

Endometriosis – A chronic disease that you can do something about

Before reading this, I recommend that you read the section on Chronic and Auto-Immune.

Contrary to what many believe or are told, there are many natural things you can do to reduce the symptoms of Endometriosis, an increasingly common chronic illness. There are also many things you can do to prevent it should you have a family history.

Below I have summarised some notes for you but it is increasingly clear to me, through my Bioresonance testing, that those who suffer with Endometriosis have a high toxic load and high levels of oestrogen.

When I talk about a toxic load, I am referring to environmental toxins like DDT, PCB's and Glyphosate which is getting into our foods more and more. I am also referring to heavy metals and in particular Aluminium which for a number of reasons appears to be increasing.

On top of that there is an increasing load of pathogenic bacteria and viruses that remain in the system. I do find with testing the following viruses and bacteria often appear: Chlamydia trachomatis, Herpes simplex, Human papilloma virus, blood parasites, Candida overgrowth and parasites like Fasciolopsis buski. Different types of strep and Staph bacteria also appear to be present.

Below are some general tips on diet and supplements you can take but first you need to know what toxic load your body has. I can help you identify these. Only once you have this information can you work to remove the possible causes.

ENDOMETRIOSIS

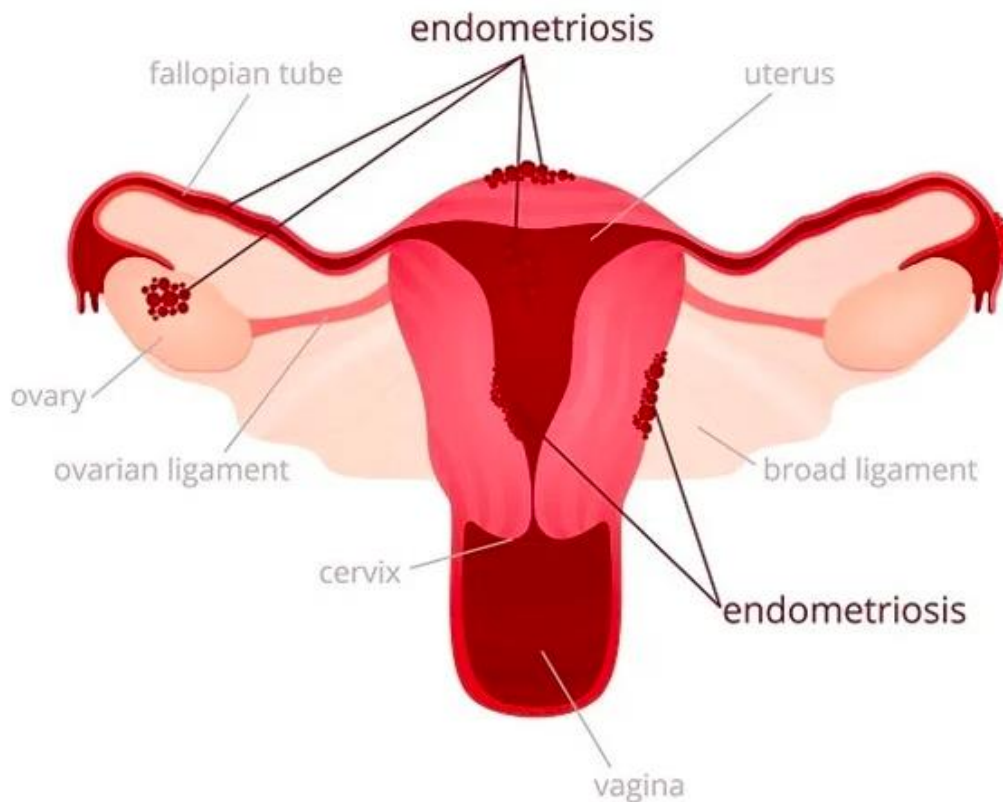


Image taken from News-Medical.net

Apparently, March is Endometriosis Awareness Month in the UK, which seems very timely as this was the next topic I had planned to write on, thank you Cancerian intuition! Endometriosis is an invasive disease that can give rise to long-term debilitating pain and infertility. It affects a shocking 1 in 10 women of reproductive age (at least) and so many of these women are told there isn't much they can do other than manage it with anti-inflammatories or surgery (1). However, there is so much they CAN DO, such as supporting themselves nutritionally and adapting their lifestyle to minimise stress to help reduce/manage the pain and improve chances of fertility. Read ahead to learn more on this topic and to learn about positive steps women with endometriosis can take today to help support themselves in the best way possible. Of course, it is always recommended to seek professional help (GP/Gynaecologist/ Nutritional Therapist) first before making any drastic changes to your lifestyle or diet.

Even though there is some promising research, at the moment, there are no definitive associations between specific food items and the risk of endometriosis (11). Therefore, further studies, in particular randomised controlled trials and meta-analyses, are still needed in this area.

What is endometriosis?

Endometriosis is an, 'autoimmune-like hormonal condition' where the endometrium, the tissue that lines the inside of the uterus, grows outside the uterus in places such as the fallopian tube or ovaries; it can be extremely painful for some women. This tissue can adhere to the tissues of the bladder, gut or even within the abdominal cavity where they can give rise to spasms that affect the digestive process and cause pain. This tissue is sensitive to cyclic hormonal fluctuations of oestrogen, cytokines and prostaglandins, the latter contributing to either uterine relaxation or contraction. The products of this metabolic activity give rise to an altered inflammatory response involving fibrosis formation and neovascularisation. A combination of oestrogen dominance and chemical stress trigger the undesirable painful symptoms of endometriosis.

Symptoms

- Irregular or heavy bleeding
- Pelvic pain manifesting in your lower back and/or lower tummy (usually more intense during your period)
- Painful periods which prevent you from everyday activities
- Pain when urinating or having a bowel movement during your period
- Bloating, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, constipation or blood in your urine during your period
- Fertility issues
- Pain during exercise (2)

*the most common symptoms being pelvic pain and infertility. Fortunately, most women experience a mild form of endometriosis and their fertility is not affected.

Possible causes of endometriosis

There does not seem to be a single, clear-cut cause of endometriosis. A family history of endometriosis is one of the primary risk factors, where women with a sister or mother with endometriosis have a greater risk as well as women with longer periods with shorter menstrual cycles (3). However, there are many causative theories including limited exercise at an early age, high/imbalanced oestrogen levels, natural red hair colour, history of abuse, high fat diet, use of intrauterine devices and altered cell immunity (4).

There is also some research showing a link between a higher prevalence of endometriosis and women with increased levels of the toxin, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) in their blood (5,6). PCBs and organochlorines are commonly used in agriculture and the main route of human exposure of these toxins is via food, especially fish, though also appear in dairy products and meats. Women who are vegetarian have been shown to have decreased levels of toxins in their breast milk compared to non-vegetarian women (3,5,6).



Image taken from eatright.org

Treatment Methods

Medical intervention normally relies on anti-inflammatory painkillers and hormone methods to help shrink endometrial tissues, though occasionally surgical treatments are applied to severe pain nerves and remove cell clumps. Sometimes a hysterectomy is suggested with possible removal of the ovaries.

Possible naturopathic interventions based on research:

- Regular exercise – this has been linked to 40-80% lowered risk for endometriosis in many case-control studies (7)
- Vitamin C and E supplementation has been shown to decrease oxidative stress marker concentration and reduce pelvic pain in women with endometriosis (8)
- A randomised controlled trail (9) revealed that dietary therapy was significant in regards to pain reduction post surgery with endometriosis. Dietary therapy included nutritional advice along with probiotics, omega-3, vitamins C, E, A and B6 and minerals (calcium, magnesium, selenium, zinc and iron). Please note professional advice on amounts and prioritising supplements along with diet changes is essential.
- Fish oils, vitamin D, fruits and vegetables are likely to be linked with a decreased risk of developing endometriosis (4).

- Risk factors include high consumption of red meats, products rich in trans-unsaturated fats and alcohol (10)



Image taken from newatlas.com

Nutritional tips you can apply today:

- Include cruciferous vegetables in your diet (e.g. broccoli, cauliflower, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, broccoli sprouts). Research has shown that women who consume a higher intake of fresh fruit and green vegetables have significantly lower risk of endometriosis (10)
- Consume oily fish at least 3x week (mackerel, salmon, sardines, anchovies, trout, herring). Omega-3 may help to modulate cytokine function and reduce the inflammatory response (12)
- Eat gut healing foods such as bone broth and fermented foods (sauerkraut, kimichi & kefir) as dysbiosis (an imbalance of gut bacteria) is likely among women with endometriosis
- Limit alcohol – at least 4 alcohol free days and keep to 2 small drinks max per day
- Reduce coffee to 1 small one before noon. Click [here](#) to read my Instagram post on pros and cons of caffeine
- Increase fibre intake by replacing beige foods with – vegetables, fruit, flaxseeds, chia seeds, complex carbs (e.g. brown rice, cold sweet/white potatoes, rye bread, oatcakes, oats etc)
- To help decrease pain choose foods rich in magnesium (avocado, dark leafy vegetables, almonds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds and black beans).
- Avoid red meat – high intakes associated with increased risk of endometriosis (10)
- Replace dairy with alternatives such as almond/coconut/oat milk or yoghurt
- Reduce pesticide-laden foods (clean 15 – see picture below)

- Drink 2-3 cups of green tea per day – EGCG from green tea has been shown to decrease the development of experimental endometriosis in mice models (13)
- Incorporate a regular exercise routine that includes intensive work (e.g. power walking/running/dancing/weights etc) to raise the heart rate, but combined with a balance of calming, mind-body practises such as yoga, pilates, Thai chi etc.

When you are purchasing fruit and vegetables, try and go organic. If this is not possible then those listed below in the Clean 15 tend not to be too contaminated. Those listed as the Dirty 12 usually have high levels of pesticides and other chemicals if they are not organic. Remember that high levels of these chemicals can be one of the causes of Endometriosis.



Image from tastendash.com

Sources

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