

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome

What is polycystic ovary syndrome?

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS for short) is a common condition. It is usually related to your hormones being out of balance.

Most people with PCOS have problems with how their body uses sugar. Some get small cysts (fluid-filled sacs) on their ovaries. You can also have high levels of hormones called androgens.

How do I know if I have it?

Your period cycles may not be regular. Some patients have trouble getting pregnant. You may have too much hair on your face or body. You may have higher than normal blood glucose (sugar) levels.

How is it diagnosed?

PCOS is hard to diagnose because many symptoms occur in other diseases too. Your doctor may look for those other diseases first.

Your doctor may also ask about your health and your periods. You may need a physical examination and blood tests. And your doctor may suggest an ultrasound to look at your ovaries.

How is it treated?

It depends on how PCOS is affecting your life, what symptoms you have, and what treatments you prefer.

Some common treatments are weight loss, diet, exercise, medicine, and hair removal. If you are having trouble getting pregnant, you may need special treatments.

What medicines are used to treat it?

Many medicines may be used because there are many ways PCOS can affect you.

If your blood sugar is high, you may need to take medicines that are usually used to treat diabetes, such as metformin.

If you have too much hair, you may need to take birth control pills or a medicine called spironolactone.

Birth control pills may help if your period cycles are not regular.

If you have trouble getting pregnant, you may need to take a fertility medicine, such as letrozole, or other medicines.

Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

AskPCOS app

<https://www.monash.edu/medicine/sphpm/mchri/pcos/resources/askpcos-app>

National Library of Medicine

<https://medlineplus.gov/polycysticovarysyndrome.html>

PCOS Awareness Association

<https://www.pcosaa.org>

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