

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome-A Natural Treatment Approach By Marianne Marchese, ND

Polycystic ovarian syndrome, PCOS, is the most common hormonal disorder of reproductive age women. It accounts for 75% of women with amenorrhea and 85% of women with androgen excess, acne and hirsutism. The most common signs and symptoms include; menstrual irregularity, hirsutism, acne, infertility, obesity, and increased risk of cardiovascular disease. PCOS is a common cause of female infertility due to anovulatory cycles and infertility is frequently the initial reason the patient seeks medical advice.

The obesity seen with PCOS is typically characterized by an increase in the waist circumference (>35 inches) as opposed to overall obesity. This type of obesity is associated with insulin resistance, glucose intolerance, and elevated lipids.

There are numerous causes of PCOS and environmental chemicals should not be overlooked. Phthalates, Bisphenol-A, cadmium and mercury have all been correlated with PCOS. The mechanism includes altering hormones to cause anovulation, development of insulin resistance, and acne. This evidence is outlined in the book 8 Weeks to Women's Wellness.

A naturopathic treatment approach to managing PCOS includes addressing the underlying disorder, managing the presenting symptoms and reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Treatment goals are aimed at;

1. Restoring menstrual regularity
2. Reduce acne and hirsutism
3. Restore fertility if desired
4. Health maintenance- weight reduction if obese and cardiovascular protection
5. Patient education and support.

Natural treatment modalities include diet and lifestyle modification, exercise, hormone balancing herbs, blood sugar and insulin resistance treatments, vitamins and minerals. It is important to evaluate and treat any underlying environmental toxins that may be contributing to PCOS. Education on avoiding chemicals found in food, air, water, cosmetics, plastics, and household products is key. Testing for heavy metals helps determine if chelation is required. Detoxification is always a part of the treatment process.

Polycystic ovarian syndrome is a complex condition. Many natural treatment options are available and PCOS can be successfully managed with lifestyle modifications, botanical medicine, and other nutrients. Proper management can reverse all symptoms, restore fertility and decrease risk of future cardiovascular disease. Make your appointment with Dr. Marchese for PCOS treatment and prevention.