Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a common condition but with good support, it is very manageable.

What is PCOS & do I have it?

- Delays in getting pregnant
- Excess hair growth on face, stomach, back and loss of hair on the top of the scalp
- Irregular periods that are more or less than monthly or no periods
- Acne, darkened skin patches
- Weight gain (that needs monitoring) and increased metabolic and diabetes risk
- Impact on emotional wellbeing, self-esteem and body image

Symptoms

The symptoms of PCOS vary between women. The range of symptoms you may experience are:

- Irregular periods or less than monthly or no periods
- Delays in getting pregnant
- Excess hair growth on face, stomach, back and loss of hair on the top of the scalp
- Acne, darkened skin patches
- Weight gain (that needs monitoring) and increased metabolic and diabetes risk
- Impact on emotional wellbeing, self-esteem and body image

Diagnosis

There is some variation in what symptoms or signs for a PCOS diagnosis. We require only two of the following three signs to diagnose a woman with PCOS:

#1

- Periods less regular – more or less often than monthly

#2

- Higher levels of androgen hormones found from a blood test or symptoms such as excess body hair

#3

- If needed in adults – if 1 or 2 alone are present then the appearance of partly formed eggs (fluid filled sacs called follicles) will be observed on ultrasound (greater than or equal to 20 follicles per ovary).

*This ultrasound is only needed if 1) and 2) are not found and is not recommended in younger women

If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, see your doctor.

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