

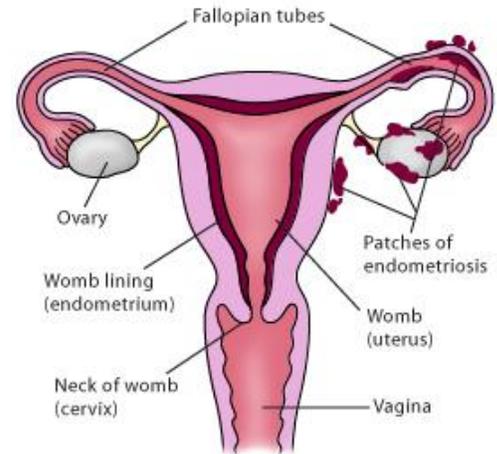
Endometriosis

What is endometriosis?

The tissue that lines the uterus (womb) is called the endometrium. When that tissue grows outside the uterus, it is called endometriosis. Most often it is in the pelvis but can occur in any part of the body. The cause is not known.

Risk factors include:

- Early age of first period (menstrual cycle).
- Never been pregnant.
- Family history.
- Short menstrual cycles (less than 27 days).
- Periods that last seven or more days.
- Changes that block normal menstrual flow. This could include the shape of your uterus or scar tissue that formed after an STD or infection.



What are the symptoms?

- You may have pain:
 - In your lower belly or back, rectum or vagina.
 - Only before and during your periods.
 - Worse during sex, when you poop or when your ovaries release an egg.
- Spotting or light bleeding before periods.
- Frequent and heavy periods.

How is it diagnosed and treated?

Signs and symptoms may lead to the diagnosis. The only sure way to confirm diagnosis is by surgery.

Treatment can help with symptoms. This may include pain medicine, hormonal birth control and/or surgery. It often gets worse over a number of years. It goes away after menopause.

What about getting pregnant?

It may make it hard to get pregnant. Most women with mild endometriosis can get pregnant without treatment, but it may take longer. There are medical or surgical treatments that can help with pregnancy. There is no increased risk of problems if you are pregnant.

ALERT: Call your doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if you have special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.