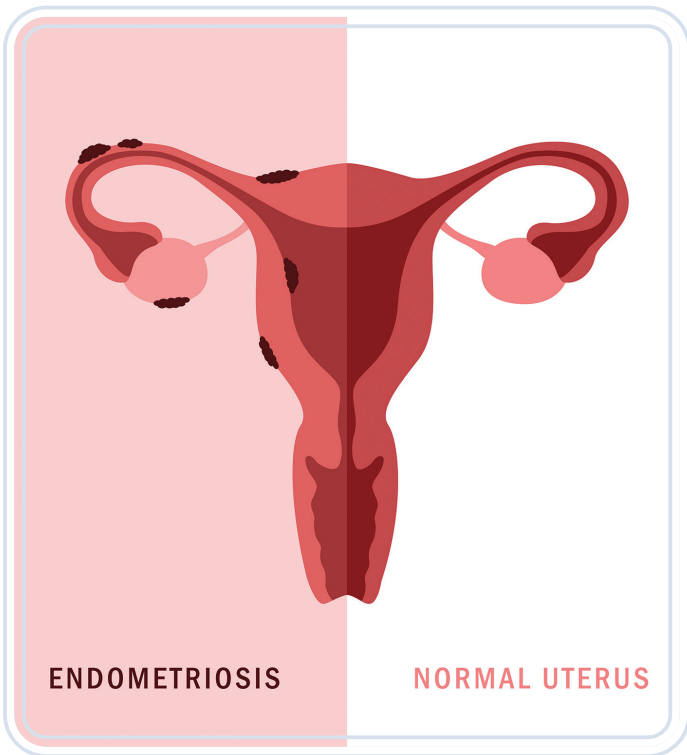


Endometriosis



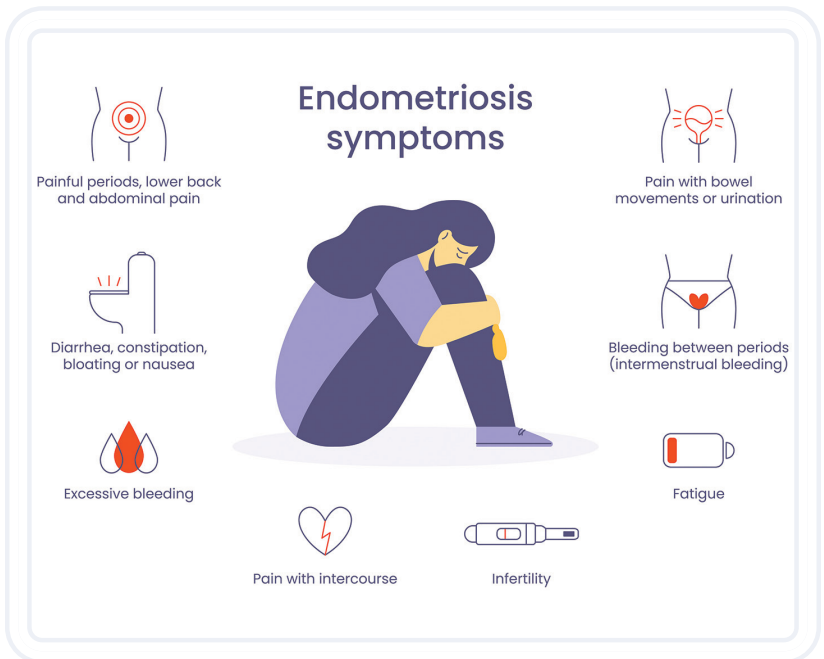
What is Endometriosis?

Endometriosis is a condition where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside of the uterus. The tissue inside the uterus is called “endometrium” and the tissue outside of the uterus is called “endometriosis”. The most common places where endometriosis occurs are the ovaries, the fallopian tubes, the bowel, and the areas in front, in back, and to the sides of the uterus.



Symptoms

- Pain can occur:
 - Just before or during the menstrual period
 - Between menstrual periods, with worsened pain during the period
 - During or after sex
 - With bowel movements or when urinating, especially during the period
- Difficulty getting pregnant
- Endometriomas (chocolate cysts)—ovarian cysts containing endometriosis (typically filled with blood)



Diagnosis

Endometriosis might be suspected based on your symptoms of pelvic pain or painful menstrual periods. The only way to know for sure is to have surgery so a provider can actually see and biopsy the abnormal tissue. Endometriosis cannot be diagnosed by ultrasound, x-ray, or other non-invasive methods.

Treatment

• Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)

- Pain medicines that can help relieve the pain caused by endometriosis. The medicine works by stopping the release of prostaglandins, one of the main chemicals responsible for pain-ful menstrual periods.
 - ◆ Ibuprofen—Advil, Motrin & store brands
 - ◆ Naproxen sodium—Aleve, Anaprox, Naprosyn, and store brands
- Disadvantage of NSAIDS is that they do not always relieve endometriosis-related pain.

• Hormonal birth control

- Birth control pills, patch, and the vaginal ring are often helpful in treated pain because they reduce heavy bleed-ing. Injectable and implantable long-acting progestins may be very effective in managing endome- triosis-related pain. A progestin-containing intrauterine device can be very effective in treating pain. Hormonal birth control works best in women who do not have severe pain unrelated to the period.
 - ◆ The most common side effects of estrogen-contain- ing hormon-al birth control are:

- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Breast tenderness
- ◆ Irregular vaginal bleeding or spotting

- **Progestins**

- Synthetic form of a natural hormone called progesterone. This treatment might be recommended for women who do not get pain relief from or who cannot take hormonal birth control that contains estrogen (such as smokers). Progestins are available by prescription and usually given as a pill or injection.

- **Gonadotropin releasing hormone agonists (GnRH)**

- Medicines that work by causing a temporary menopause. The treatment causes the ovaries to stop producing estrogen, which causes the endometriosis implants to shrink.

- **Surgery (such as laparoscopy) might be an option if you:**

- Have severe pain
- Have tried medicines but still have bothersome pain
- Have a growth or mass in the pelvic area. Surgery may be necessary to remove the mass and figure out if endometriosis, or another problem, is the cause.
- Are having trouble getting pregnant and endometriosis might be the cause

Causes

The exact cause of endometriosis isn't known. Possible causes include:

- **Retrograde menstruation**—this happens when menstrual blood flows backward through the fallopian tubes into the pelvis instead of leaving the body. Because this blood carries endometrial cells from the lining of the uterus, those cells can attach to the pelvic walls and organ surfaces. Just like they would inside the uterus, these trapped cells continue to thicken and bleed with every monthly cycle.
- **Transformed peritoneal cells**—hormones or immune factors might help transform cells that line the inner side of the abdomen, called peritoneal cells, into cells that implant outside of the uterus.
- **Endometrial cell transport**—the body's blood vessels or fluid systems can carry endometrial tissue to different parts of the body.
- **Immune system condition**—if the immune system isn't working properly, it might fail to recognize and destroy endometrial tissue.
- **Embryonic cell changes**—hormones, such as estrogen, may transform embryonic cells into endometrial-like cell growths during puberty.
- **Surgical scar complication**—during abdominal surgeries like a C-section, endometrial cells can sometimes stick to the resulting scar tissue.

As a part of our Circle of Care, PT Center for Women offers specialized physical therapy services to women of all ages with certain complications or needs, often following pregnancy or surgery. With the right approach, support, and treatment, our therapists can decrease pain, improve function and muscle strength, and address any problems.

Our physical therapists treat:

- Bladder issues
(leakage/difficulty urinating)
- Bowel dysfunction
(constipation or leakage of stool)
- C-section or episiotomy scar pain
- Diastasis recti
(separation of abdominal muscles)
- Dyspareunia
(painful intercourse)
- Headaches
- Low back, SI joint & tailbone pain
- Pelvic organ prolapse
(fallen pelvic organs)
- Pelvic pain
- Postpartum pain
- Pregnancy-related pain

For more information or to schedule an appointment, **call or text 920.729.2982** or visit ptcenterforwomen.com.



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