

# What is PCOS?

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a common endocrine disorder which affects the function of a woman's ovaries.

## Common symptoms of PCOS

### Irregular periods

Eggs not being regularly released from the ovaries during ovulation can result in menstrual irregularities with long menstrual cycles (35+ days) and abnormally heavy or light periods.

### Excess body and facial hair

Excess body hair, including the chest, stomach, and back (hirsutism) due to higher levels of male hormones (androgens) in the body. Conversely it can manifest as male-pattern baldness or thinning hair

### Weight gain

Greater risk of central weight gain, overweight or obese.

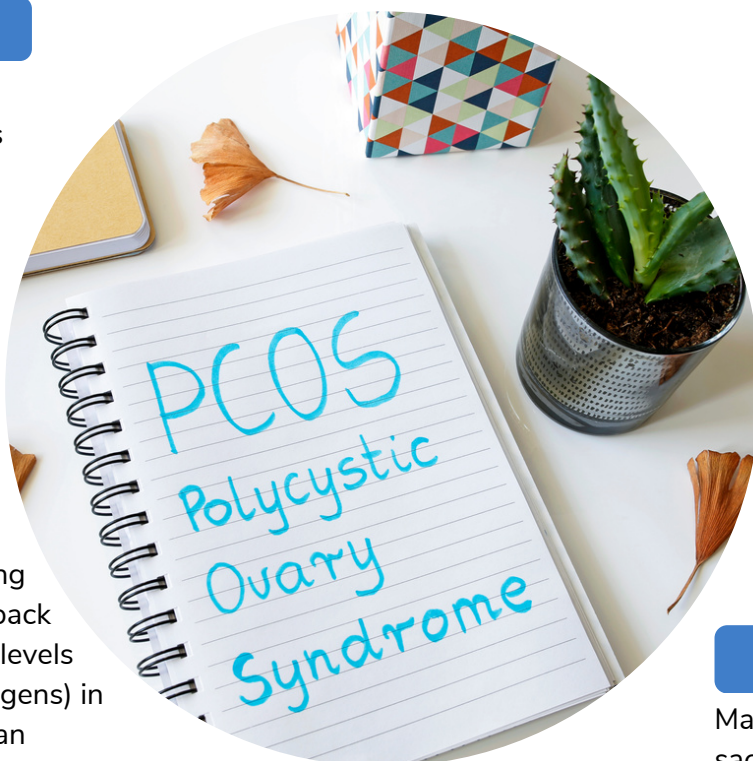
### About PCOS

PCOS is characterised by an imbalance in hormones but, more specifically, higher than normal amounts of male hormones (androgens) resulting in a collection of different symptoms. Despite the name, it is possible to have PCOS without the presence of ovarian cysts and to have ovarian cysts and not have PCOS. Genetics, insulin resistance and inflammation are among some of the factors which are thought to be involved in the development of the syndrome which affects an estimated 1 in 10 women of reproductive age in the UK.

### Diet & Nutrition

### Diet and Lifestyle support for PCOS

There are many ways to support PCOS with a personalised nutrition and lifestyle approach. BANT nutrition practitioners assess and identify potential nutritional imbalances to understand how these may contribute to an individual's symptoms and health concerns. There is no singular treatment for PCOS, however it can be successfully supported with dietary and lifestyle recommendations to manage frequency and severity of symptoms and occurrence.



### Infertility

PCOS is a leading contributor of female infertility and can disrupt a woman's menstrual cycles, resulting in irregular ovulation or no ovulation.

### Oily skin / Acne

Overproduction of male androgens may result in greater oil stimulation & acne, darkened skin or excess skin (skin tags).

### Ovarian cysts

Many ovarian cysts (fluid-filled sacs also known as follicles), can develop inside the ovaries due to eggs not maturing and being released. Over time, multiple cysts may form and the ovary may become enlarged with the ovaries being unable to function properly.

### Mood swings

An increased risk of mood swings, depression, and anxiety, also related to poor sleep.

