

Essential Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Your PCOS

Introduction

Every time you visit your doctor for a consultation on PCOS, you are sure to have questions. It is easy to forget those questions because you are distracted, stressed or intimidated.

The questions in this report should help you to become more focused on getting the answers you need. Take them to the consultation with you and don't be afraid to get them out to prompt your memory. Tailor them to your own specific situation and take notes – sometimes it is just as easy to forget the answers you are given than to remember to ask the question in the first place!

Many of your concerns will be answered by the health practitioner in general conversation during the course of the consultation, so don't overwhelm them immediately with your long list of questions. Give them a chance to ask about your symptoms, perform any physical examinations that might be required and discuss test results first.

Before Diagnosis

It is important not to assume you have PCOS simply because you are suffering from some of the common symptoms. There may be other health issues creating these problems.

4. Listen to the “PCOS Uncovered” interviews so you have a good, rounded knowledge of PCOS before seeing your health practitioner. Not all doctors are “clued-up” on Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome, and some still have dated views on the subject, so be prepared to question anything that doesn’t sound right.

First Consultation

After discussion with your health practitioner about your symptoms and health problems, they will probably perform a physical (blood pressure, weight etc.) and pelvic examination. If everything points towards PCOS they will suggest some tests in order to confirm diagnosis.

Here are some initial questions you will want to ask:

1. How will you confirm the diagnosis?
2. Will you test for other problems associated with PCOS, such as Insulin Resistance and Diabetes?
3. Is there anything I need to do to prepare for these tests?
4. If it isn’t diagnosed as PCOS, what else could it be?
5. How long until I have the results of the tests and can I come back and see you when the diagnosis has been made? (**this is recommended**, in order to discuss further options and concerns)

What if my doctor says it isn't PCOS?

If your doctor believes it isn't PCOS you should consider the following:

- Did they give you a satisfactory explanation as to what else it could be?
- Did they offer treatment or tests for whatever they believe the problem is?
- Did you feel happy that they had treated you and your symptoms seriously?
- Did they listen to your reasons for believing it was PCOS and offer an alternative explanation?
- Would you be prepared to recommend that doctor to someone else?

If you answered "no" to one or more of these questions you may want to consider getting a second opinion. Try and find a physician in your area who specializes in PCOS (or at least in health problems related specifically to women)

After Diagnosis

Your medical practitioner has told you that the tests confirm you have PCOS. Consider asking the following questions (some may be relevant to your situation while others may not):

1. What were the test results and what do they mean (for example, am I insulin resistant)?

2. Will you recommend me to a specialist (most PCOS experts now agree that an endocrinologist is best placed to treat PCOS, although those wishing to conceive might be referred to a gynecologist)?
3. What are my treatment options? What does each treatment involve?
4. Will you be prescribing any medications? If so, what are they, are there any side effects, and will they affect any other medications I am already taking?
5. Am I at risk of developing other problems as a result of the PCOS? If so, what signs should I look for?
6. Do I have to make any lifestyle changes to help treat my PCOS? If the doctor suggests you should lose weight and take more exercise (or if these issues are already of concern to you), ask for their recommendations or to be referred to someone who can help.
7. Will you continue to monitor my health on a regular basis?
8. I want to conceive? Is there anything that you/I can do to improve my chances of a successful and healthy pregnancy?

These are some of the biggest questions you will have for the doctors you consult in regard to your PCOS but it is by no means an exhaustive list. Don't be afraid to write all your questions down as they occur to you and continue to ask them as you progress with your treatment.

To your good health!