How To Reverse The Number One Cause of Infertility – PCOS

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is responsible for as much as 70 percent of infertility issues in women. In fact, this disorder affects one out of every ten women of childbearing age, and yet, few women are aware of PCOS and its symptoms.

Common Symptoms of Polycystic Ovary Syndrome

Before we explore why PCOS happens and how we can reverse it, we must first get familiar with it. Here are the most common symptoms of PCOS:

- irregular periods
- amenorrhea (the absence of menstruation)
- trouble conceiving a child
- infertility
- fatigue
- mood swings
- low sex drive
- weight gain
- trouble losing weight
- acne
- hirsutism (excessive hair growth on the face, abdomen, chest, and back)
- thinning hair

From fatigue to infertility to unsightly hair growth, these symptoms are a random assortment of things that no man or woman would ever want to experience. Could these all be a part of one disorder?

Unfortunately, the answer is yes. However, there is a silver lining – all of the PCOS symptoms point to the same underlying

cause.

Related Reading: ***Holistic Guide to Healing the Endocrine System and Balancing Our Hormones***

What Causes Polycystic Ovary Syndrome?

To understand how PCOS happens, we must understand the nature of this disease.

When we dig through the research the first evidence we come across is that women with PCOS have an increased risk for:

- hypertension
- dyslipidemia
- insulin resistance
- obesity
- glucose intolerance
- diabetes

These conditions are all a manifestation of poor lifestyle choices (overeating and inactivity), but we cannot draw the same conclusion about PCOS by looking only at its associated risks. Let’s look a bit deeper into the cells of a woman with PCOS (I know it sounds a bit creepy, but bear with me here.)

Must Read: ***The Top 10 Supplements You Can Use To Reverse Polycystic Ovary Syndrome***

The common consensus among PCOS researchers is that most women with PCOS have higher levels of insulin and insulin resistance than normal women. This is an important clue that points us to the cause of PCOS.

How Insulin and Insulin Resistance

Cause PCOS

You probably already know by now that insulin resistance has something to do with diabetes and obesity, but did you know that it can also cause infertility and other PCOS symptoms? Let’s find out how.

When cells are consistently resistant to insulin, insulin levels continue to rise. High insulin levels trigger the ovaries to produce more androgens, including testosterone. Insulin also decreases the production of sex-hormone binding globulin – a glycoprotein that prevents testosterone from freely entering cells.

Related: *Diabetes, Endocrine Functions of the Pancreas, and Natural Healing*

With more androgen production and less sex-hormone binding globulin, free testosterone freely floats through the blood and interacts with cells. This is not a good thing for a woman’s health, leading to mood swings, fatigue, low sex drive, acne, and other PCOS symptoms.

As androgen levels continue to increase, they stimulate 5-alpha reductase activity – an enzyme that converts testosterone to a more potent metabolite called DHT. (You may be familiar with DHT as one of the instigators of male pattern baldness and thinning hair.)

Although genetics play a role in PCOS as well, the disorder will not progress without the presence of high insulin levels and insulin resistance. To create a chronic state of insulin resistance and elevated insulin levels, it takes a combination of poor lifestyle habits that contribute to many common diseases.

The Seven Lifestyle Factors That Cause PCOS

If you want to prevent PCOS or reverse it (or improve your health rapidly), avoid these things:

- high sugar foods
- excess calorie consumption
- chronic stress
- inactivity
- too much exercise
- exposure to endocrine-disrupting chemicals (e.g., Bisphenol A, Methylparaben, Nicotine, Sodium Fluoride, PBDEs/PCBs, etc.)
- having a high percentage of body fat (being overweight or obese)
- having a low percentage of body fat due to unhealthy calorie restriction

Each one contributes to PCOS in some way. High sugar foods, excess calorie consumption, and inactivity increase insulin levels and insulin resistance, making PCOS worse. Chronic stress, over-exercising, and having a low body fat percentage will increase cortisol levels, creating more insulin resistance.

Endocrine-disrupting chemicals can also exacerbate PCOS symptoms. These chemicals can cause hormonal imbalances and cell damage, so it is important to avoid consuming them or putting them on your skin.

However, avoiding these PCOS contributors may not completely reverse the disorder. To get the best results, you need to follow a diet that addresses the underlying cause of PCOS – insulin resistance.

Is There a PCOS Diet?

The scientific literature on diets for PCOS is sparse. However, the researchers of a treatment review suggest that PCOS women will do best by eating complex carbohydrates and avoiding sugar. This suggestion was confirmed in one study on the effects of low-glycemic index diet in women with PCOS.

To find more convincing evidence for a PCOS diet, we must look at the diets that are most helpful for addressing the disorders underlying causes. After sifting through the research, the low-carbohydrate diet is the clear winner. It is more effective at reducing insulin levels and insulin resistance than every other diet it was put up against.

There is one important caveat. Carbohydrate restriction may cause stress and make PCOS worse for some women. This is why it is important for women with PCOS to follow the guidelines below.

Related: 80% *Raw Food Diet*

The New And Improved PCOS Diet

A low-carbohydrate diet can help many women reverse their PCOS. For some women, however, carbohydrate restriction may cause excess stress and keep them from getting results. This is why it is important to follow these guidelines to create the right PCOS diet for you:

1. Restrict Carbohydrate and Sugar Intake

Experts suggest that women should eat between 75 and 150 grams of carbohydrates to maintain fertility and improve insulin levels. It is important to avoid consuming refined sugar as well. The best way to do this is by sourcing your carbohydrates from whole plant foods like leafy greens, cruciferous vegetables, root vegetables, and legumes.

Related:** **Are Low-Carbohydrate Diets Healthy for Women? How Do Carbs Affect Fertility and Pregnancy?

2. Eat High-Fiber Vegetables With Every Meal

High-fiber vegetables, like broccoli, kale, and spinach, can help combat insulin resistance and reduce inflammation. Have them with every meal for best results.

3. Eat Enough Calories to Achieve Your Ideal Weight

If you are overweight or unhealthily skinny, tracking your calories can help you reach a healthy weight. (I prefer to use MyFitnessPal to calculate calorie goals and increase my awareness of what I'm eating.) After about a month or so of tracking your calories, you'll develop a greater intuitive sense of how to maintain a healthy weight.

By following these guidelines, you will be able to lower your insulin levels, balance your hormones, and reverse many of the PCOS symptoms. However, the wrong lifestyle can still get in the way of the right diet. This is why it is important to follow the lifestyle tips below to improve your health even further.

The Lifestyle That Helps Reverse PCOS

Combining a vegetable-rich sugar-free diet with exercise, sleep, and meditation is one of the most efficient ways to reverse PCOS.

1. Exercise

What kind of exercise should you do? It's up to you. Many

different types of exercise have been found to help women with PCOS including resistance training, aerobic exercise, and yoga.

Make sure you are getting at least 30 minutes of low to moderate intensity exercise, like yoga, cycling, or a brisk walk, every day. (Add in resistance training, three days a week, for even better results.)

It is also important to prioritize stress reduction as well. The more stressed you are, the more insulin resistant your cells will be. This will cause an increase in insulin levels and PCOS symptoms. The simplest way to reduce stress levels? Sleep and meditation.

2. Sleep

The most efficient way to reduce stress levels is with sleep. However, getting quality sleep may be more difficult for women with PCOS. In a review published in Human Reproduction, researchers found that “sleep disturbances were twice as common in women with PCOS,” and women with PCOS especially had difficulty falling asleep.

However, there is some good news for these women. Sleep disturbances will most likely be cleared up by the diet and lifestyle suggestions in this article so that they can finally get a restful sleep. For those that still struggle with sleep issues after following our suggestions, meditation will help tremendously.

3. Meditation

Studies have shown that meditation lowers cortisol levels and improves blood sugar levels, which creates a reduction in insulin resistance and insulin secretion. Meditating 30 minutes before you plan on going to sleep is a great way to improve sleep quality and reduce stress at the same time.

Putting it all Together – The Ideal Diet and Lifestyle for Women with PCOS

Here's a simple breakdown of the diet and lifestyle that will help reverse PCOS:

- Limit sugar and carbohydrate intake
- Eat high-fiber, low-carbohydrate vegetables with each meal
- Eat enough calories to achieve your ideal weight (use MyFitnessPal to assist you with that)
- Exercise for at least 30 minutes every day
- Meditate every night before sleep
- Make sure you are getting 7-9 hours of sleep every night

and last but not least:

- If you need more help, consider using the natural supplements that you will find in this article to reverse PCOS.

Editor's Note:

Eliminate wheat, eliminate candida, and consider progesterone (I particularly like this Progesterone Plus with black cohosh and chasteberry) – but if the wheat and candida are eliminated you shouldn't need progesterone (or any of the other aforementioned supplements).

Best Supplements To Kill Candida and Everything Else You Ever Wanted To Know About Fungal Infections

Recommended Reading:

- *The Top 10 Supplements You Can Use To Reverse Polycystic Ovary Syndrome*
- *Are Low-Carbohydrate Diets Healthy for Women? How Do*

Carbs Affect Fertility and Pregnancy?

- *Holistic Guide to Healing the Endocrine System and Balancing Our Hormones*
- *Detox Cheap and Easy Without Fasting – Recipes Included*

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