

## POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME (PCOS)

# Your health checklist

PCOS is most common in young women and can cause challenges when trying to conceive. Yet many go undiagnosed because signs and symptoms can vary and are not always specific.

Try to answer the following questions regarding your overall health. Schedule an appointment with your healthcare provider if you are experiencing any of the described indicators.

---

### Question 1. Have you been trying to conceive unsuccessfully for more than a year?

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_



*Health fact: A very common effect of PCOS is higher difficulty in conception, as women with PCOS may not be able to ovulate due to hormonal imbalances and lack of production of progesterone.<sup>1</sup>*

### Question 2. While trying to conceive, have you gotten more frequent positive ovulation test results?

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_



*Health fact: Normally, luteinizing hormone (LH) levels in urine spike during ovulation, and ovulation tests use this metric to define the best window in which to conceive. Women with PCOS experience higher LH levels throughout ovulation, obscuring the best times to conceive.<sup>2</sup>*

### Question 3. Have you frequently experienced irregular menstrual cycles?

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_



*Health fact: Women with PCOS typically have irregular or absent periods as an early indicator.<sup>3</sup>*

### Question 4. Have you noticed excess hair growth, especially on your face?

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_



*Health fact: Due to higher androgen (hormone) levels, women with PCOS may experience excessive hair growth in atypical areas on their bodies.<sup>1,3</sup>*

## Question 5. Have you noticed excessively oily skin or increased adult acne?

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_



**Health fact:** Due to a heightened amount of the hormone dihydrotestosterone, women with PCOS experience oily skin and pimples, especially along the jaw line and other abnormal areas (e.g., chest or back).<sup>3,4</sup>

## Question 6. Have you experienced prolonged sleeping problems?

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_



**Health fact:** Many women with PCOS suffer from sleep apnea, a breathing disorder that makes continuous nightly sleep very difficult.<sup>1</sup>

## Question 7. Are you diabetic or think you might be experiencing diabetes-like symptoms, such as frequent urination, excessive thirst, unexplained weight loss, blurry vision or changes in energy levels?

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_



**Health fact:** The research on the connection between diabetes and PCOS is still very much a work in progress, but it is clear there is a link. Approximately 50–70% of women with PCOS have detectable insulin resistance.<sup>5</sup>

### References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. PCOS (Polycystic ovary syndrome) and diabetes. <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/pcos.html>. Accessed July 1, 2021.
2. Luteinizing Hormone (LH) Levels Test. <https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/luteinizing-hormone-lh-levels-test/>. Accessed May 13, 2022.
3. A fact sheet from the office on women's health. Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). <https://www.womenshealth.gov/patient-materials/resource/fact-sheets>. Accessed May 13, 2022.
4. What is PCOS? <https://www.oviahealth.com/guide/101276/pcos-what-is-it/>. Accessed May 13, 2022.
5. Azziz R, Carmina E, Dewailly D, et al. The Androgen Excess and PCOS Society criteria for the polycystic ovary syndrome: the complete task force report. *Fertil Steril*. 2009 Feb;91(2):456-488.