

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

Women with PCOS are at higher risk to develop type 2 diabetes.

1 Introduction

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a common hormonal disorder. This disorder can often lead to female infertility. Those with PCOS can develop other serious health problems and are more likely to suffer from depression and anxiety. Please use this guide to understand the cause, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment of polycystic ovary syndrome.

2 Cause

The exact cause of PCOS is unknown. There are a few factors that contribute to the risk of having this disorder. Risk factors include:

- Excess insulin production
- Excess androgen
- Family history of PCOS
- Low-grade inflammation

3 Symptoms

Symptoms of PCOS may develop over time, beginning after the first menstrual period or after significant weight gain. Symptoms include:

- Infertility
- Cysts on the ovary
- Irregular menstrual periods

- Excess body hair
- Acne and oily skin
- Unexplained weight gain
- Dark or thick skin patches

4 Diagnosis

There is not a definitive test that can diagnose PCOS. To start, your doctor may ask about your menstrual periods or weight changes. Additionally, your doctor may perform a series of tests that could include ultrasound, blood tests, or pelvic exam.

5 Treatment

How PCOS is treated depends on factors such as age, symptom severity, overall health, and if you want to become pregnant. Symptoms can be relieved through medication and lifestyle changes.

Women who struggle with physical symptoms of PCOS can try other treatments such as:

- Electrolysis
- Laser hair removal
- Diabetes medicine
- Medication to induce ovulation

Did you know?

Polycystic ovary syndrome affects 1 in 10 women during their reproductive years.

For more information on PCOS and women's health, please visit www.nwhn.org

References:

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/pcos/symptoms-causes/syc-20353439>

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/polycystic-ovary-syndrome-pcos>