

What Is It?

Endometriosis is a condition where **tissue similar to the uterine lining grows outside the uterus**, commonly on the ovaries, fallopian tubes, and surrounding pelvic organs. This tissue responds to the menstrual cycle, and can lead to **inflammation, pain, and scarring**. Endometriosis affects approximately **1 in 10 women and individuals assigned female at birth (AFAB)**. There are four stages of endometriosis:

Stage 1 (Minimal):

Few superficial implants, minimal scar tissue, considered the least severe.

Stage 2 (Mild):

More implants, deeper lesions in the pelvis, possible development of filmy adhesions.

Stage 3 (Moderate):

Many deep implants, potential presence of ovarian endometriomas (cysts), thicker scar tissue and adhesions.

Stage 4 (Severe):

Extensive deep implants, large ovarian cysts, dense adhesions that may involve organs like the bowel and bladder.



Possible Symptoms

- ✦ **Severe pelvic pain**
(especially before and during periods)
- ✦ **Pain during or after intercourse**
- ✦ **Chronic fatigue**
- ✦ **Heavy or irregular periods**
- ✦ **Digestive issues**
(bloating, constipation, diarrhoea)
- ✦ **Difficulty conceiving**
(infertility in some cases)

Important points to remember:

- The staging system is based on a point system, where higher points indicate more severe disease.
- The severity of symptoms does not always directly correlate with the stage of endometriosis.



Triggers & Risk Factors

The exact cause is unknown, but possible factors include:

- ✦ **Genetics** (family history of endometriosis)
- ✦ **Retrograde menstruation**
(when menstrual blood flows backward)
- ✦ **Immune system dysfunction**
- ✦ **Hormonal imbalances**
(high oestrogen levels)



Diagnosis

- ✦ **Pelvic exam to detect cysts or abnormalities**
- ✦ **Ultrasound or MRI for imaging pelvic organs**
- ✦ **Laparoscopy** (minimally invasive surgery for definitive diagnosis)



FACT SHEET:

ENDOMETRIOSIS



Treatment & Management

✦ Medications

- **Pain relievers** (NSAIDs like ibuprofen)
- **Hormonal therapies** (birth control pills, GnRH agonists, progestin-only treatments)

✦ Lifestyle Adjustments

- **Anti-inflammatory diet** (reducing dairy, sugar, and processed foods)
- **Regular exercise and stress management** (yoga, meditation)

✦ Surgical Options

- **Laparoscopic surgery to remove endometriosis tissue**
- **In severe cases, hysterectomy** (removal of the uterus) may be considered



Support in the Workplace

- ✦ Flexible work hours or remote work during flare-ups
- ✦ Accessible restrooms and rest areas
- ✦ Open discussions about endometriosis to reduce stigma



Impact on Work & Daily Life

Endometriosis can lead to **chronic pain, fatigue, and emotional distress** making it difficult to maintain productivity and requiring frequent medical appointments and sick leave.

RESOURCES

✦ Websites

- Endometriosis Foundation of America
www.endofound.org
- The Endometriosis UK
www.endometriosis-uk.org
- National Women's Health Network
www.nwhn.org

✦ Apps

- **Flutter**
Tracking symptoms and treatments
- **Clue**
Menstrual and symptom tracking

✦ Books

- **Endometriosis: A Key to Healing Through Nutrition**
by Dian Shepperson Mills
- **The Endometriosis Health & Diet Program**
by Andrew S. and Danielle Cook
- **Beating Endo: A Patient's Treatment Plan for Endometriosis**
by Dr. Iris Kerin Orbuch
- **Know Your Endo: An Empowering Guide to Health and Hope With Endometriosis**
by Jessica Murnane

✦ Online Support Groups & Forums

- **Facebook Endometriosis Support Groups** such as endometriosis.uk.org and [NancysNookEndoEd](https://www.facebook.com/NancysNookEndoEd)
- **Instagram pages** such as [@endowarriors](https://www.instagram.com/endowarriors) and [@jen.dometrisis](https://www.instagram.com/jen.dometrisis)

