

Endometriosis in Young Menstruating Women

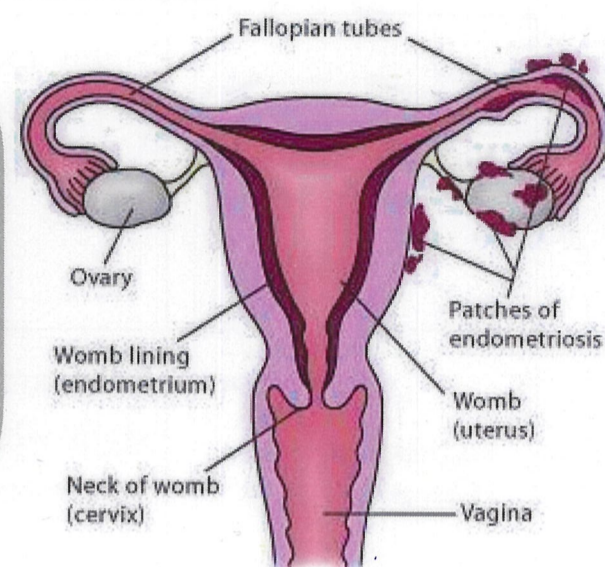


Research Question:

If risk factors and early warning signs of endometriosis were classified by health professionals in young adults, would this result in an earlier diagnosis of endometriosis?

What is Endometriosis?

Endometriosis is an inflammatory gynaecological disorder which occurs when endometrial tissue that lines the inside of the uterus grows in abnormal areas of the reproductive system outside of the uterine cavity such as the bladder and ovaries. Endometriosis is likely to affect 176 million females throughout the world today which can also be described as 10% to 15% of the entire female population. In New Zealand it has been estimated that 120,000 women are affected by symptoms related directly to endometriosis such as painful periods, infertility, chronic pelvic pain, and abnormal menstrual bleeding. (Endometriosis New Zealand, 2018).



Discussion

Endometriosis has proven to be a challenging disease as it is often under-diagnosed and has limited research. Chronic pelvic pain may have been experienced by women for several years yet surgical laparoscopy is generally always postponed for many years. Many sources discuss the role that early diagnosis, identification of risk factors and early warning signs has in successful treatment of the gynaecological disease. It has been noted that the average delay experienced by women with endometriosis is 6.7 years. Endometriosis is often more common in women who have an existing family history of the disease (Dun et al., 2015).



Recommendations

Medical management of endometriosis is essential for young menstruating women to effectively to control their symptoms and prevent the disorder from progressing throughout the reproductive system (Trotman and Gomez-Lobo, 2018). It is also vital that early intervention of the disease process occurs so women can be referred to a gynaecological specialist. Health professionals should undertake an elaborate health history. Several treatments could be adopted such as drug treatments which includes non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, the combined oral contraceptive pill (COC), progestogens, intra-uterine hormones, GnRH agonists, and anabolic steroids (Women's Health Queensland Wide Inc et al., 2010).

Giving young females full support throughout the whole process is one of the most important things that a health professional can do. Not only does endometriosis affect women physically through progression of chronic symptoms, it affects women mentally and emotionally as well. Therefore, it is essential that appropriate health services such as professional counselling and support groups are offered to women especially adolescents. These are a significant way for young females and their families to access health information, learn strategies that help with coping and improve their own health literacy on topics surrounding endometriosis (Women's Health Queensland Wide Inc et al., 2010).



Conclusion

Endometriosis is an inflammatory disorder which can occur from a young woman's first menstrual period. Early intervention of the condition such as identification of risk factors and early warning signs is vital for women because it can prevent the progression of the disease, prevent infertility from occurring and most importantly promote a high quality of life. Women under the age of 23 are often overlooked for a diagnosis of endometriosis because they display atypical associated symptoms. Timely referrals, reporting of symptoms at an early age, and beginning appropriate treatments will result in favourable outcomes.



It is also important that women receive scheduled follow up appointments and meetings in order to promote their own health and ensure they are managing okay with the progression of their symptoms and the current treatments they are undertaking. Young women should be involved in follow up appointments at least every 3-6 months, this allows health professionals to analyse the progression of a woman's expression of endometriosis. It is also essential that all women track their symptoms, menstrual cycles, and how their treatment is going frequently, using a symptom diary can be effective way to track this (Dun et al., 2015).

References

- Endometriosis New Zealand. (2018). *Endo Information*. Retrieved from <http://nzendo.org.nz/endo-information/>
- Dun, E. C., Kho, K. A., Morozov, V. V., Kearney, S., Zurawin, J. L., & Nezhat, C. H. (2015). Endometriosis in Adolescents. *JSLS : Journal of the Society of Laparoendoscopic Surgeons*, 19(2), e2015.00019. <http://doi.org/10.4293/JSLS2015.00019>
- NCCRM. (2018). *Diagnosing and Treating Endometriosis*. Retrieved from <https://www.nccrm.com/getting-started/understanding-infertility-conditions/endometriosis/>
- Trotman, G. and Gomez-Lobo, V. (2018). Pelvic pain in the adolescent. [online] Contemporary OB/GYN. Available at: <http://contemporaryobgyn.modernmedicine.com/contemporary-obgyn/news/user-defined-tags/endometriosis/pelvic-pain-adolescent?page=full>
- Women's Health Queensland Wide Inc. (2010). *Endometriosis factsheet*. Retrieved from <https://womhealth.org.au/conditions-and-treatments/endometriosis-fact-sheet>

**IT'S OK
TO TALK.
PERIOD.**



Developing my research question using the PECOT Model (Whitehead, 2013)

If risk factors and early warning signs of endometriosis were classified by health professionals in young adults, would this result in an earlier diagnosis of endometriosis?

Pecot Category	Information relating to question	Explanation
Population	Young menstruating females prior to their first time being pregnant.	This is the age that women tend to experience moderate to severe associated symptoms of endometriosis. I want to include women who have not been pregnant before.
Exposure (Intervention)	What are the risk factors and early warning signs which lead to an early diagnosis of endometriosis?	Young women from the age of 13 to 23 years tend to be within the age range which onset of chronic pelvic pain and endometriosis symptoms begin to manifest.
Comparison/ Control	I want to research other healthcare systems in other countries.	I am looking at research studies which have been conducted in other countries because there are very little studies if any which have been carried out in New Zealand relating to young menstruating females.
Outcome	Early diagnosis of endometriosis young menstruating women.	I want to find out if identification of risk factors and early warning signs of endometriosis in young menstruating women will result in an earlier diagnosis of the disease.
Time	A period of at least eight years of endometriosis associated symptoms.	I want to know if these women are diagnosed with endometriosis.

Summary

Women's sexual health and more specifically endometriosis are topics of personal interest to me and by carrying out this research and literature review I hope to create an awareness about what endometriosis is and the importance of early intervention into the debilitating inflammatory disease. My rationale for choosing to design a poster surrounding this topic is because I believe it is an informative and engaging way to educate people about endometriosis and what it looks like and the difficulties and challenges of diagnosing endometriosis in young women. Academic poster presentations are perceived as being a visual medium and therefore they allow for a great way to combine significant information and appealing aesthetics in order to attract individual's attention. The visual appeal of a poster presentation can allow for in depth discussions between the presenter and an audience which can facilitate active learning and the sharing of information (Ilic & Rowe, 2013).

References

Rowe, N., & Ilic, D. (2009). What impact do posters have on academic knowledge transfer? A pilot survey on author attitudes and experiences. *BMC Medical Education*, 9, 71. <http://doi.org/10.1186/1472-6920-9-71>