

What Is Endometriosis?

For many women, a diagnosis of endometriosis finally gives a name to their pain.

And the diagnosis puts them on a path toward managing and treating it.

To start, it can help to know that endometriosis usually isn't dangerous.

But it can cause pain and other problems.

So what is endometriosis?

It's a condition where cells that are supposed to live in the uterus grow in other parts of the body.

Here's what that means.

The uterus is lined with a type of tissue called endometrium.

With endometriosis, clumps of this tissue, called implants, grow outside of your uterus, like on your ovaries, fallopian tubes, or even on the intestines.

That's why you may feel pain in one place in your body, but another person with endometriosis feels it somewhere else.

And the pain can range from mild to severe.

Endometriosis symptoms include low back pain, pain during sex, and painful bowel movements.

And it can make menstrual cramps worse.

Endometriosis can cause a mass to grow near the ovaries.

Or it can cause you to have problems getting pregnant.

Some women may also have heavy periods, bleeding between periods, or bleeding after sex.

Symptoms often are most severe before and during your menstrual period.

That's because endometriosis responds to the hormone levels that change throughout your menstrual cycle.

If your doctor thinks your symptoms are caused by endometriosis, your treatment can depend on whether you want to control pain, you want to get pregnant, or both.

What Is Endometriosis?

If you aren't trying to get pregnant, your doctor might recommend using birth control hormone medicines to treat endometriosis.

If medicines don't help or if you're trying to get pregnant, surgery might be an option.

Surgery can check and then treat endometriosis by removing the implants and treating any painful scar tissue.

For some people with endometriosis, the pain affects their moods, their relationships, and their ability to work.

But finding the right treatment can help.

So it's important to find a doctor who you can be open and honest with about your pain.

When you are in pain or are worried about your health, it can be hard to remember what your doctor tells you.

So you might want to bring a friend or family member to the doctor with you to help you understand and remember everything the doctor tells you.

It can take time, and you may have to try different things to find a treatment that works for you.

But you and your doctor can work together to find what will help you feel better.