

# WHAT IS ENDOMETRIOSIS?



## Overview

**Endometriosis** is a chronic condition where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus (endometrium) grows outside the uterus.

This tissue can cause pain, inflammation, scarring, and adhesions, commonly affecting the ovaries, fallopian tubes, and pelvic lining.

## Diagnosis

- Clinical history & symptoms assessment
- Pelvic exam: Identifies cysts or tender areas
- Imaging: Ultrasound or MRI can suggest endometriosis but cannot confirm it
- **Laparoscopy (Gold Standard):** A minimally invasive surgery that allows direct visualization and biopsy of endometriotic lesions

## Symptoms

- Chronic pelvic pain
- Painful periods (dysmenorrhea)
- Pain during intercourse (dyspareunia)
- Pain with bowel movements or urination
- Heavy or irregular menstrual bleeding
- Fatigue
- Infertility

## Treatment options

- **Medications:**
  - Pain relievers (NSAIDs like ibuprofen)
  - Hormonal therapy (birth control pills, progestins, GnRH agonists) to suppress endometrial growth
- **Surgery:**
  - Laparoscopic excision or ablation of endometrial implants for symptom relief
  - In severe cases, hysterectomy may be considered (usually a last resort)
- **Lifestyle & Complementary Approaches:**
  - Regular exercise, anti-inflammatory diet, pelvic physiotherapy may help manage symptoms

## Fertility

Endometriosis can impact fertility, but many individuals with the condition conceive naturally.

Options:

- **Surgery** to remove lesions and improve reproductive outcomes
- Assisted reproductive technologies (**ART**) such as in vitro fertilization (**IVF**)
- **Consultation with a fertility specialist** is recommended for those struggling to conceive