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Does PCOS increase the risk of developing endometrial cancer?

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Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome is an endocrine disorder encountered in 4-18% of all women at reproductive age. On the other side, endometrial cancer is one of the most common gynecological cancers in developed countries. About 25% of women with EC are pre-menopausal and 5% of all cases are diagnosed at ages younger than 40 years. In 1949, Speert was the first to suggest the association between PCOS and EC. Women with PCOS present several risk factors for EC: unopposed estrogen exposure of the endometrium increases the risk for endometrial hyperplasia and cancer, but there is also obesity, insulin resistance, diabetes, nulliparity, and progesterone resistance. Until the end of the last century several studies that support this association were published. Most of this studies lack control groups and the number of the subjects was too small. One recent study from UK shows an increased endometrial expression of genes involved in insulin signaling pathway (IGF1, IGFBP1 and PTEN) for women with PCOS and EC. Also, Cyclin D1 expression was shown to be significantly increased in the endometrial cancers associated with PCOS. Recent meta-analysis show women with PCOS are three times more likely to develop EC. This translates into a lifetime risk of 9% for developing EC compared with only 3% in the general population. Danish Cohort Study published in 2015 found an almost fourfold increased risk for endometrial cancer. Considering that, early endometrial cancer detection and treatment are associated with more than 86% survival rate at 5 years, this association calls for implementation of risk-reducing measures and sustained screening programs.

Biography

Paul Stanciu has completed his residency training in Obstetrics and Gynecology in Romania. He obtained his PhD from Victor Babes University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timisoara, Romania. He did an Oncological Gynecology Fellowship with St. James's Hospital in Dublin, Ireland and now he is fellow with one of the busiest Oncology Center of North London area at Watford. He has published several papers regarding minimally invasive techniques used to treat gynecological malignancies and has a great interest in fertility sparing surgery for oncologic patients.

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