

PCOS – COMMON BUT FREQUENTLY MISSED

As Many As 5 Million Women In the U.S. Are Affected by PCOS

PCOS Occurs In Girls As Young As 11 Years Old

PCOS, although common, is frequently misdiagnosed or worse, undiagnosed and untreated as patients often suffer in silence. This guide will help patients better understand what PCOS is and how to become an active partner in the successful treatment of this condition.

01 | What is PCOS?

According to the Mayo Clinic, Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a common endocrine system disorder among women of reproductive age. Women with PCOS may have enlarged ovaries that contain small collections of fluid, called follicles, located in each ovary as seen during an ultrasound exam.

02 | Symptoms

- Irregular or absent menstrual periods / heavy, irregular vaginal bleeding / pelvic pain
- Hirsutism – increased facial and body hair
- Acanthosis Nigrans – patches of dark skin (most commonly found on the neck, under arms and groin)
- Skin Problems – acne, oily skin, dandruff
- Weight gain or obesity
- Skin tags
- Anxiety, depression and/or mood swings
- Fatigue, sleep apnea and/or trouble falling asleep

03 | Preparing For Your Appointment

There are many things that you, as the patient can do to prepare for your appointment:

- Make a list of specific symptoms including when they started, frequency and severity
- Compile your medical history – include your menstrual history, fertility/pregnancies and weight issues

- Know your family's OB/GYN medical history – has your mother, sister or grandmother experienced gynecological issues or surgical procedures?
- Jot questions down and bring your list
- Be prepared to listen (taking notes if necessary) and cooperate with your doctor's treatment plan

04 | Working As a Team

When visiting the doctor, you may find it intimidating or even embarrassing to discuss your condition, which may cause you to shy away from speaking up. However, keep in mind that your physician values your input and participation. The more information you provide, the better equipped your medical provider will be to formulate the best treatment plan for you.

To learn more about PCOS, including symptoms, complications and treatment options, visit:

<http://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/polycystic-ovary-syndrome.html>

Did You Know?

PCOS is the most common cause of female infertility

References

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/pcos/basics/symptoms/con-20028841>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/turning-straw-gold/201307/don-t-be-intimidated-in-the-doctor-s-office-six-strategies>