

What is Endometriosis?



QUICK VOCAB

1

Adenomyosis: A benign (non-cancerous) invasion of endometrial tissue into the uterine wall.

2

Adhesions: Bands of fibrous tissues that bind the abdominal or pelvic organs together.

4

Implants: Small, flat patches of endometrial-like cells growing outside their normal location.

3

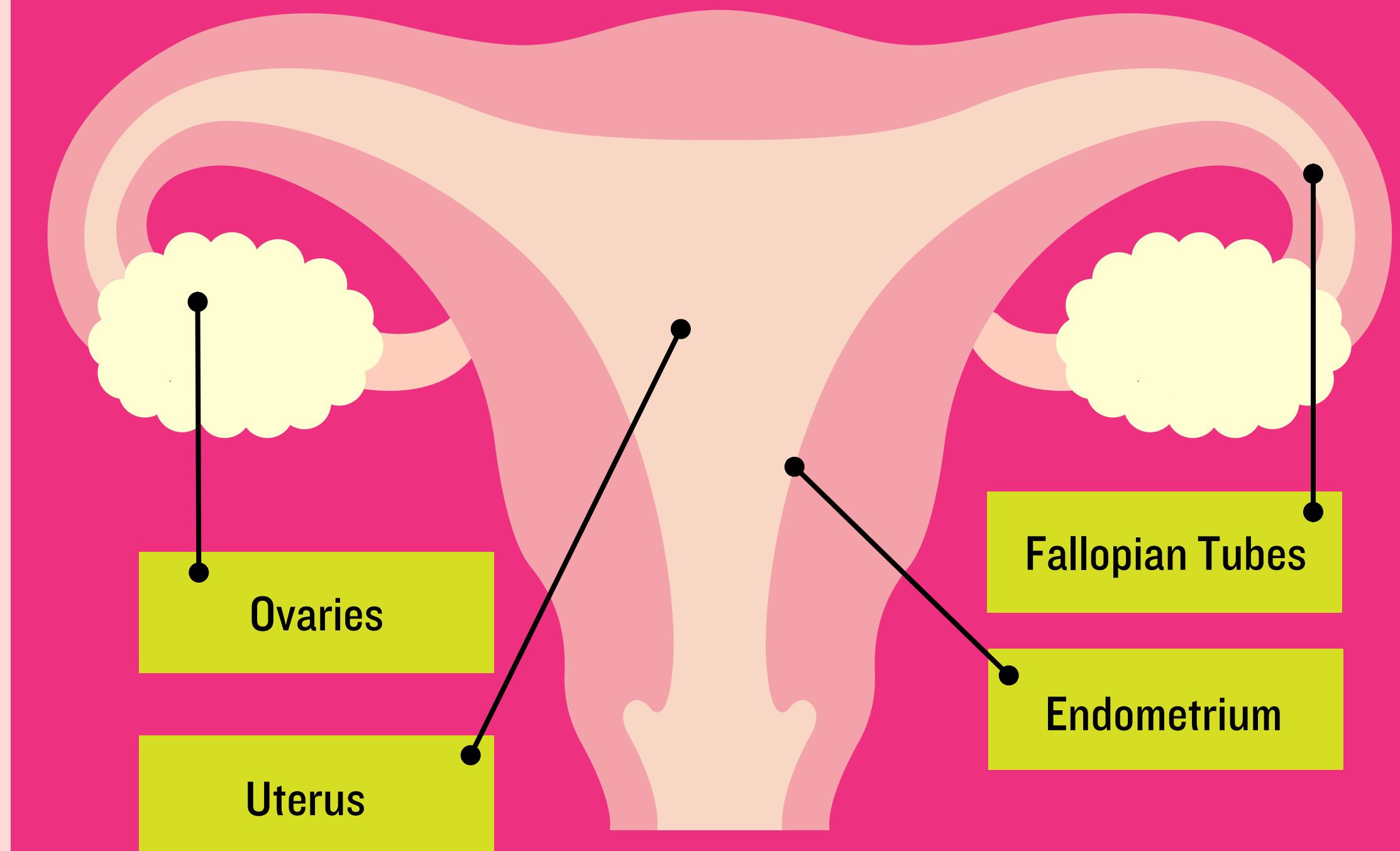
Endometrioma: Ovarian cysts filled with dark brown fluid, also called “chocolate cysts,” & indicate more severe endometriosis.

ENDOMETRIOSIS IS...

Endometriosis is a condition in which tissue **similar** to the endometrium, the lining of the uterus that sheds during your period, grows outside the uterus, where it cannot be expelled.

This tissue is often found on...

- Fallopian Tubes
- Ovaries
- Surface of the uterus
- Peritoneum
- Uterosacral Ligaments



UNDERSTANDING ENDOMETRIOSIS

- Endometriosis can affect teenagers and adult women.
- Believed to be more common in women who have never been pregnant.
- Often seen in those with infertility or chronic pelvic pain

- Endometriosis starts as small growths in the pelvis that can spread, form endometriomas, “chocolate cysts”, and create scar tissue that causes organs to stick together.



WHY ENDOMETRIOSIS DEVELOPS

- Endometriosis affects up to 10% of women and the cause of endometriosis remains unknown
- The most accepted theory is **retrograde menstruation**
 - menstrual tissue flows backward through the fallopian tubes into the pelvis. This tissue can attach to organs, forming endometriosis lesions, and sometimes grow into endometriomas.
- Endometriosis causes lesions (implants, nodules, or endometriomas) that react to menstrual hormones. As estrogen rises each cycle, these tissues can grow and often cause pain.



SYMPTOMS

People with endometriosis experience few to no symptoms.

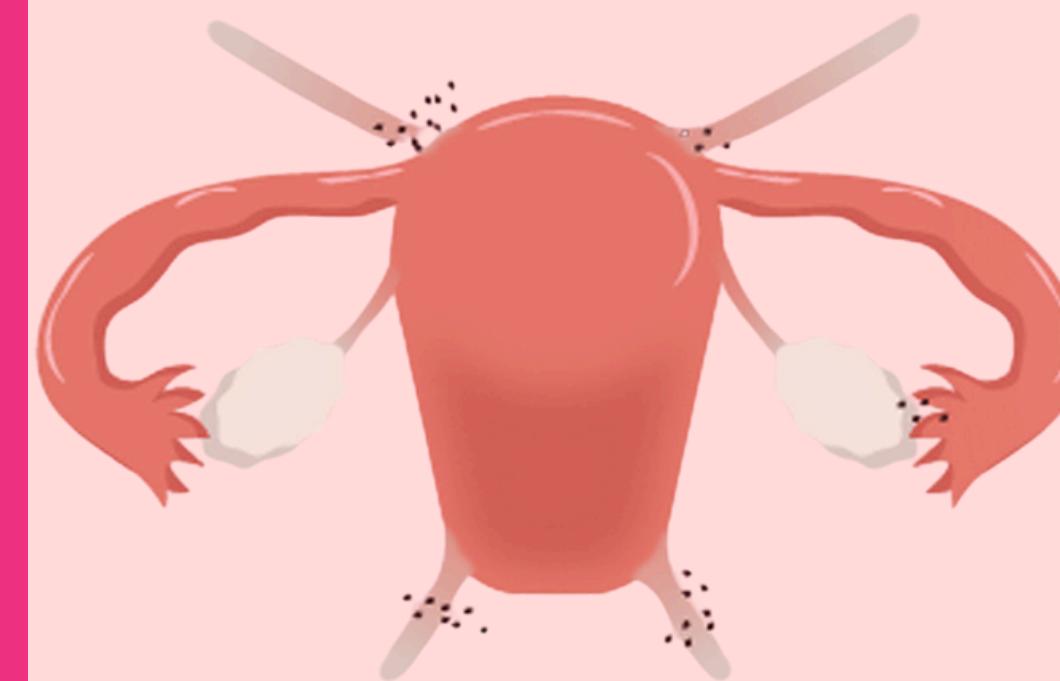
Some symptoms may include

- Pelvic pain, especially during your period
- Infertility
- Pain during sex
- Heavy and/or prolonged periods
- Neuropathy



STAGES

Stage 1: Minimal



- Few superficial implants

Stage 2: Mild



- More and deeper implants

STAGES

Stage 3: Moderate



- Many deep implants
- Small cysts on one or both ovaries
- Presence of filmy adhesions
- Few superficial implants

Stage 4: Severe



- Many deep implants
- Large cysts on one or both ovaries
- Many dense adhesions
- More and deeper implants

TO DIAGNOSE...

- To diagnose, health providers may require...
 - Pelvic exam
 - Ultrasounds*
 - MRI*
 - Laparoscopy
 - Biopsy
- Currently no lab tests are able to screen for Endometriosis.



TREATMENT

Unfortunately, there is no cure for endometriosis. However, there are various treatment options to manage the symptoms and find support.

1

Conservative Surgery targets and removes endometriosis lesions while keeping healthy organs intact.

2

Definitive Surgery removes organs affected by widespread endometriosis, most common form of surgery is a hysterectomy (uterus removal).

3

Hormone therapy

- Low dose oral contraceptives
- Hormonal IUDs
 - The **BEST** treatment is a Mirena IUD (which is offered at FPA ☺)
- Other long-acting progesterone therapies (injection or implant)

4

Pain Killers (NSAIDs)

like ibuprofen and naproxen relieve endometriosis pain by reducing inflammation and uterine contractions but only manage symptoms, not the condition.

5

Acupuncture

is a holistic approach that is believed to help endometriosis by reducing pain and inflammation, supporting hormone balance, improving pelvic blood flow, and promoting overall well-being.

6

Lifestyle Changes

like exercise and a healthy diet can reduce pain and stress, support hormone balance, improve circulation and gut health, boost energy, and lessen inflammation and bloating.



OWN YOUR JOURNEY

Given the pain that comes with Endometriosis, it can often interrupt one's quality of life. Therefore, it is important to be patient with yourself

To manage your mental health, consider...

- Support groups and therapy
- Online communities

Advocating for yourself is incredibly important, even if it feels intimidating.

- Take notes during appointments
- Track your pain
- Bring a loved one to appointments
- It's okay to directly address "sensitive" or "embarrassing" topics- there's nothing to be ashamed of!!



Q & A

Have a question you'd prefer to discuss privately?
Feel free to reach out to Marie Garcia at
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for a confidential conversation.

THANK YOU

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