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HOW DOES PCOS AFFECT FERTILITY?



Have you ever had irregular periods, acne, or too much hair growth? Have you ever noticed excess skin tags in your neck area? Could these symptoms point to an underlying condition and potentially affect your fertility?

What is polycystic ovarian syndrome?

Polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) is an imbalance of hormones that happens when your ovaries produce excess hormones. As a result, there will be excessive production of male hormones known as androgens. This results in an imbalanced reproductive system. Women with this condition find it difficult to get pregnant. Individuals often experience unpredictable ovulation and irregular or missed periods. Your ovaries contain follicles that have eggs. During periods, follicles grow and burst every month, releasing eggs into your fallopian tube. If you have PCOS, follicles don't release eggs every month. These follicles align around your ovaries. During an ultrasound examination, these small

fluid-filled sacs with immature eggs are visible on your ovaries.

What could be the causes?

PCOS is thought to be caused by high levels of hormones such as insulin or testosterone. These hormones can stop your ovulation. If there is a family history, you might have a greater chance of getting it.

What are the symptoms?

- Irregular periods
- Hair loss
- Excessive hair growth on your body or face
- Weight gain
- Oily skin
- Acne on your chest, back, and skin
- Dark patches on your neck, groin, or breast
- Infertility

How to diagnose PCOS?

Your healthcare professional will:

- Talk to you about your health background and symptoms
- Ask certain questions to know about the family's medical history
- Check your blood pressure & weight
- Examine for extra facial hair, acne, or skin tags

- Examination of pelvis
- Perform blood tests to check glucose and hormone levels.

Lifestyle hacks to manage PCOS

- Regular exercises can reduce insulin resistance and maintain your hormone levels. Physical activities can help in managing weight and boosting your mood and energy levels.
- Manage your stress using relaxation techniques: Stress can trigger the release of certain hormones such as cortisol that cause hormonal imbalance which worsens PCOS. Stress management can stabilize your body's hormonal environment, and can minimize the impact of PCOS. Practicing stress relaxation techniques like yoga, deep breathing exercises, and meditation can reduce the symptoms.
- Consume nutrient-rich foods: Focus on a diet rich in fiber and proteins while reducing the intake of carbohydrates and refined sugars. Eat whole grains, berries, and leafy greens to maintain your health and hormonal balance.
- Monitor your blood sugar levels

PCOS and pregnancy:

With fertility treatment, most women with PCOS can have a baby. If you are below 35 years old, your chance of getting pregnant is high. But, even if you are older, you don't need to lose hope. A good conversation with your doctor lets you decide on different fertility treatment options.

PCOS in pregnant women can increase the risk of complications such as pre-eclampsia, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, etc. But, you don't need to worry about these symptoms. By 20 weeks, you will be monitored for gestational diabetes and will be managed accordingly by the doctor.

What are the treatment options?

Drugs like Clomiphene and letrozole can induce ovulation while taken orally. Metformin is another drug that improves insulin resistance and reduces the incidence of miscarriage. Gonadotrophins can also cause ovulation which are administered by injection. Surgery is another option that kills tissue around the ovaries which produce testosterone.

Conclusion:

PCOS is a common condition that significantly affects your fertility which lifestyle modifications and medications can manage. It is important to attain a proper treatment plan to fix fertility problems and reduce long-term health risks. You can become a great parent, despite the challenges this condition causes by getting the relevant information and being able to take care.



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