

EXPLORING PCOS THROUGHOUT THE BODY

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a common hormone disorder where fluid-filled sacs (cysts) form in the ovary and produce high levels of androgen hormone, resulting in immature egg development and irregular ovulation. PCOS affects **8-13%** of reproductive age women worldwide and nearly **5 million** women in the United States, but an estimated **70%** of women with PCOS remain undiagnosed.¹

The exact cause of PCOS is unknown, but common symptoms include:

- Missed or irregular periods
- Excessive body hair (e.g., facial, chest, or stomach)
- Acne or oily skin
- Thinning hair
- Weight gain

While PCOS is often diagnosed after a woman experiences menstruation issues or infertility, this chronic condition impacts more than just ovulation.

Know Your Risk

MENTAL HEALTH

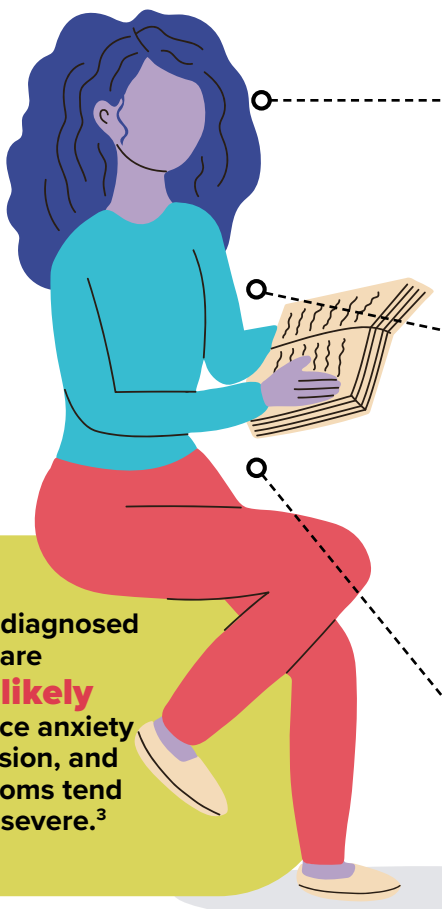
Prolonged inflammation and cortisol levels in the body associated with PCOS heighten the risk of stress and depression. Elevated cortisol also increases the likelihood of developing insulin resistance, which continues a cycle that can worsen depressive symptoms.

HEART HEALTH

Many risk factors associated with PCOS—such as obesity, insulin resistance, and hypertension—are also linked to cardiovascular disease (CVD). Women with PCOS experience **19%** higher risk of developing CVD than women without PCOS, particularly women in their 30s.² Proactive strategies to manage cardiovascular health are key for women diagnosed with PCOS, and lifestyle modifications, medication, and/or regular monitoring can help reduce the risk of cardiovascular complications, such as heart attack or stroke.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

The hormonal imbalance associated with PCOS can make it challenging for women to become pregnant. In fact, **90-95%** of women who experience female infertility due to anovulation (the disruption of egg development and release that are necessary for conception) also have PCOS.⁴



Individuals diagnosed with PCOS are **3x more likely** to experience anxiety and depression, and their symptoms tend to be more severe.³

Empowered to Prosper

PCOS highlights a complex relationship between hormonal imbalances, psychological wellness, heart health, and overall well-being. It takes a holistic approach to manage PCOS and long-term health. **Be empowered to advocate for yourself and seek whatever assistance you need to help you navigate your PCOS journey.**

Some providers you might include in your care team:

- Primary Care Provider
- Endocrinologist
- Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility (REI) Specialist
- Obstetrician/gynecologist (OB/GYN)
- Nutritionist
- Acupuncturist

PCOS Education & Support Organizations



¹ Boyle J, et al. Aust Fam Physician, 2012.

² Lo JC, et al. J Clin Endocrinol Metab, 2006.

³ Cooney LG, et al. Hum Reprod, 2017.

⁴ Dennett CC, et al. Diabetes Spectr, 2015.