

PCOS Hormone Imbalance - If Untreated Triggers Infertility, Cysts and More

PCOS - Polycystic Ovary Syndrome - ranks as one of the most common problems Gynecologists see in their patients. "Two major factors seem to trigger this problem in your body," says McLeod Gynecologist David Bersinger, MD. "One, a woman experiences excessive androgen - the male hormone. Or two, it may be abnormal insulin activity. Insulin is the hormone that enables your body to use sugar, which means women with PCOS are at risk of type 2 diabetes.

Symptoms - This hormonal imbalance affects many systems in the body, leading to a wide range of symptoms, including:

- Problems with your periods (menstrual dysfunction).
- Infertility.
- Weight gain.
- Acne.
- Dark or thick skin patches around the armpits, neck, breast and pelvic areas.
- Male hair growth on the chest, belly and face.
- Male pattern baldness on your head.
- Deepening of the voice.

The effects of PCOS might also surface as other health problems, such as cardiovascular disease, thickening of the uterus lining or even endometrial cancer. Fluid-filled sacs (cysts) can form when the eggs are not released.

Why does all this happen? The actual cause remains unclear. However, experts believe that genetics play a role. As a result, if your mother, sister or aunt suffered PCOS, your risk increases. Most often, Polycystic Ovary Syndrome is discovered when a woman is in her 20s or 30s.

Physicians know that when a woman has too much male hormone, the ovaries don't release eggs as part of a woman's monthly cycle. These missed or irregular periods lead to fertility issues. A woman's menstrual cycles may become more irregular as she approaches menopause, but the PCOS hormone imbalance does not change. Other symptoms may continue.

To diagnose PCOS, your doctor will look for the visible symptoms, may do a pelvic exam and/or ultrasound, as well as conduct blood tests to check your androgen, insulin and cholesterol levels. Your Gynecologist may also check thyroid levels, because thyroid symptoms can appear similar to PCOS.

PCOS treatments - For women NOT trying to get pregnant, your Gynecologist may recommend hormonal birth control of some type to help regulate your menstrual cycle, reduce acne and decrease hair symptoms. Pills or creams to reduce abnormal hair growth can be prescribed.

For women trying to get pregnant. Your Gynecologist may recommend medication that will help you ovulate. Sometimes, simply losing weight will help. Other times, you may be referred to an infertility specialist, who might try IVF or some other technique to help you get pregnant.

Actions you can take

- Losing weight - even as little as 10 or 15 pounds - can bring more regularity to your menstrual cycle.
- Excess Hair can be removed with creams or laser treatments. There is a prescription treatment that helps slow new hair growth in unwanted places on your body.
- See Your Gynecologist as soon as you notice PCOS symptoms. Whether or not it is Polycystic Ovary Syndrome, your Gynecologist needs to determine what is causing your symptoms and discomfort.

About McLeod Health Cheraw McLeod Health Cheraw serves the residents of Chesterfield, Marlboro, Anson, Richmond and Scotland Counties. The 59-bed hospital joins six other McLeod Health not-for-profit hospitals providing advanced heart, vascular, orthopedic, surgical, cancer, women's and children's services from the midlands of South Carolina to the coast.



POLKTON FUN DAY 2016
 Saturday September 10, 2016 10am- 5pm

Looking for something fun to do? Come on out to Polkton Fun Day! This year's event will feature something for all ages. For the kids, there will be a bounce house/slide combo, trackless train, and a "tubs of fun" amusement ride that's sure to excite children of all ages. There is **NO** charge for the kids to enjoy these amenities. For the adults, there are numerous booths (shopping & informational) available and live entertainment. For those who come hungry, and we hope that's everyone, there will be LOTS of food and sweets to choose from! We hope each of you will be "Making Tracks for a Fun Day" and joining us this Saturday for Polkton Fun Day!

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- One of America's 100 Best Hospitals for Cardiac Care™ - 2016
- One of America's 100 Best Hospitals Coronary Intervention™ - 2016
- One of America's 50 Best Hospitals for Vascular Surgery™ (2015 - 2016)
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