



Understanding **Endometriosis**

KRAMES

*Options  
for  
Treatment*

*Working with  
Your Provider  
Living Your Life*

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# Understanding Endometriosis

## Options for Treatment

Working with Your Provider

Living Your Life

## Planning Your Treatment

Your treatment plan will be based on your symptoms, the results of your medical tests, and any tests and procedures you've had done. Treatment focuses on controlling the pain and other symptoms. This is often done with medications, surgery, or both. In some cases, lifestyle changes can help. If you have problems with fertility, treatment also aims to increase your chances for becoming pregnant.

**Making the Right Decision for You**  
 Your health care provider will present you with different options. The one recommending how to you decide?  
 Adding journal from another healthcare provider  
 - What do I want the treatment to do?  
 - Do I understand what the treatment involves?  
 - How will I follow up with my healthcare provider about the benefits and risks of the treatment?

**Your Treatment Options**  
 Common treatments for endometriosis include medications and

### Treatment with Medications

Medications often need to treat endometriosis and its symptoms include pain relief and different types of hormone therapy. The most common medications are listed below.

Medications	What They Are	How They Work	Side Effects
Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)	These pain relievers are often the first medications used to treat the painful symptoms of endometriosis. You may also have medications like NSAIDs with another medication your healthcare provider gives you.	NSAIDs block specific chemicals in the body that make prostaglandins. Prostaglandins are a substance that triggers the uterus to contract. All kinds of prostaglandins may cause pain.	Upset stomach, nausea, constipation, bloating, and blood in urine or stools.
Birth control pills	Birth control pills contain estrogen and progestin in forms of progesterone. Both hormones play roles in your menstrual cycle.	Birth control pills control estrogen and progesterone levels. As a result, you stop ovulating. Ovulating and related growth are reduced.	Weight gain, nausea, breast tenderness, spotting, blood clots, and phlebotomy (drawn vein)
Progestins	Progestins are a form of progesterone. They come in pill or IUD form, or are given as a shot.	Progestins help keep estrogen levels low. This helps limit breast growth.	Mild to moderate weight gain, bloating, constipation, more stomach upset, and mood changes.
Gonadotropin-releasing hormone agonists and antagonists	GnRH agonists and antagonists affect the action of the hormone, GnRH. This hormone helps the pituitary gland make other hormones that cause the uterus to grow. GnRH agonists and antagonists act like a wall, so GnRH antagonists come to get lower.	GnRH agonists and antagonists keep the pituitary gland from producing hormones that send signals to the uterus. As a result, less estrogen and progesterone are produced. This stops ovulating and limits your monthly periods. Your symptoms may abate.	Hot flashes, vaginal dryness, mood swings, headache, and bone loss. During therapy, bone mass may decrease. Side effects return to normal in about 1 to 2 years after treatment stops.
Danazol	Danzol is a hormone.	Danzol blocks the pituitary gland from making certain hormones. This lowers the levels of estrogen and progesterone low. You stop ovulating and having your monthly periods. Your symptoms may abate.	Acne, muscle cramps, weight gain, night sweating, hot flashes, headache, vaginal dryness, mood swings, sometimes hair growth, changes in the voice, and decreased HDL. Danazol may require you to stop treatment.
Aromatase	AIs help manage the pain path of endometriosis.	AIs block estrogen production. They also help reduce the risk of breast cancer.	Hot flashes, vaginal dryness, decreased sex drive, joint pain and stiffness, and bone loss (they improve when treatment stops)

### Living Well with Endometriosis

When you have endometriosis, you may feel that it is controlling your life. So you can take back control. Find out all you can about the condition. Listen to your body and don't ignore your symptoms. Learn to make changes in your body and your health. There are things you can do to live well with endometriosis.

**Coping with Your Emotions**  
 Coping with the pain of endometriosis can be emotionally draining. And along with the physical pain, you may have mood swings. You may feel angry, frustrated, or depressed. Don't suffer in silence. Allow yourself the help you need. Talking with someone you trust can help you. Check out places in your area for support groups and consider joining. The resources you use to work.

**Eating Well**  
 Get up with you every healthy. And for some women, making certain changes to their diet may help reduce or even eliminate the pain. One diet that has been shown to be helpful is the low-fat, anti-inflammatory diet. Talk with your healthcare provider about what diet changes you'd like to try.

**Controlling Your Pain**  
 In addition to medications, you can do other things to help with your pain, like using heat packs. Some find that taking a hot bath or using a heating pad can help ease the pain. Also, some women find that yoga, meditation, or acupuncture might help.

**Dealing with Pain During Sexual Activity**  
 Many women with endometriosis have pain during sexual intercourse. Try using lubrication for sex. Some women might have pain during sex if you have vaginal dryness, using a water-soluble lubricant before and during sex may help. And ask your partner about using condoms and what size and what type of condom is best. It's important to keep the lines of communication open. Also, the kind of sex you have and your partner can be helpful, such as oral stimulation or massage.

**Staying Active**  
 Being active and getting frequent exercise can help control your symptoms. Exercising at least once a week can help reduce your pain. Low-impact choices, like walking, swimming, or biking, may offer the most symptom relief.

**Thinking About Pregnancy**  
 Having endometriosis doesn't mean that you can't become pregnant. But you may find that it is more difficult to do so. Many women with endometriosis are able to become pregnant after treatment. And some women find that having pain relief helps them get pregnant, at least for a while. Talk with your healthcare provider about endometriosis and pregnancy.