

PCOS AND METABOLIC SYNDROME

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) and metabolic syndrome often go hand in hand. Women who have one disease are at greater risk for developing the other.

PCOS is a disease in which a woman's hormones are out of balance and she produces more male hormones (androgens) than female hormones (estrogens). Metabolic syndrome describes a cluster of risk factors for heart disease and diabetes. Women with PCOS are more likely to develop metabolic syndrome and women with metabolic syndrome are more likely to also develop PCOS.

Polycystic ovary syndrome

What is it? A disease in women caused by an imbalance in male and female hormones.

What are the symptoms?

- ▶ Cysts on the ovaries
- ▶ Infertility
- ▶ Pelvic pain
- ▶ Excessive hair on face, chest, stomach, thumbs, toes
- ▶ Baldness
- ▶ Acne or oily skin



How do you treat PCOS?

- ▶ Healthy lifestyle to manage symptoms
- ▶ Hormonal birth control
- ▶ Anti-androgen medications*
- ▶ Metformin*—a drug used to treat type 2 diabetes that helps with PCOS symptoms

*The Food & Drug Administration has not approved these for the treatment of PCOS.

Metabolic syndrome

What is it? A cluster of risk factors that increase your risk for heart disease.

What are the symptoms?

- ▶ Abdominal obesity: waist circumference >40 inches for men, >35 inches for women
- ▶ Triglycerides >150 mg/dL
- ▶ High-density lipoprotein ("good" cholesterol) <40 mg/dL
- ▶ High blood pressure
 - Systolic (top number) >130 mm Hg
 - Diastolic (bottom number) >85 mm Hg
- ▶ Fasting glucose >100 mg/dL

How do you treat metabolic syndrome?

- ▶ Lifestyle: diet, physical activity, no smoking
- ▶ Medicines to control insulin, blood pressure, and cholesterol
- ▶ Lose weight
- ▶ Don't smoke



HYPERTENSION



CANCER



HEART DISEASE



INSULIN RESISTANCE



PCOS



TYPE 2 DIABETES

- Women with PCOS are at greater risk for developing metabolic syndrome
- People with metabolic syndrome are four times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke and women are more likely to also develop PCOS
- Women with PCOS and metabolic syndrome are at greater risk for pregnancy-related diabetes and have higher rates of liver, breast, and colon cancer
- Taking hormones for PCOS helps manage symptoms but does not lower your risk for heart disease or stroke

PCOS AND METABOLIC SYNDROME

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)

If you have PCOS, your ovaries or adrenal gland makes more male hormones (androgens) than normal. The disease affects nearly one in 10 women of childbearing age and tends to run in families. In fact, a family history is the primary risk factor for PCOS. Women who have PCOS develop cysts, or fluid-filled sacs, on their ovaries. This disrupts your menstrual cycle and can cause infertility. Other PCOS symptoms include pelvic pain, baldness or thinning hair, high levels of insulin, weight gain or difficulty losing weight, and acne and oily skin. Women with PCOS often have excess hair in places where men typically grow hair (hirsutism). Having PCOS can make it difficult to get pregnant.

There is no cure for PCOS. However, you can manage symptoms with a healthy lifestyle, hormonal birth control, and medicines. Your first step in managing your PCOS is to make sure all of your healthcare providers are aware of your condition.

Metabolic syndrome

Metabolic syndrome (sometimes called syndrome X) describes a cluster of risk factors for cardiovascular disease: abdominal obesity, elevated triglycerides (a type of fat in the blood), low high-density lipoprotein (“good” cholesterol), high blood pressure and insulin resistance, which can lead to type 2 diabetes. If you have three or more of these symptoms, you have metabolic syndrome. Women with metabolic syndrome are more prone to PCOS.

You can reduce your risk of metabolic syndrome, heart disease, and PCOS by eating a primarily plant-based diet, getting adequate exercise, not smoking, and maintaining a healthy weight.

Action Item:

If you have PCOS, ask your doctor how to manage your symptoms and how to reduce your risk for metabolic syndrome. If you have metabolic syndrome, talk to your doctor about ways to lower your risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and PCOS.