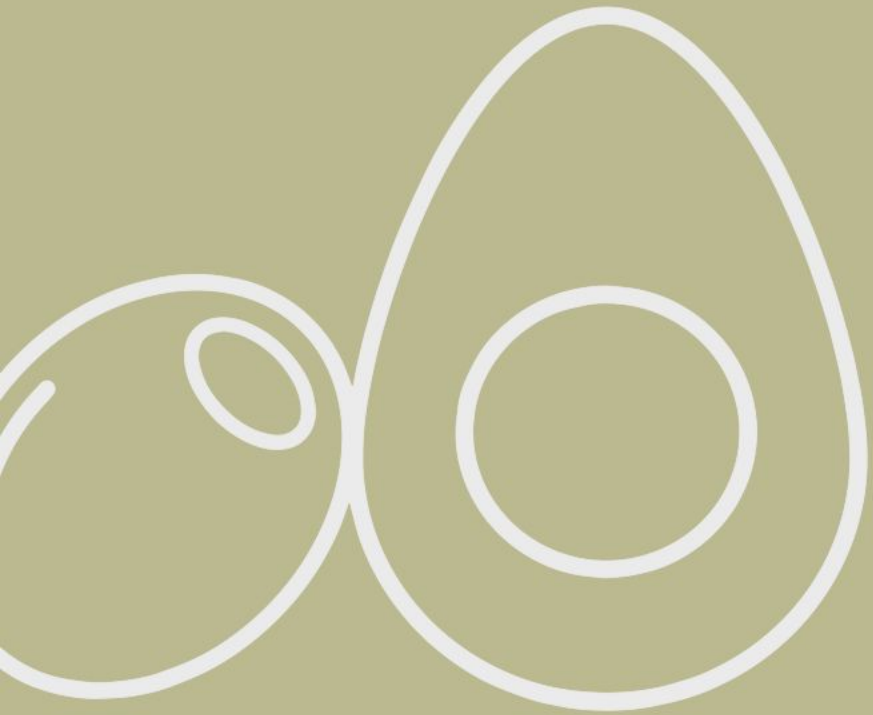


OLIVE – AVOCADO

# Understanding Women's Health





**Kelly Beaumont**  
OLIVE – AVOCADO



International  
Women's Day

**Give to gain**



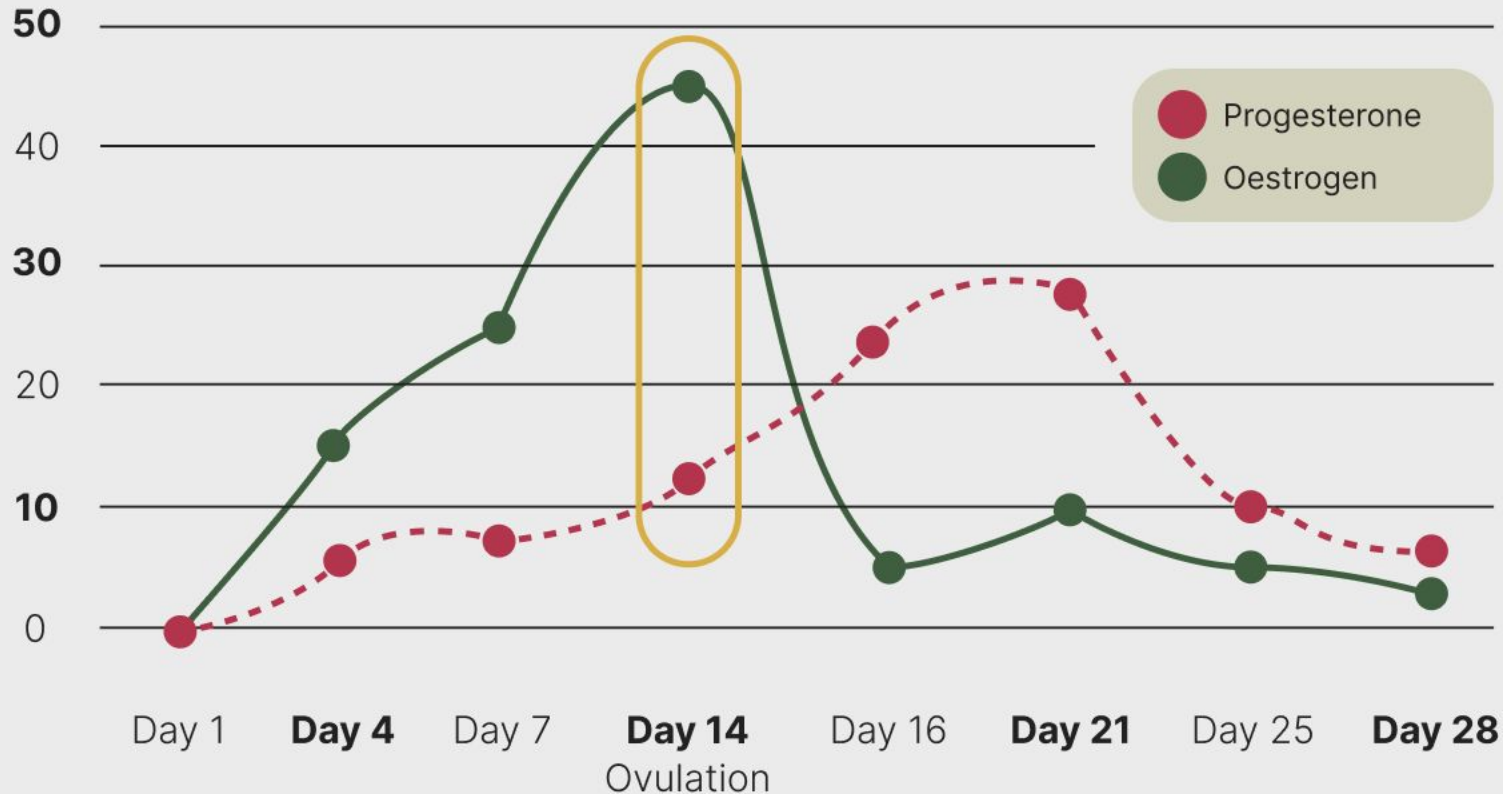
# What we'll cover

- Raising awareness on menstrual conditions
- Symptoms and statistics linked to conditions
- Potential considerations for supporting conditions and their symptoms
- Additional support services for further reading and considerations



# What happens during the cycle?

## Hormonal Levels within the menstrual cycle

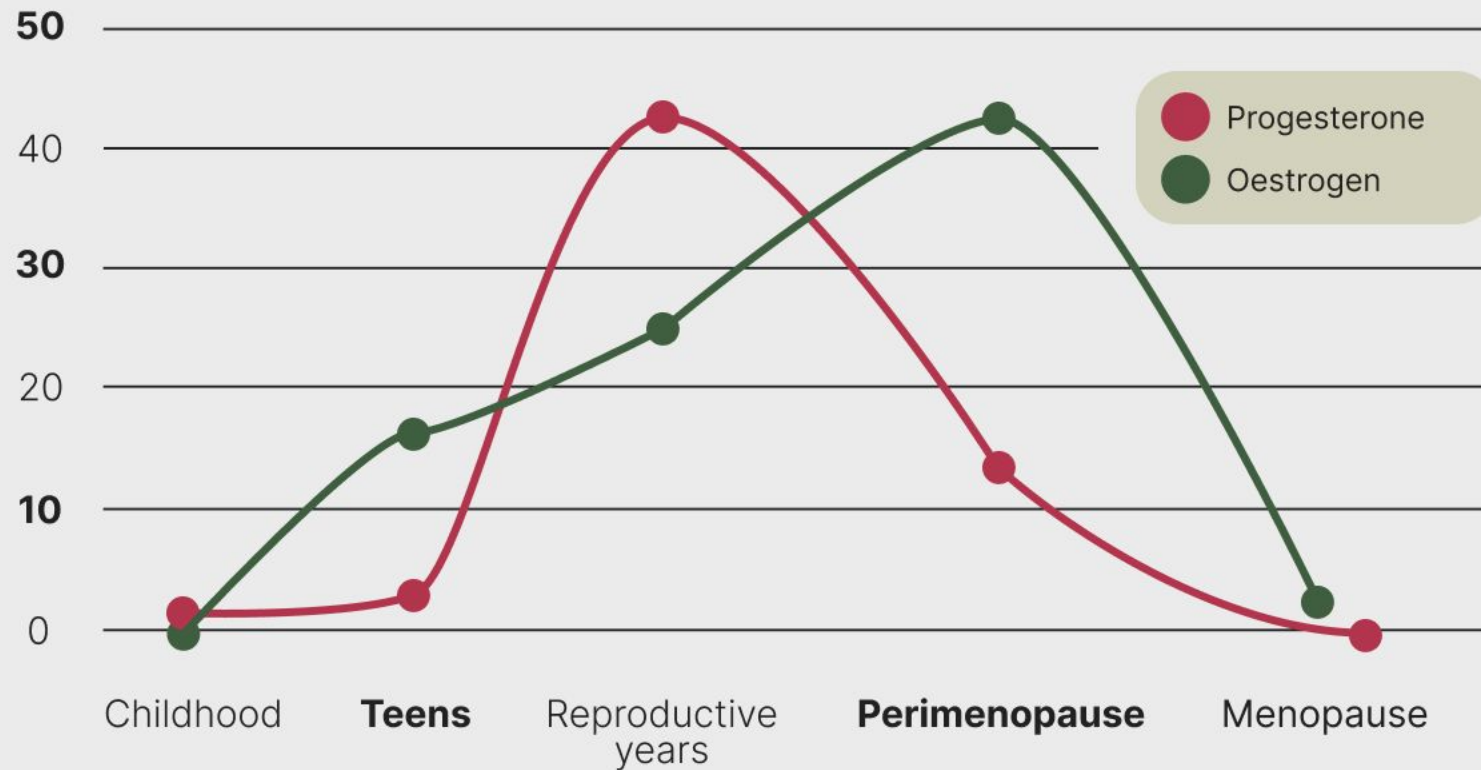


### Four phases within a cycle:

- Menstruation
- Pre-ovulation
- Ovulation
- Pre-menstrual
  
- Follicular
- Luteal

# Hormonal Shifts Throughout the Life Cycle

## Hormonal changes throughout the years



### Childhood

low hormones, no cycles.

### Teens

menarche is the beginning of the menstrual cycle.

### Reproductive years

core cycling years.

### Perimenopause

cycles continue but change.

### Menopause

marks one year from the final menstrual cycle

### Post-Menopause

Low hormones - no cycles.

# The phases of the menstrual cycle



Phase One  
**Menstruation**



Phase Two  
**Pre-Ovulation**



Phase Three  
**Ovulation**



Phase Four  
**Pre-Menstruation**

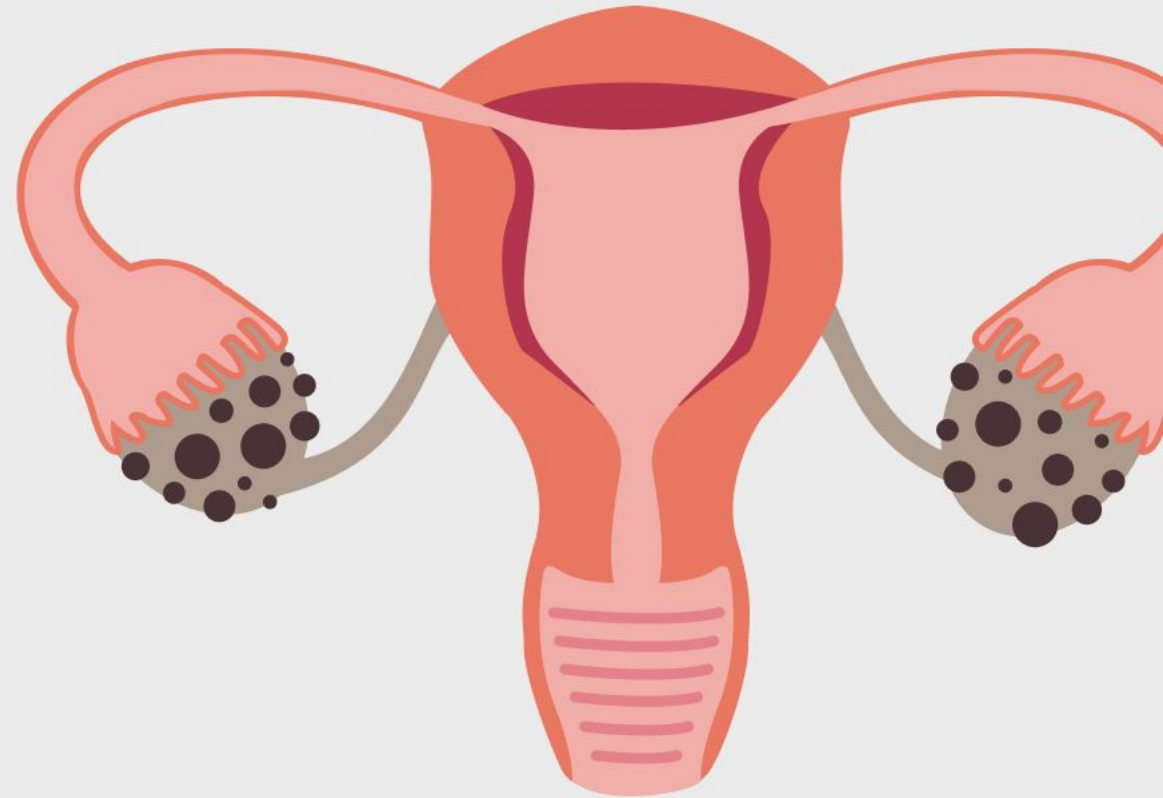
# Menstrual Health/Hormonal Conditions

	Prevalence
<b>Polycystic Ovary Syndrome - PCOS</b>	1 in 8
<b>Endometriosis</b>	1 in 10
<b>Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder - PMDD</b>	1 in 20
<b>Premenstrual Syndrome - PMS</b>	3 in 10 (moderate to severe)
<b>Adenomyosis</b>	1 in 10
<b>Infertility</b>	1 in 7
<b>Menopause</b>	All with around 25% experiencing severe symptoms

# Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)

[verity-pcos.org.uk](http://verity-pcos.org.uk)

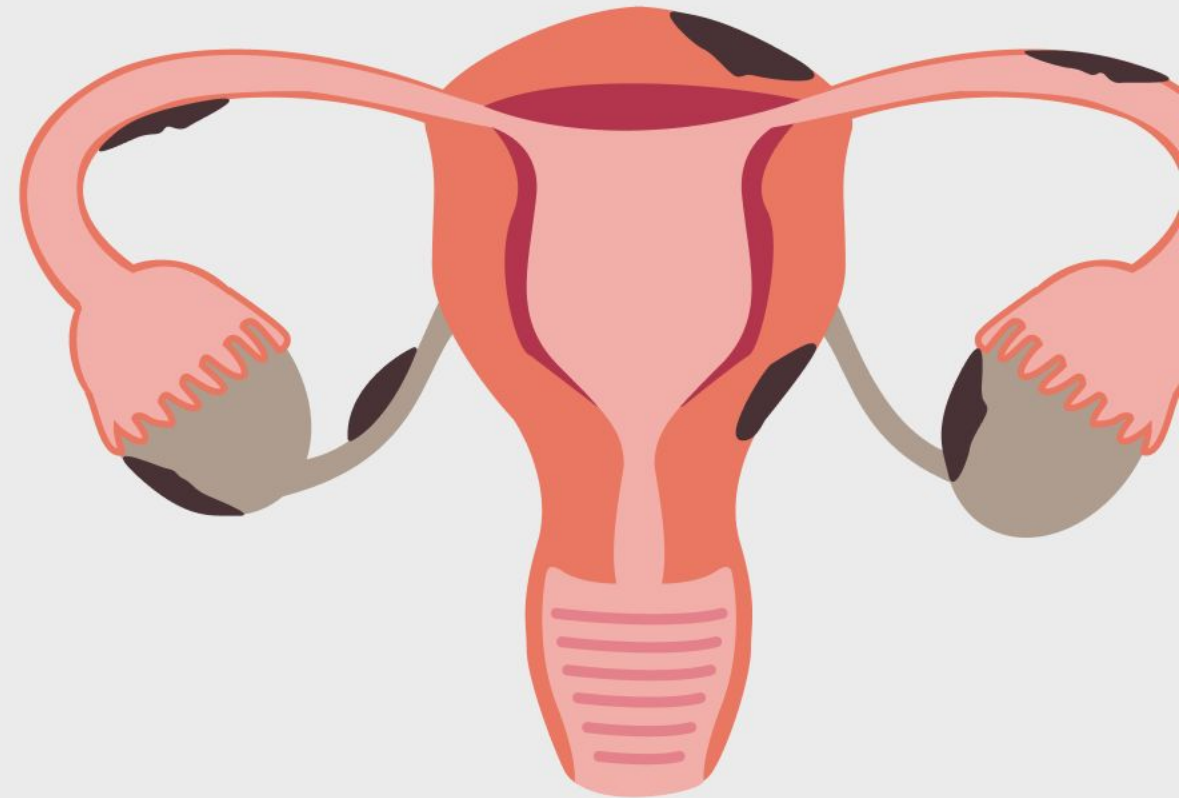
- 1 in 8 menstruators in the UK have PCOS.
- Inflammatory endocrine disorder which prevents ovarian follicles from reaching the ovulation stage.
- Key features – irregular or no periods, excess androgens and polycystic ovaries.
- Two of the three features need to present.
- Symptoms include (but not limited to) excess hair growth, weight gain, ovarian cysts, fatigue, trouble conceiving/infertility, mood changes, aggression.
- No known cure.



# Endometriosis

- 1 in 10 have the condition.
- Currently 1.5 million menstruators in the UK impacted.
- A complex, inflammatory disease characterised by the growth of tissue on the outside of the uterus.
- Cells that grow and have no way to exit the body.
- Present debilitating symptoms such as (but not limited to) painful menstruation, sickness, excessive bleeding, depression and anxiety, pelvic pain disorders, fatigue, bloating, weakness.
- Takes an average of 9.5 years to formally diagnose.
- No known cure.

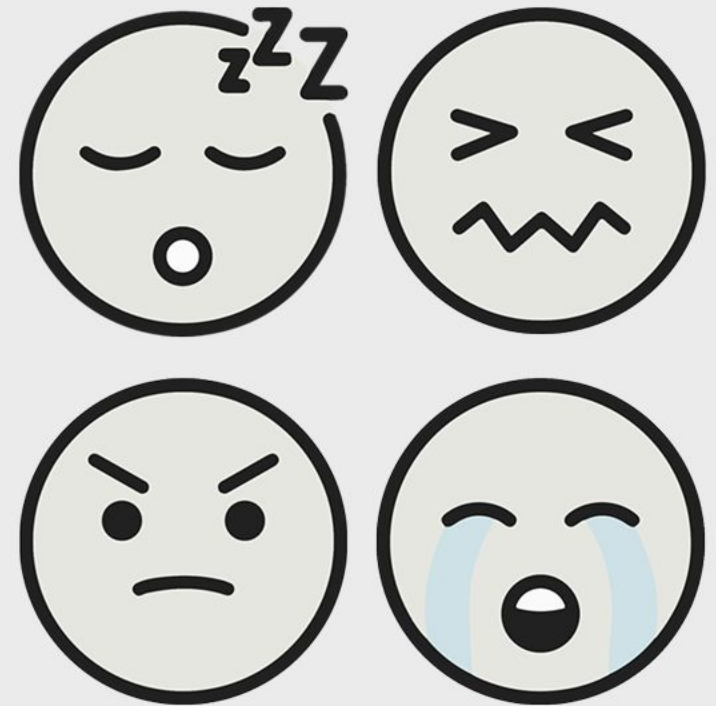
[www.endometriosis-uk.org](http://www.endometriosis-uk.org)



# Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)

mind.org.uk

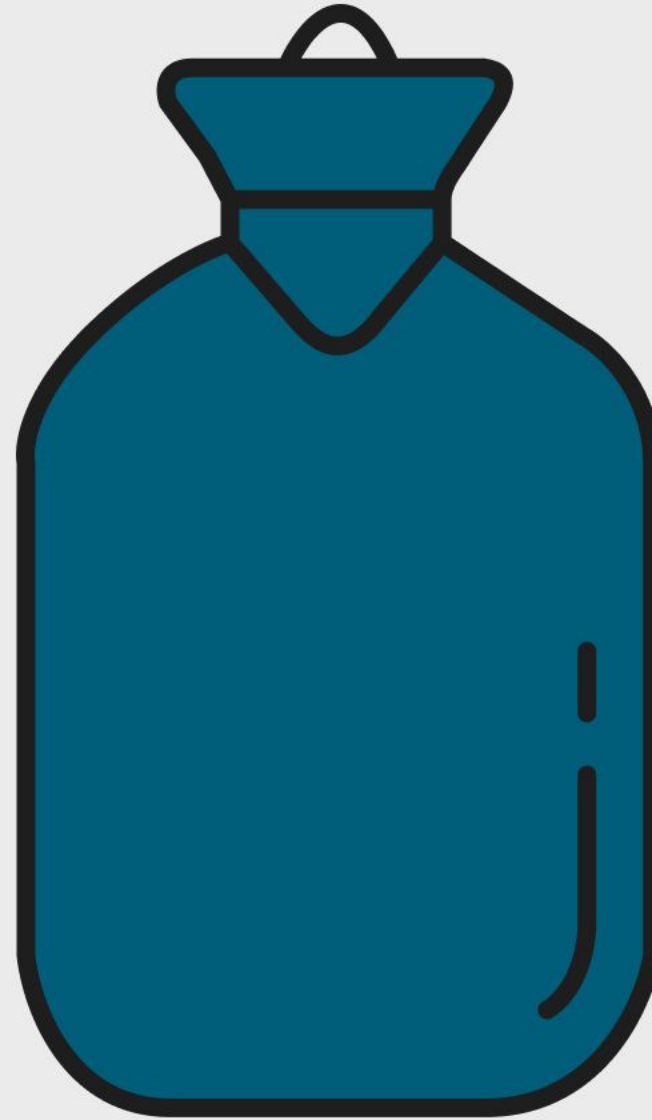
- Estimated to impact 5-8% of menstruators.
- Considered a very severe mood disorder characterised by significant emotional and physical symptoms.
- Often confused with depression.
- Cyclical – hitting a full 7-14 days before menstruation.
- Symptoms characterised by a more extreme version of PMS where menstrual cycles are negatively impacting relationships, career and mental wellbeing.
- Symptoms include (but not limited to) sadness, hopelessness, worthlessness, extreme anxiety, overwhelmed by life, suicidal thoughts.
- No known cure.



pms.org.uk

# Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)

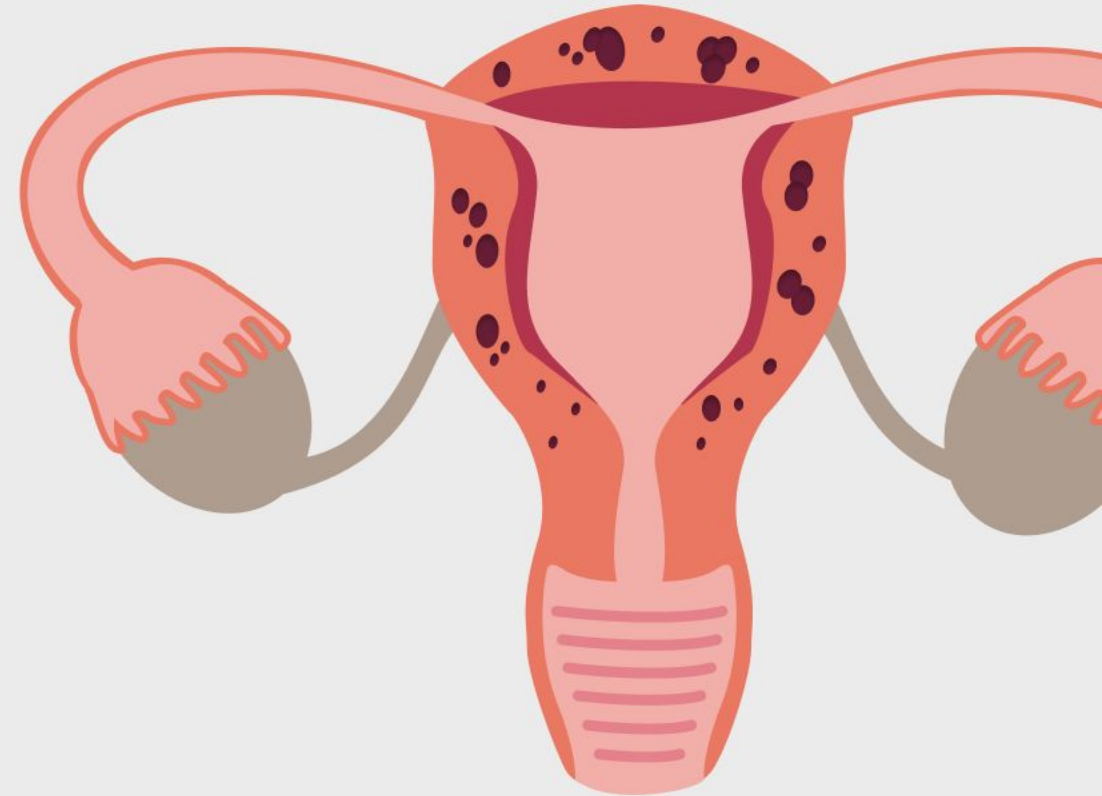
- Estimated to impact 30% of menstruators in the form of moderate to severe symptoms.
- Refers to a collection of physical and psychological symptoms that arise in a cyclical pattern within the second half of the cycle.
- Symptoms are vast and wide-ranging from bloating, cramping and lower back pain, through to acne, sleep problems, brain fogs, headaches and menstrual migraines.
- Lots of these symptoms have been normalised due to their commonality.



# Adenomyosis

- 1 in 10 menstruators in the UK have Adenomyosis.
- A condition where the lining of the womb starts growing into the muscle in the wall of the womb.
- Diagnosis typically comes through a process of elimination and pelvic examinations, ultrasounds and MRI scans may all be used to help identify the condition.
- Symptoms include (but are not limited to) painful menstruation, heavy bleeding, pelvic pain, bloating.
- It is possible for some with the condition to have no symptoms.
- There is no known cure.

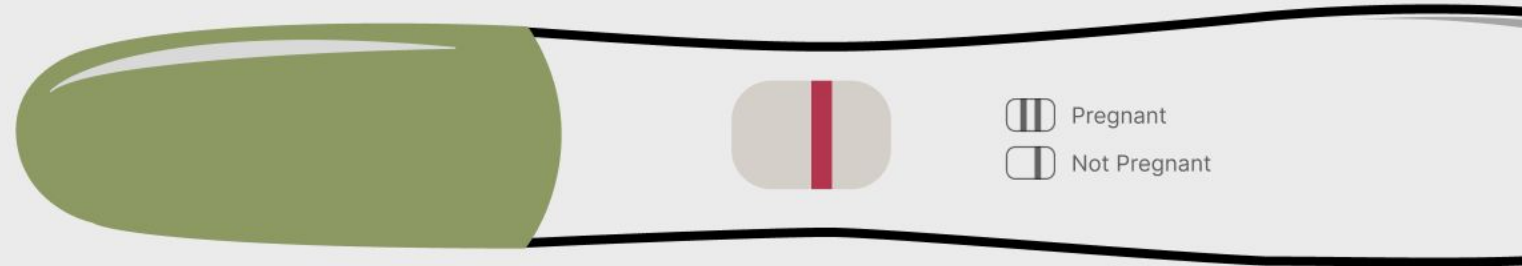
[www.endometriosis-uk.org](http://www.endometriosis-uk.org)



# Infertility

[britishfertilitysociety.org.uk](http://britishfertilitysociety.org.uk)

- Whilst most couples will fall pregnant within a year if having sex regularly without contraception, data from the NHS states that 1 in 7 may have difficulties conceiving.
- There are a range of things which can impact infertility – from challenges to ovulation, hormone imbalances, menstrual conditions, poor quality semen amongst many others.
- Lifestyle and environmental factors can also contribute.
- Fertility also declines with age.
- Infertility rates are on the rise.



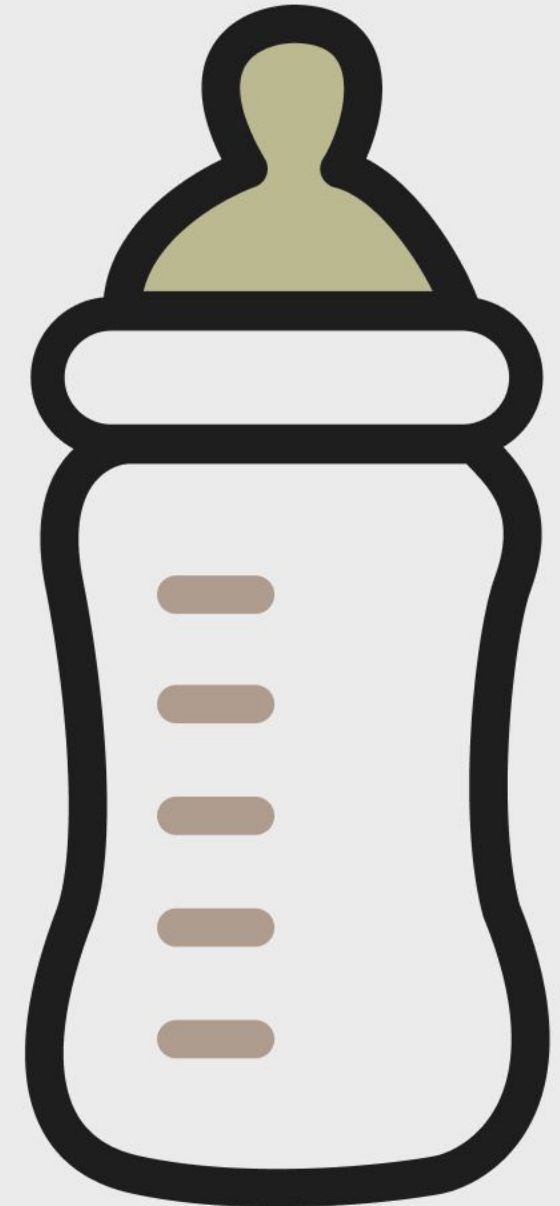
# Perimenopause

- Still having menstrual cycles but may begin to notice changes to the length/frequency/flow.
- Some individuals may experience no or minimal symptoms, where others can experience a vast range.
- Symptoms include (but are not limited to) brain fog and memory loss, sleep problems, weight gain, dry & itchy skin, hair thinning or loss, hot flushes, heart palpitations, anger, anxiety.
- Perimenopause is a natural process of changing hormone levels.
- All menstruators will go through menopause.



# Postpartum

- During pregnancy, a woman will produce more oestrogen than throughout her entire life when not pregnant.
- Post birth, oestrogen and progesterone drop immediately and in the following days, will continue to decrease.
- Between day 3-10, 80% of women may develop 'baby blues'.
- For most, these feeling will dissipate however, for some, this will continue. 15-20% of women are impacted by post-natal depression.
- There are a number of stages when it comes to postpartum, some believe this ends with trimester 4 (3 months postpartum), others say 12 months, my experience working with clients average 3-5 years.



# Managing Symptoms

## Stress

- Minimise non-essential stressors (non-value add).
- Create space and time for recovery.
- We reflect on periods of high stress.
- We work on stress being healthy and short-term.

## Movement

- High intensity = less of vs. slow movement = need more.
- All about sustainability and any movement is better than none.
- Cycle alignment can drive sustainable movement.

## Sleep

- Signal to your brain and body that it's safe to sleep.
- Natural light and dark exposure.
- Blood sugar considerations\*
- Build up adenosine.

## Nutrition

- Ultra processed foods and inflammation link - leads to pain and other health problems inc. chronic stress on the body.
- Increase variety = healthy microbiome.
- Sustainability over diet culture\*

# How you can show up

## Manager

- Create an open culture (role model if you can).
- Create flexibility (where it's possible to do so).
- Have supportive conversations.
- Signpost resources.
- Listen to understand.

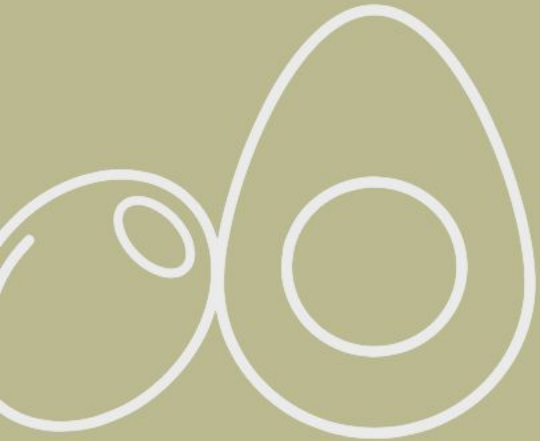
## Ally

- Educate yourself.
- Be available to offer support.
- Challenge the taboo nature.
- Advocate and drive inclusivity.

## Peer

- Remove judgement.
- Share knowledge.
- Listen and validate.
- Be patient.
- Promote kindness and self-care.

# Key Takeaways



- There are a range of conditions linked to hormones with a number of them having no known cure.
- Whilst there is no one size fits all solutions, changes in lifestyle and decisions within our control can have a significant bearing on symptoms.
- Each individuals needs will be tailored, but ensuring that the key pillars are being supported and tracking symptoms will allow for greater awareness, understanding and management.