

Understanding Endometriosis

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Often overlooked, yet common

Endometriosis is a common yet neglected affliction. In this chronic gynaecological condition, tissue similar to the lining of the uterus (endometrium) grows outside the uterine cavity. These growths are commonly found on the ovaries, fallopian tubes and the pelvic lining. However, in rare cases, they can spread beyond the pelvic region. Despite affecting millions of women worldwide, endometriosis is often underdiagnosed and misunderstood.

What are the symptoms of Endometriosis?–

The most common symptom of endometriosis is pelvic pain, particularly during menstruation. However, the severity of pain is not always proportionate to the extent of the disease. Other symptoms include painful intercourse, heavy menstrual bleeding, pain during bowel movements or urination and chronic fatigue. Some women may also experience infertility. This makes endometriosis a significant concern in reproductive health.

Causes and Risk Factors

The exact cause of endometriosis remains unclear although several theories exist. Retrograde menstruation, in which menstrual blood flows backward into the pelvic cavity is a widely accepted explanation. Genetic predisposition, immune system dysfunction and hormonal imbalances are also contributors. Women with a family history of endometriosis or early onset of menstruation may be at higher risk.

Challenges in diagnosis

Diagnosing endometriosis can be tricky as its symptoms often overlap with other conditions such as pelvic inflammatory disease or irritable bowel syndrome. Imaging techniques like ultrasound or MRI can help, but the foolproof process for diagnosis is laparoscopy, a minimally invasive surgical procedure that allows direct visualisation of endometrial tissue.



4. Emotional Well-Being & Mental Health

While there is no definitive cure for endometriosis, various treatment options can help manage symptoms and improve quality of life. Pain relief medications, hormonal therapies (such as oral contraceptives or progestins) and gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists are commonly used. In more severe cases, surgical removal of endometrial lesions may be necessary, especially for women facing infertility.

Lifestyle changes are imperative

Lifestyle changes help a lot by playing a supportive role in managing symptoms. Regular exercise, a balanced diet rich in anti-inflammatory foods and stress management techniques help reduce discomfort. Emotional support and counselling are also important, as chronic pain can impact mental health.

To sum up, endometriosis is a complex condition that requires timely recognition and a multidisciplinary approach to care. Increasing awareness, early diagnosis and personalised treatment can significantly improve outcomes for affected women.