

SELF-HELP FOR

PCOS Polycystic Ovary Syndrome

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a hormonal disorder common among women of reproductive age. Women with PCOS may have infrequent or prolonged menstrual periods or excess male hormone (androgen) levels. The ovaries may develop numerous small collections of fluid (follicles) and fail to regularly release eggs.



ON THE CHART

PCOS can manifest on fertility charts. Look out for:

- long cycles with odd mucus patterns
- anovulatory cycles
- short luteal phase
- complete lack of cycles
- miscarriage or infertility



DIAGNOSIS

Two of the following conditions must be present:

- chronic anovulation
- evidence of elevated "male" hormones
- multiple small cysts on the ovaries

See doctor for diagnosis.
Do not self-diagnose.

PCOS SELF-HELP STRATEGIES

While there is no complete cure to PCOS yet, there are many ways to feel better. Here are some tips that can help increase insulin sensitivity, which causes PCOS to improve.

1

Consider the possibility of hypothyroidism.

It is worth checking even if nothing seems amiss. Low basal body temperatures can indicate poor thyroid function.



Avoid foods that rapidly elevate blood sugar levels.

Instead, try to eat fats, proteins and fiber-rich foods which require your body to produce less insulin.

2

3

Strictly avoid artificial sweeteners.

Calorie-empty sweeteners not only trigger unnecessary insulin, but they also create gut bacteria imbalance and increase hunger.



Supplement a good diet.

Most people's diets lack important nutrients. Supplements can make a huge difference in PCOS management.

4

5

Commit to regular exercise - even a little!

Regular exercise can increase insulin sensitivity and losing a few pounds can improve cycles significantly.



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Sources: Mayo Clinic.org and Marilyn Shannon's popular book *Fertility, Cycles & Nutrition* (5th Ed)

FIND OUT MORE:

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