

Ovarian Cysts: Types, Symptoms, Diagnosis & Treatment

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What are Ovarian Cysts?

The female reproductive system includes the ovaries. They're on both sides of the uterus in the lower abdomen. Women have two ovaries, which produce eggs, as well as oestrogen and progesterone hormones. On one of the ovaries, a cyst might form, which is a fluid-filled sac. Throughout their lives, many women will acquire at least one cyst. Cysts are usually painless and have no symptoms.

Types of Ovarian Cysts

Ovarian cysts occur in a variety of forms, including dermoid cysts and endometrioma cysts. Functional cysts, on the other hand, are the most prevalent form. Follicle and corpus luteum cysts are the two forms of functional cysts.

Follicle cyst: An egg grows in a sac called a follicle during a woman's menstrual cycle. This sac can be seen within the ovaries. This follicle or sac usually breaks open and releases an egg. The fluid inside the follicle might form a cyst on the ovary if the follicle does not break open. Follicle sacs normally disintegrate when an egg is released, resulting in corpus luteum cysts. However, if the sac does not dissolve and the follicle's entrance shuts, more fluid can accumulate inside the sac, resulting in a corpus luteum cyst.

Other types of ovarian cysts include:

- Dermoid cysts, which are sac-like growths on the ovaries that can include hair, fat, and other tissue
- Cystadenomas, which are noncancerous growths that can develop on the ovaries' outer surface.
- Endometriomas: tissues that ordinarily grow inside the uterus might grow outside the uterus and adhere to the ovaries, forming a cyst.

The signs and symptoms of an ovarian cyst

Ovarian cysts frequently do not create any symptoms. However, as the cyst expands, symptoms may appear.

- Abdominal bloating or swelling
- Painful bowel movements
- Pelvic discomfort before or during the menstrual cycle

- Painful intercourse
- Pain in the lower back or thighs are all possible symptoms.

Ovarian Cyst Complications

The majority of ovarian cysts are benign and disappear on their own without therapy. There are few, if any, symptoms associated with these cysts. However, your doctor may find a malignant cystic ovarian growth during a routine examination in a rare situation. Cyst ruptures, which are also uncommon, can cause excruciating agony and internal haemorrhage. If left untreated, this consequence increases your risk of infection and can be fatal.

An Ovarian Cyst Can be Diagnosed in a Variety of Ways

During a normal pelvic examination, your doctor can notice an ovarian cyst. If they discover swelling on one of your ovaries, they may request an ultrasound to confirm the cyst's presence. Ultrasound (ultrasonography) is a diagnostic imaging procedure that uses high-frequency sound waves to create a picture of your interior organs. Ultrasound examinations are used to determine a cyst's size, location, form, and composition.

Imaging tools used to diagnose ovarian cysts include:

- A CT scan is a type of body imaging that creates cross-sectional images of interior organs.
- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI): a procedure that uses magnetic fields to obtain detailed images of interior organs.
- An ultrasound device is a type of imaging technology that is used to see the ovary.

Treatment for an Ovarian Cyst

If the cyst does not go away on its own or develops larger, your doctor may recommend therapy to reduce or remove it.

Pills for Birth Control

Your doctor can prescribe oral contraceptives to suppress ovulation and prevent the formation of new cysts if you have recurrent ovarian cysts. Oral contraceptives can also lower your chances of developing ovarian cancer. Ovarian cancer is more common in postmenopausal women.

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Laparoscopy

Your doctor can conduct a laparoscopy to surgically remove the cyst if it is small and results from an imaging test to rule out cancer. Your doctor will make a small incision around your navel and then remove the cyst with a little device inserted into your abdomen.

Laparotomy

If you have a huge cyst, your doctor can surgically remove it from your belly through a large incision. They'll take a sample right away, and if the cyst turns out to be cancerous, they'll remove your ovaries and uterus with a hysterectomy.

Ovarian Cyst Prevention

Ovarian cysts are unavoidable. Ovarian cysts can be detected early with routine gynecologic exams. Ovarian cysts that are benign do not get malignant. Symptoms of ovarian cancer, on the other hand, can be mistaken for those of an ovarian cyst. As a result, it's critical to see your doctor and get a proper diagnosis. Notify your doctor if you experience any symptoms that could indicate a concern, such as: Irregular menstrual cycles, persistent pelvic pain, appetite loss, unexplained weight loss, stomach fullness.