



WOMEN'S DAY *Special*

Endometriosis: When uterine tissue grows outside the uterus

Dr Tripti Dubey MBBS (Gold Medalist), MS (Obs and Gynae), PG Diploma (Assisted Reproductive Technique), Kiel Germany and senior consultant in obstetrics and gynaecology at Apollo Hospital, Navi Mumbai and Shivangi Clinic, Seawoods, says that there are times when the uterine tissue grows outside the uterus.

She explains, "Uterine tissue can sometimes grow in other organs and cause bleeding in these organs during menses. Due to the bleeding, there is severe pain during periods. Most affected are pelvic tissues and organs like ovaries, fallopian tubes, rectum, urinary bladder and the pelvic walls. In ovaries, sometimes it causes cyst formation, which is filled with chocolate sauce-like fluid and known as a chocolate cyst. Rarely, uterine tissues could grow in remote organs too. This condition is known as endometriosis."

Endometriosis can cause severe pain and heavy bleeding during periods, painful sex

Endometriosis is due to excessive estrogen hormone and usually, there is no complete cure. However, with early diagnosis, it can be detected at an early stage and can be treated with the help of various medications, exercises, lifestyle modifications, and sometimes surgery

and painful defecation. Dr Dubey says, "Lots of females have severe bloating, pain in the abdomen and legs, and backache. Due to chronic inflammation, there is scarring around lesions, causing fibrosis and adhesions, and difficulty in conceiving. Many women have to take leave from work due to severe pain in the abdomen and backache. Sometimes, it is so debilitating that they suffer from anxiety and depression due to chronic pain, inadequate sex life and subfertility."

Endometriosis can be seen in women as



Dr Tripti Dubey

early as when their periods start until menopause. "The condition is due to excessive estrogen hormone and usually, there is no complete cure. However, with early diagnosis, it can be detected at an early stage and can be treated with the help of various medications, exercises, lifestyle modifications, and sometimes surgery. Treatment at an early stage can suppress the disease and slow or stop its progression to a severe form," she explains.

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Creating awareness about endometriosis

Dr Dubey points that there should be enhanced awareness about endometriosis among the general public as well as frontline healthcare providers. "Any menstrual cramp at any age should be evaluated thoroughly to rule out all causative factors. Most often, patients don't have severe symptoms and early cases cannot be picked up by ultrasound or MRI. So most important is high clinical suspicion, early diagnosis and referral of patients to specialists and hospitals fully equipped with minimally invasive surgeries as these might be required in a few cases," she concludes.