



Understanding PCOS

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You're probably wondering what 'pkos' means and why you have to read about it this time of the day. Is it important to you? Why do you need to know? What does it even mean?

Well, PCOS stands for Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome.

It is a hormonal disorder that occurs in women of reproductive age. Basically, what this means is that for some women, certain chemicals in their bloodstream are either in too little or in too much quantity which results in an imbalance in their system. PCOS, like Mean Girls, is characterized by a dreadful trio.

- Infrequent or prolonged menstrual periods
- Excess androgen levels (you guessed right, that is a male hormone- good job!)
- Ovaries that develop collection of fluids called cysts What makes this happen?

Like the reason for the sudden appearance of aliens in Riverdale, researchers have concluded that the exact causes of PCOS are unknown but there are some suspected factors.

- They say an excess amount of the hormone called insulin could be a culprit. Insulin is the hormone that allows the cells in your body make use of the sugar in your body. A large amount of this hormone in your body will cause a spike in the production of androgen which will lead to a difficulty in ovulation.
- They also say when your tiny fighter blood cells (White Blood Cells) produce some substances to help 'kombat' some infections, this stimulates already existing polycystic ovaries to produce even more androgen leading to heart and blood vessel problems.

- These guys also say that this condition can be passed down through generations like grandma's pearls.

Now, what does this lead to?

With all of this happening inside the body, here is a long list of the external manifestations that might occur.

- Infertility
- Gestational diabetes (pregnancy induced High Blood Pressure)
- Non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (severe accumulation of fat on liver)
- Metabolic syndrome (her body starts throwing her a barrage of diseases like HBP, high blood sugar, cholesterol and triglyceride levels that lead to cardiovascular diseases.
- Sleep Apnea
- Depression, Anxiety and Eating disorders (yes, it is infact an actual ailment)
- Abnormal Uterine Bleeding
- Cancer of the endometrial lining (as if all the above was not terrible enough, her body decides to throw cancer in the mix).

Please note that due to the increase in the androgen levels in her body, this might also result in physical symptoms like excess body/ facial hair, severe acne and even male-pattern baldness. Okay, can it be treated though?

It is a big bummer that the main cause of PCOS is still largely unknown which makes it difficult to actually fight it. PCOS can not

be cured but its symptoms can be managed. Physicians usually recommend certain lifestyle changes to help decrease the effects but this is only an unworthy substitute to not having to deal with it at all.

How can you help?

- It is very essential for people with symptoms to speak with a gynaecologist as soon as they can.
- So you might need to share the knowledge you now have with as many people as you can. PCOS is still very unknown in many parts of the world and so there's a truckload of people going through all of this without fully understanding what it is.

Talk about it.

Help a woman, today.