

Glossary

- **Adenomyosis** – A medical condition in which tissue that normally lines the uterus (endometrial tissue) grows into the muscular wall of the uterus
- **Adhesions** – Bands of scar-like tissue that can cause pain for patients with endometriosis
- **Anticonvulsants** – A group of pharmacological agents used in the treatment of epileptic seizures that can also be used for management of nerve pain for patients with endometriosis
- **Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)** – A short-term treatment technique that helps individuals learn how to identify and change thought patterns that have a negative influence on their behavior and emotions
- **Embryo** – A fertilized egg in early stages of cellular division and development
- **Endometriosis** – A medical condition in which tissue similar to that which lines the uterus grows outside the uterus where it does not belong
- **Endometrium** – The mucous membrane lining the uterus, which thickens during the menstrual cycle in preparation for possible implantation of an embryo
- **Gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists and antagonists** – Man-made versions of the naturally produced pituitary hormone GnRH that modifies its action in the body. Agonists initially produce a rise in GnRH (and an increase in estrogen levels), followed by a profound decrease. Antagonists directly inhibit GnRH without a rise in estrogen.
- **Hormonal contraceptive** – A type of birth control that uses hormones to prevent pregnancy. Hormonal contraceptives contain estrogen and progesterone, or progesterone only
- **Implant** – Endometrial growth outside of the uterus, usually found in the pelvis or abdomen
- **Intrauterine device (IUD)** – A contraceptive device fitted inside the uterus that physically prevents the implantation or fertilization of eggs
- **Intrauterine insemination (IUI)** – A fertility treatment that involves placing sperm inside a woman's uterus to facilitate fertilization
- **In vitro fertilization (IVF)** – A fertility treatment whereby an egg is fertilized by sperm in a test tube or elsewhere outside the body before being placed in the uterus
- **Laparoscopy** – A surgical procedure in which a fiber-optic instrument is inserted through the abdominal wall to view the organs in the abdomen or to permit a surgical procedure
- **Lesion** – Area of abnormal tissue that has suffered damage through injury or disease, such as a wound, ulcer, or abscess
- **Menses** – Vaginal bleeding resulting from the shedding of uterine lining as the ovum releases mature eggs, on average lasting 3–7 days; also known as menstruation
- **Menstrual cycle** – The monthly changes a woman's body goes through in preparation for the possibility of pregnancy. Each month, one of the ovaries releases an egg in a process called ovulation. At the same time, hormonal changes prepare the uterus for pregnancy. If and the egg isn't fertilized, menses occurs and the lining of the uterus sheds through the vagina
- **MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging)** – A medical imaging technique that uses a magnetic field and computer-generated radio waves to create detailed images of the organs and tissues in the body
- **Pelvic exam** – A physical exam of the vagina, cervix, uterus, fallopian tubes, ovaries, and rectum
- **Pelvic floor** – A base group of muscles that stretch like a hammock from the pubic bone (at the front) to the coccyx or tailbone (at the back) and from side to side
- **Progestin** – A synthetic form of the body's naturally-occurring hormone progesterone
- **Stigma** – A mark of disgrace (perceived or actualized) associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person
- **Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (tens) unit** – A device that sends small electrical currents to targeted body parts to relieve pain
- **Ultrasound** – An imaging method that uses high-frequency sound waves to produce images of structures within the body