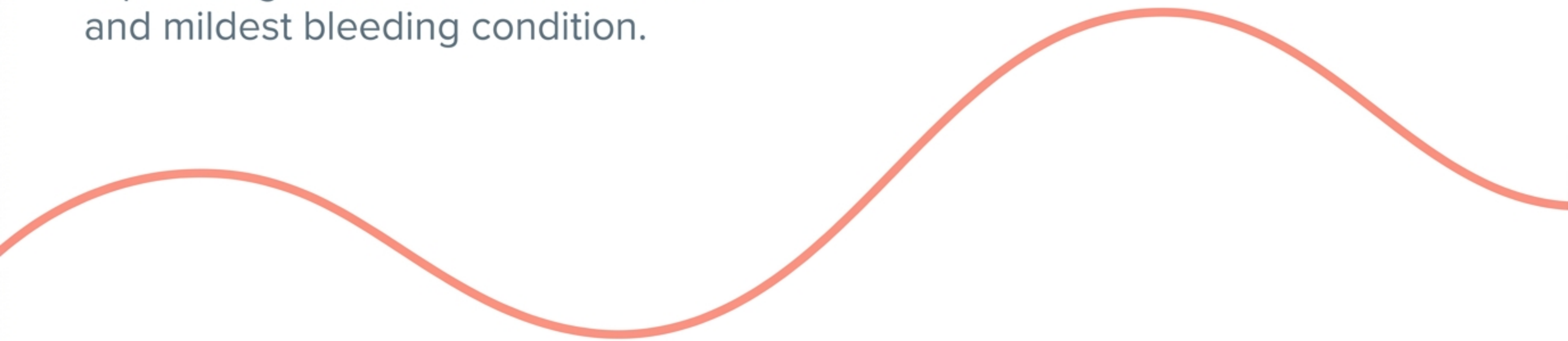


Understanding Type 1 Von Willebrand Disease

A patient guide to the most common
and mildest bleeding condition.



Adapted from clinical guidance by William Aird.

The reassuring reality of a Type 1 diagnosis



It is a mild condition. The vast majority of people with Type 1 live entirely normal, active lives. It does not shorten life expectancy.

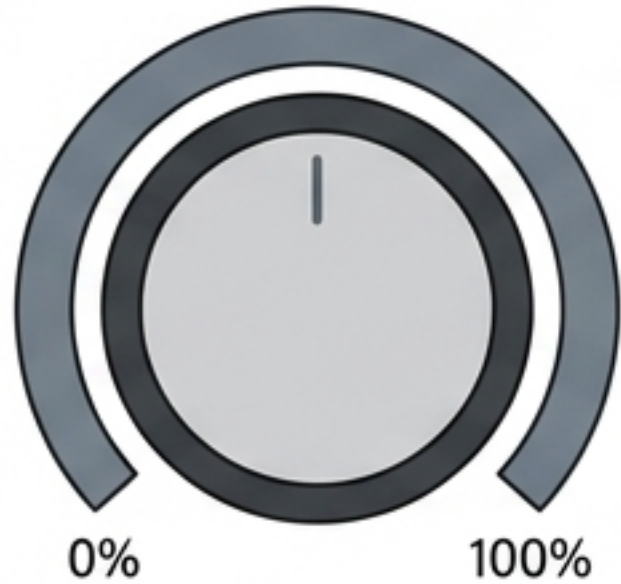


Spontaneous bleeding is highly uncommon. The risk is predictable and almost always tied to specific, manageable situations like surgery or childbirth.



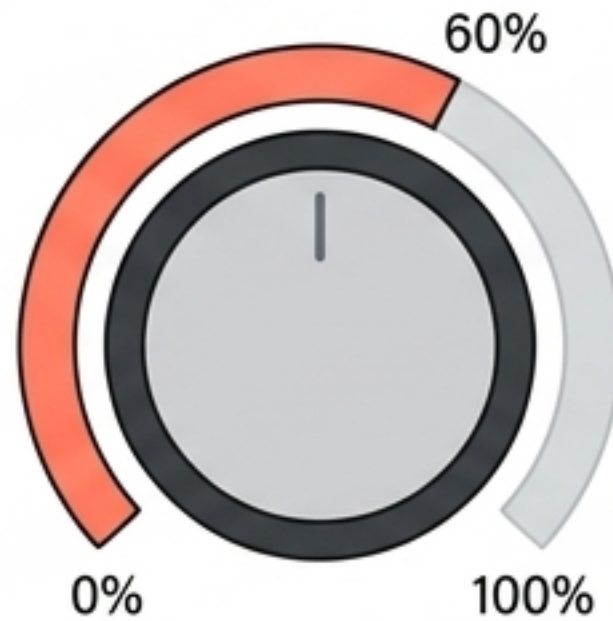
It rarely requires daily medication. Management is about occasional, situational planning rather than constant, ongoing therapy.

A system working perfectly, just at a lower volume



Normal VWF levels

The body produces an average amount of the clotting protein.



Lower VWF levels

The body makes less of the protein, but the protein that is present functions flawlessly. (This is Type 1).



Broken or missing protein

The body cannot clot properly on its own. (This is NOT Type 1).

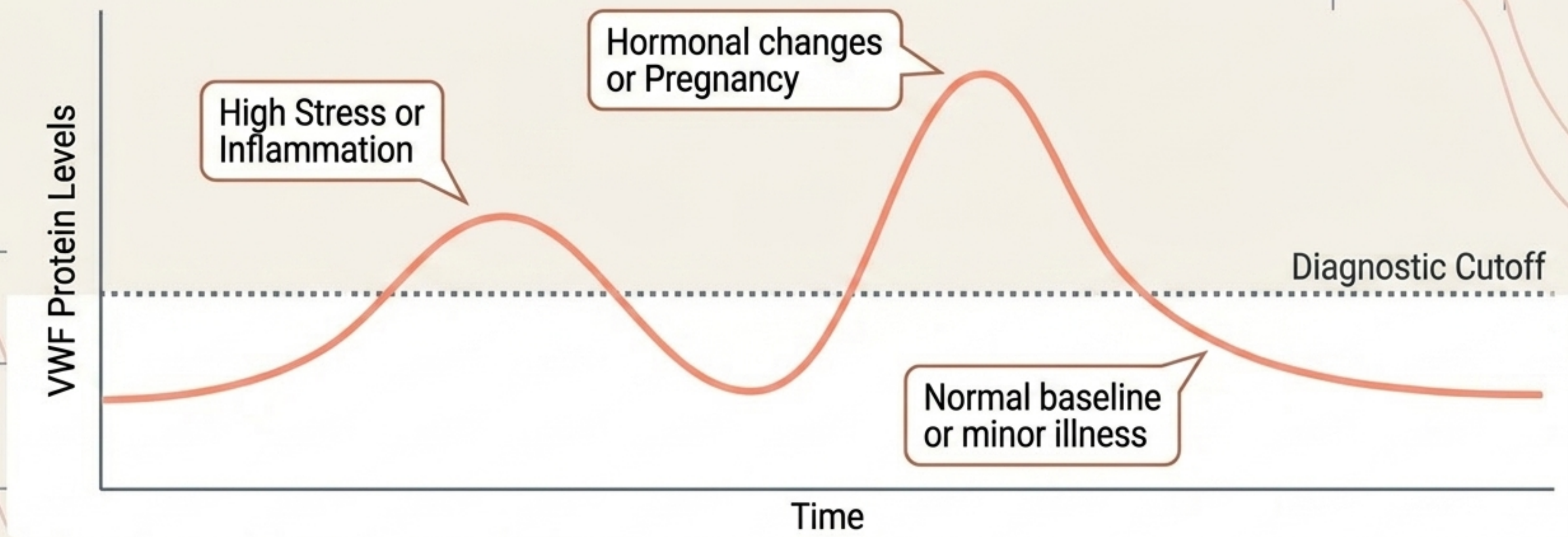
Type 1 is a matter of quantity, not quality.
You have less of a working protein, not a complete absence of it.

Putting Type 1 in context alongside other conditions

	VWF Protein Quantity	VWF Protein Quality	Daily Bleeding Risk
Normal Clotting System	✓ Normal	✓ Normal	🛡️ Low
Type 1 VWD	↓ Lower than average	✓ Normal (Functions perfectly)	🛡️ Low (Predictable during trauma/surgery)
Severe Bleeding Disorders	⊗ Absent	⊗ Broken / Non-functional	⚠️ High (Spontaneous bleeding possible)

Because your protein functions correctly, clotting usually occurs naturally—it just may take longer than average to stop.

Why your lab tests might show different numbers on different days



VWF levels are naturally variable. They rise and fall based on your environment and biology. This is why doctors often require repeat testing and why a borderline result requires clinical context, not panic.

Symptoms only appear when the system is heavily challenged

The Quiet System



Normal Daily Life

The lower VWF reserve is highly capable of handling daily wear and tear. Symptoms are entirely absent or extremely mild (e.g., occasional easy bruising).

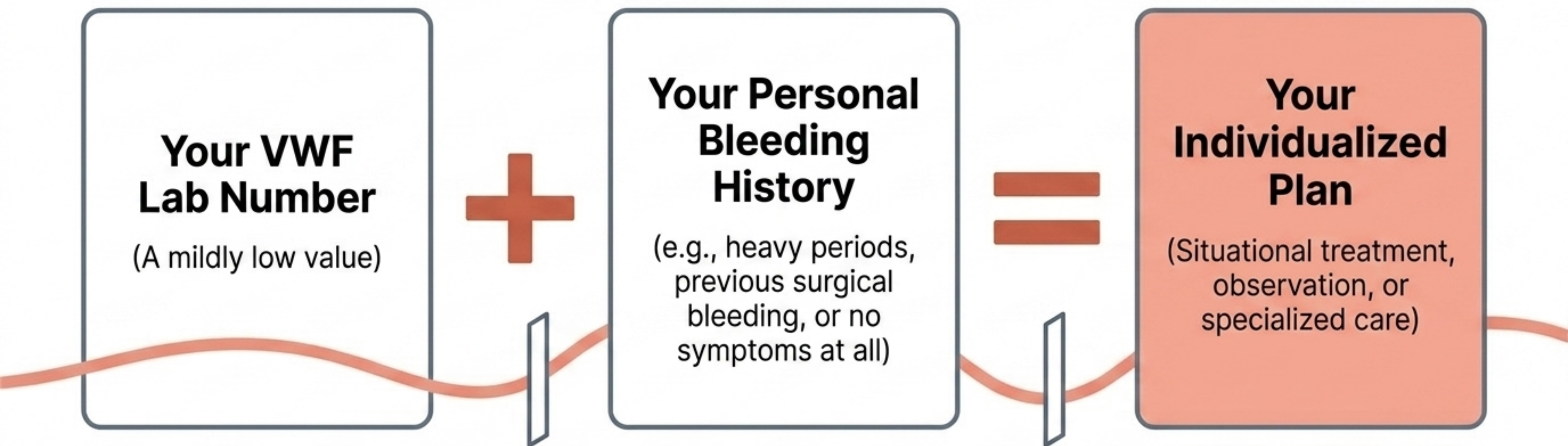
The Challenged System



System Under Stress

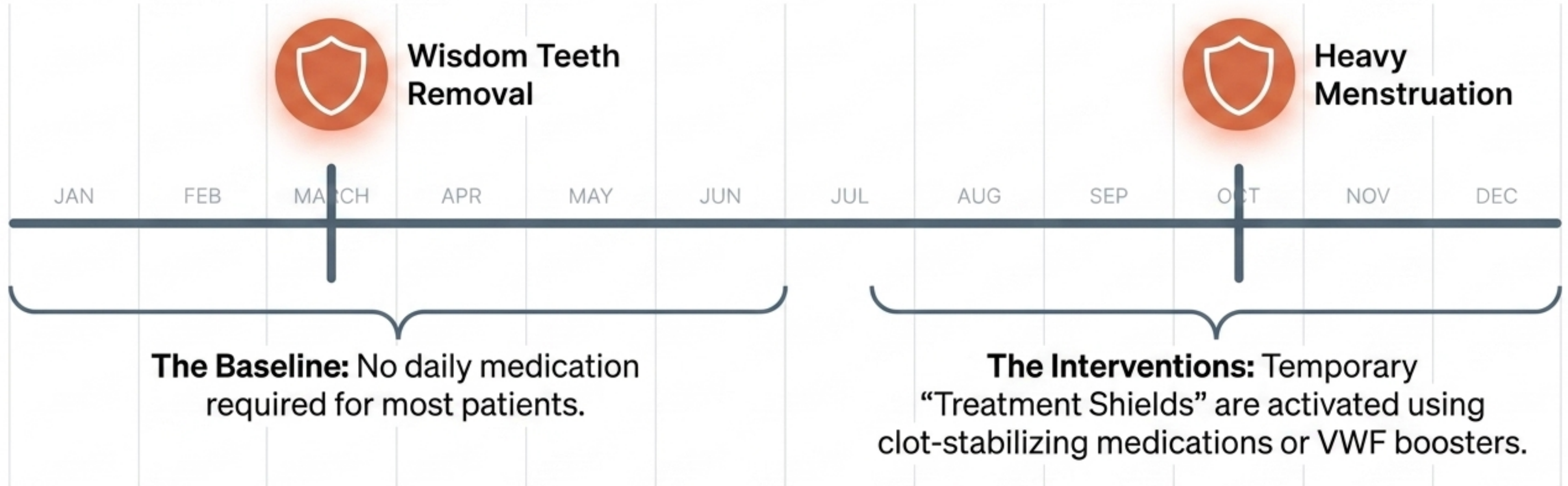
When the body faces a significant challenge, the lower protein reserve is stretched thin. This is when prolonged or prolonged bleeding, frequent nosebleeds, or heavy menstrual bleeding occur.

How your care team creates your specific plan



Doctors interpret your lab results alongside your lived experience. A mildly low value in someone with no bleeding symptoms is managed very differently than the exact same number in someone experiencing heavy menstrual bleeding.

Treatment is about situational planning, not continuous medication



Knowing your diagnosis allows your care team to activate temporary shields before and after planned procedures, preventing bleeding rather than reacting to it after it happens.

Living actively with a Type 1 baseline

What remains completely normal



Participate fully in sports and physical exercise.



Engage in all routine daily activities without restrictions.



Maintain long intervals between doctor visits if symptoms are mild.

Your primary self-care responsibilities



Communication

Tell your dentist, surgeon, or OBGYN about your diagnosis long before any procedure.



Awareness

Keep track of any procedures that might challenge your clotting system so simple precautions can be taken.

Knowing when to check in with your doctor

Normal Baseline (Wait & See)



- Minor cuts that stop with standard pressure.
- Occasional minor bruising from daily activities.

Action Triggers (Call Your Care Team)



- **Unusual Flow:** Bleeding that takes noticeably longer or is harder to stop (usual)
- **New Symptoms:** Entirely new or highly unusual bleeding patterns.
- **Life Impact:** Heavy menstrual bleeding that begins interfering with your daily life.
- **Upcoming Events:** Any upcoming surgery, dental work, or plans for pregnancy.
- **Medication Changes:** Questions about new medications (like pain relievers) that might affect bleeding.

The Type 1 Mindset: Planning over panic



Lower, but Normal Protein
Your clotting system is not fragile or unstable; it simply operates with a smaller reserve.



Mild, Situational Symptoms
Because the protein works perfectly, symptoms are often absent unless the system is specifically challenged.



Strategic Preparation

Understanding this framework prevents unnecessary worry and over-treatment. It empowers you to rely on awareness and planning to keep you safe during major life events.

Type 1 von Willebrand disease is a highly manageable trait. By understanding your baseline, you can live fully, actively, and confidently.