

# Endometriosis Discharge Information

## What is endometriosis?

Endometriosis is a condition where the tissue that normally lines the inside of the uterus, called the endometrium, gets out of the uterus and grows in other areas of the body. Usually the tissue grows around the ovaries, fallopian tubes, and the outside of the uterus. It may grow on the intestines, bladder, rectum, and the lining of the pelvic area and abdomen. Very rarely, it may be found in other areas of the body.

This misplaced tissue responds to the hormones of the menstrual cycle and bleeds each month in the same way the lining of the uterus responds to hormones. However, if the tissue is not in the uterus, the blood from the tissue has no way to leave the body and can cause pain, cysts, and scar tissue. Scar tissue that binds organs together, called adhesions, or scars on the ovaries or tubes can cause infertility. The cause of endometriosis is not known.

## How can I take care of myself when I go home?

How long it takes to get better depends on your treatment, how well you recover, your overall health, and any complications you may have. Endometriosis is a condition that can get worse until you reach menopause. Current treatments offer some relief from the symptoms but not a cure. Endometriosis may come back or get worse after hormone therapy or surgery. The treatment depends on the severity of the endometriosis, your age, and your plans for having children. The condition usually goes away after menopause.

## Management

How long it takes to get better depends on how well you respond to treatment, your overall health, and any complications you may have.

- Your provider will give you a list of your medicines when you leave the hospital.
  - Know your medicines. Know what they look like, how much you should take each time, how often you should take them, and why you take each one.
  - Take your medicines exactly as your provider tells you to.
  - Carry a list of your medicines in your wallet or purse. Include any nonprescription medicines and supplements on the list.
- Your provider may prescribe medicine to:
  - Treat pain
  - Block hormones that help endometrial tissue to grow and bleed
- If you have had surgery, to care for your incision:
  - Keep your incision clean.
  - If you are told to change your dressing on your incision, wash your hands before changing the dressing and after disposing of the dressing.

## **Appointments**

- Follow your provider's instructions for follow-up appointments.
- Keep appointments for any routine testing you may need.
- Talk with your provider about any questions or fears you have.

## **Diet, Exercise, and Other Lifestyle Changes**

- Follow the treatment plan your healthcare provider prescribes.
- Follow activity restrictions, such as not driving or operating machinery, as recommended by your healthcare provider or pharmacist, especially if you are taking pain medicines.
- Keep a careful record of your symptoms, including any time lost from work, school, or leisure activities. Report the symptoms to your healthcare provider.
- Exercise as your provider recommends.
- Find ways to make your life less stressful.
- To help ease your pain:
  - Take warm baths.
  - Get plenty of rest.
  - Wear loose clothing.
  - Use a hot water bottle or heating pad on your abdomen.
  - Avoid constipation by increasing the fiber in your diet.
  - Do relaxation exercises.

## **Call your healthcare provider if you have new or worsening:**

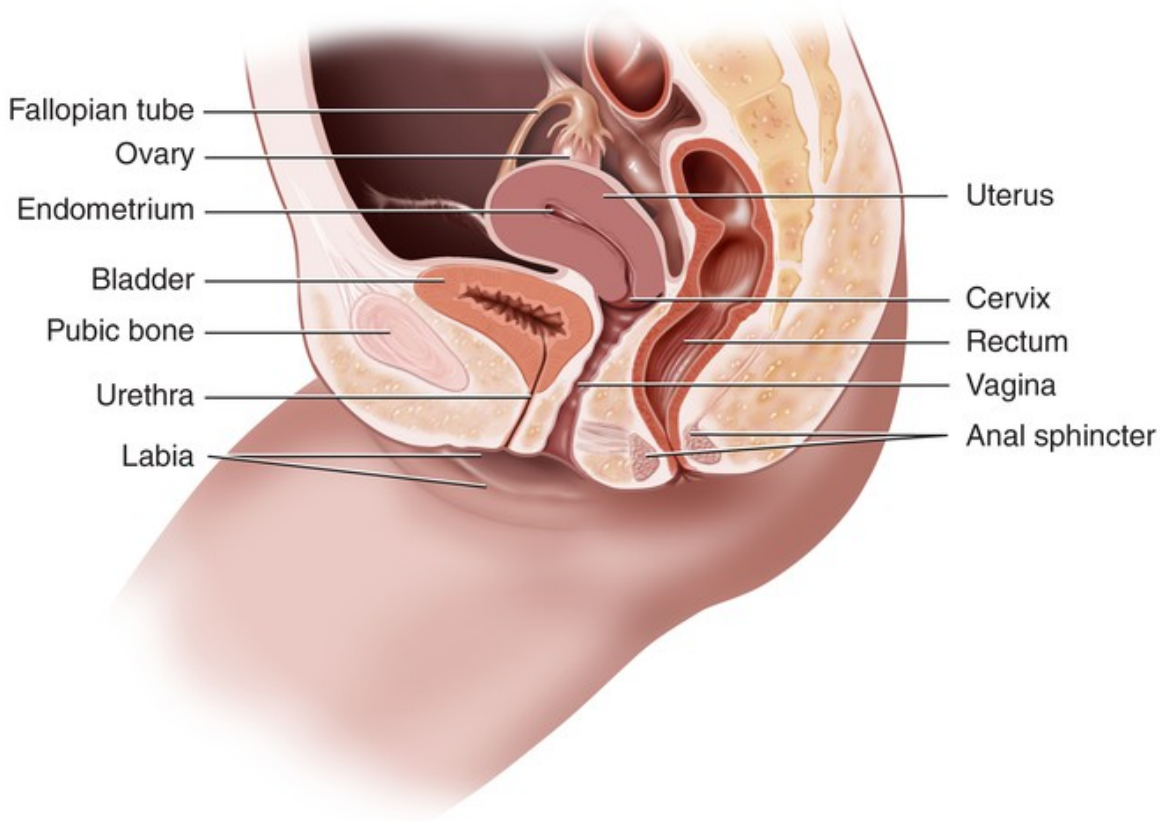
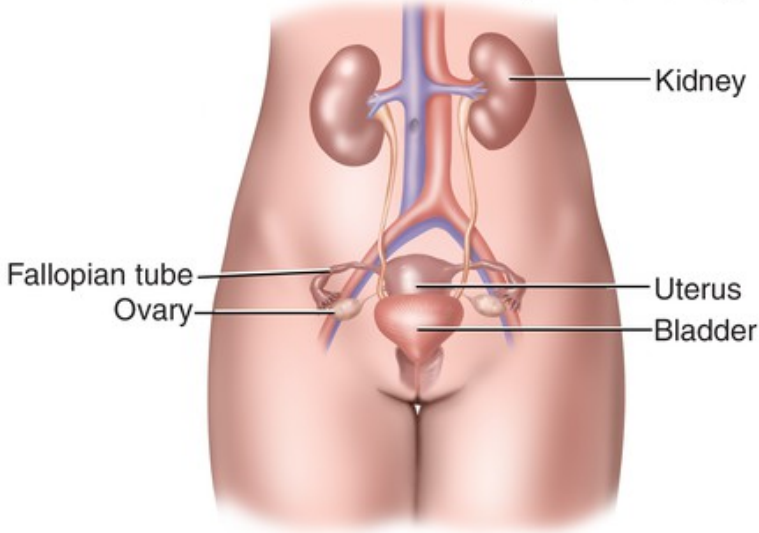
- Pelvic, back, or buttocks pain that starts just before or during the menstrual period
- Very painful menstrual cramps
- Pain during sex
- Abnormal or heavy menstrual flow
- Painful bowel movements, diarrhea, constipation, or other intestinal problems during menstrual periods
- Pain or burning during urination
- Urgent need to urinate often
- Signs of infection around your surgical wound. These include:
  - The area around your wound is more red or painful
  - Your wound area is very warm to touch
  - You have blood, pus, or other fluid coming from the wound area
  - You have a fever higher than 101.5° F (38.6° C)
  - You have chills or muscle aches
- Trouble getting pregnant

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*This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.*

# Female Pelvis

(Female Pelvis)



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