

Endometriosis matters.

What is endometriosis?

Endometriosis is a condition that occurs when the same kind of tissue that lines the womb also grows elsewhere in the body, such as the ovaries and fallopian tubes. This tissue thickens, breaks down and bleeds with the menstrual cycle. It can cause pain, swelling and scarring, often leading to many other symptoms.

What are the most common symptoms?

- Pelvic pain
- Pain during sex
- Painful and/or heavy periods
- Extreme fatigue
- Difficulty getting pregnant (conceiving)



I became conscious and worried about whether my employer thought I was doing a good enough job. And in turn I put pressure on myself to try to work as much on bad days as I did on good days.

Over time though, talking about it became the best thing I could do. My manager understood and showed me that my health was their priority. In order for me to be the best I could be, I needed to take the time to rest when flare ups happened – flexibility was key.”

Angela, 36, diagnosed in 2019

Ways that people with endometriosis can be supported:

- Offering a listening ear for emotional support
- Offering to help with daily tasks where someone might be struggling with fatigue
- Open communication between partners, friends and relatives – ask ‘how can I better support you’ ‘Is there anything I do/say that isn’t helpful?’
- Flexible working options and being offered the necessary time off work
- Emotional support at work
- Being recognised by employers that endometriosis is a chronic and often very difficult condition to manage
- Become more educated on endometriosis. As well as Bupa’s Women’s Health Hub, bupa.co.uk/womens-health/endometriosis-support some other good sources are: endometriosis-uk.org and nhs.uk/conditions/endometriosis



Did you know?

58%

of those with endometriosis will visit the GP over 10 times before being diagnosed.

Source: Endometriosis in the UK: time for change, Endometriosis APPG Report Oct 2020

8-9 years

On average it takes 8 to 9 years from onset of symptoms to get a diagnosis in the UK.

Source: Endometriosis in the UK: time for change, Endometriosis APPG Report Oct 2020

95%

of people with endometriosis say it impacts their wellbeing negatively or very negatively.

Source: Endometriosis in the UK: time for change, Endometriosis APPG Report Oct 2020

Diagnosis

It can take on average 8 to 9 years for a person to be diagnosed in the UK. The nature of the symptoms mean people can often be misdiagnosed. A lack of awareness of what the condition is and embarrassment can also get in the way.

Treatment

The treatments for endometriosis can also impact someone's life. Over-the-counter pain medications can work for some. Others may need stronger painkillers or hormone medication, which all come with side effects. Many people also need multiple surgeries to remove endometriosis.

Mental health

Endometriosis, its symptoms and treatments can also affect mental health. Chronic pain, fatigue, infertility and the struggle to get a diagnosis can all lead to mental health concerns such as low mood, depression and stress.



For more information, support and advice on endometriosis, visit bupa.co.uk/womens-health/endometriosis-support

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