

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome Conference

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A retrospective case series of naturopathic treatment outcomes for 32 women with polycystic ovary syndrome-related menstrual dysregulation and associated infertility

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Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a condition that includes hyper-androgenic oligo or anovulation. In addition to fertility concerns, women with PCOS have substantial risk for developing metabolic syndrome and possibly endometrial cancer. Global incidence of PCOS ranges between 4% and 20% of women. Young women with PCOS suffer significant distress related to infertility as well as clinical signs of hyperandrogenism, including severe acne, thinning scalp hair and excess facial and body hair. Obesity among women with PCOS parallels rates of the general population; however the hyper-androgen aspect promotes excess visceral fat in these women. Apparently lean women with PCOS have visceral fat in excess of what is found in women who do not evidence hyperandrogenism or insulin resistance. Primary treatment of PCOS should therefore address the associated metabolic sequelae, in addition to the patient's presenting complaint. The majority of women with PCOS present initially with concerns related to alterations in reproductive function and or cosmetic appearance. Naturopathic therapies that focus on adjusting whole family nutrition as well as each individual's exercise and stress management strategies, to correct and maintain metabolic health, are first line prevention and treatment for PCOS. Naturopathic treatment is inherently individualized. This investigation looked for treatment elements that were common to patients who experienced desired outcomes. Applying naturopathic therapies that enhance reproductive function as well as general health has broad personal and social benefits. This study provides preliminary data on naturopathic interventions that successfully address fundamental aspects of the endocrine and metabolic conditions that accompany PCOS.

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Alternative treatment options for PCOS patients looking to conceive

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PCOS is a disease that affects millions of women around the world. It is extremely common in North America and is also one of the most common causes of female infertility. Conventional treatment options for PCOS patients normally include oral contraceptives, spironolactone or metformin for blood sugar regulation. It is important for us to realize that there are several dietary, lifestyle and alternative interventions that help to improve patients' overall wellness and make this disease much more manageable. I am going to focus on a number of alternative treatments that have some good evidence backing their safety and efficacy in the complimentary treatment of PCOS. These include botanical medicine, acupuncture, dietary interventions and lifestyle interventions. I will also touch on the importance of stress management in PCOS patients and how we can naturally optimize the physiological environment of a woman with PCOS who is trying to conceive as well as improve her chances of successful conception, a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby.

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