# Can Nutrition Help Combat Endometriosis?

Endometriosis is a painful condition, often linked to infertility. It is caused by the improper growth of endometrium tissue within the abdomen and sometimes in other parts of the body as well. Instead of staying in the womb where they belong, rogue cells build tissue that attaches to other structures including the fallopian tubes, ovaries, ligaments, pelvic cavity, scar tissue, bladder, and bowel. Even though this tissue is not located within the uterus, it responds to hormones that control the monthly menstruation cycle in the same way as the womb lining – by shedding blood. There is, however, no exit for this blood. Adhesions and bleeding cause inflammation and pain.

Endometriosis is the second most common gynaecological condition. An estimated 2 million women in the UK, 6.3 million in the US, and countless women worldwide suffer from this condition.  The exact cause is unknown, but the disorder is dependent on the female sex hormone, oestrogen, and how well it is excreted via the digestive system.

Although conventional medicine can support and suppress the disease with the use of drugs and surgery, there is no cure, and research indicates that after treatments stop, recurrence of the condition is high, returning within 2 years for many women.

Research has shown that lifestyle changes, such as eating a diet low in oestrogen has helped other oestrogen related disorders.  But before this can be effective it’s paramount that the gut and liver are working well, which ensures foods are broken down properly and good absorption of nutrients occurs. Without this, body cells struggle to function well or to heal, as they may not get adequate nourishment. The gut is

also home to microbiota which contains tens of trillions of bacteria – ten times more cells than body cells. This microbiota is responsible for keeping the immune system healthy and strong.

Eating nutrient dense, good quality, organic and non-genetically modified foods to help limit toxins, (hence supporting liver detoxification), and to give vitamins and minerals to the body, enables cells to function well. Check out PAN UK for the best and worst food list of pesticide residues.

Increase the intake of liver supporting foods such as broccoli, cauliflower, onions, beets, lemons, and garlic. Good liver function is vital in order for proper digestion and absorption of nutrients to take place. It is responsible for producing digestive and pancreatic enzymes and along with the skin and lungs, is one of the main detoxification organs, responsible for the excretion of oestrogen.

Consume an anti-inflammatory diet. Any condition that involves pain means that the body is inflamed. A diet rich in nature's anti-inflammatory foods will help with lowering pain and support repair and healing. Eat a handful of raw nuts and seeds, as both contain good fats as well as providing protein and minerals. Good fats are needed for cell membranes, hormones, and brain cells.

Include a good amount of fibre in the diet such as fruit, vegetables, and lentils. This helps to reduce oestrogen levels as fibre acts like a sponge absorbing and carrying oestrogen out of the body. Also, reduce the consumption of animal products such as dairy and meat to lower oestrogen.

Limit your intake of gluten-containing foods, such as wheat, rye, couscous and barley, as gluten can disrupt hormones and cause inflammation. Opt for whole foods such as nuts, seeds, lentils, quinoa, millet, rice, amaranth, and buckwheat.

**Author**

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## Recommended Reading:

- *Gluten, Candida, Leaky Gut Syndrome, and Autoimmune Diseases*
- *The Power of Our Hormones and How To Balance Them*
- *Circumcision, the Primal Cut – A Human Rights Violation*