

Acne in young women is common—and that can be a real problem

Focus on polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a common reproductive endocrine disease among women of childbearing age. It is a hormone imbalance that causes irregular periods, weight gain, acne, and excess facial and body hair.

There is no specific test to definitively diagnose PCOS. The diagnosis is one of exclusion, where your doctor considers all of your signs and symptoms and then rules out other possible disorders. During this process, your doctor will ask about your medical history, including your menstrual periods, weight changes, and other symptoms. Your doctor may also perform certain tests and exams, including a standard physical exam, pelvic exam, blood tests, and an ultrasound.

Symptoms of PCOS include:

- irregular periods
- acne
- infertility
- male pattern hair growth

Often, because it is a common sign of PCOS, acne in younger women is mistaken for the more severe hormonal condition. Acne is an even more common occurrence than PCOS, but it nearly always accompanies the onset of polycystic ovary syndrome.

PCOS-related acne tends to flare in the lower third of the face, on your cheeks, jawline, chin, and upper neck. If you have acne in these areas,



and if you have noticed irregular periods, it's a good idea to ask your dermatologist to refer you for PCOS testing.

But if you have been diagnosed with PCOS, then it's time to take advantage of the Best Doctors benefit provided by your employer, which provides access to the best medical minds in the world, giving you the expert answers you need to any questions you may have.

When you use Best Doctors, our comprehensive case review process gives you an easy-to-read medical report by an expert physician in a simple format (a USB flash drive) that takes the guesswork out of your health and wellness.

Whether you're dealing with a traditional case of acne or a more unusual problem, Best Doctors can guide you in the right direction.

The benefit of *removing the doubt*
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