

Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS)

Fact Sheet

Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS), previously known as Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS), is a metabolic and hormonal condition that affects how the body processes insulin, hormones, and energy. The fluctuations in hormones caused by PMOS affect metabolic and mental health, weight, skin, and the reproductive system. However, early screening and lifestyle-centered care can make a difference in health outcomes.

Why South Asian Women Are at Higher Risk

South Asian women:

- Often develop PMOS symptoms at younger ages and experience more severe symptoms compared to other ethnic groups.
- Process insulin differently, making them more vulnerable to PMOS-related complications regardless of their size or weight.
- Have a higher risk of developing metabolic conditions such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.
- Are more likely to have PMOS and less likely to be diagnosed correctly.

South Asian women are about 2-3 times more likely to develop PMOS compared to other ethnic groups

How PMOS Differs in South Asian Women

Insulin resistance at a lower body weight. Research has found that South Asian women develop metabolic conditions due to a higher tendency to store fat around internal organs (visceral fat) and have lower muscle mass.

Earlier onset. PMOS symptoms often develop in adolescence or in a women's early 20s, leading to longer exposure to hormonal imbalance.

More severe PMOS symptoms. This may include irregular or missed menstrual cycles, excess facial or body hair (hirsutism), darkened skin around the neck or underarms (acanthosis nigricans), difficulty with weight management, and challenges with fertility.

Higher long-term health risks. South Asian women have increased risks of type 2 diabetes (up to 4 times higher than other ethnic groups), heart disease, and fatty liver disease. Studies indicate this is due to unique body compositions, genetic factors, and earlier onset of metabolic risk factors.



Instagram: @southasianher | www.southasianher.com

Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (PMOS)

Fact Sheet

Screening & Early Diagnosis Are Essential

Screening, early diagnosis, and regular follow-up can prevent long-term complications.

- Consider PMOS screening if you have irregular menstrual cycles, excess hair growth, persistent acne, or a family history of diabetes or PMOS/PCOS. It is recommended that South Asians be screened earlier and at lower body mass index (BMI) thresholds.
- Ask your healthcare provider about which screenings are right for you: blood sugar (fasting glucose, HbA1c, oral glucose tolerance tests), lipid profile, hormonal evaluation (testosterone, DHEAS, TSH, prolactin).
- Schedule regular screenings and follow-ups, and discuss options with your healthcare provider to prevent and manage long-term risks.

Lifestyle-Centered Care Can Make A Difference

Small, consistent changes can significantly improve insulin resistance and hormone balance.

- *Nutrition.* Focus on whole, plant-forward foods (vegetables, lentils, beans, whole grains, nuts) and include protein and fiber with each meal. Reduce intake of refined carbohydrates (white rice, sweets, processed snacks) and limit sugary beverages and ultra-processed foods.
- *Physical Activity.* Make movement part of your routine. Start with 15 minutes each day, build up to longer periods of time, and increase intensity as you go. Incorporate moderately intense activities such as brisk walking, biking, gardening, dancing, and high intensity muscle-strengthening activities to improve cardiometabolic health.
- *Weight and Body Composition.* Focus on reducing waist circumference rather than just weight. Data suggest that even a weight loss of 5%-7% can improve PMOS symptoms.
- *Sleep and Stress Management.* Aim for 7-8 hours of quality sleep each day. Physical activity, morning and evening routines, proper nutrition, and stress management help improve sleep quality. Activities such as breathing exercises, meditation, and yoga have shown to reduce stress.

Medical Management

Lifestyle changes are important, however, medications may be necessary.

- In select patients, general guideline-based treatments may include medications that improve insulin resistance and menstrual regularity, reduce androgen symptoms, treat excess hair growth or persistent acne, and help manage weight and metabolic health.
- Consult a healthcare provider for individualized treatment plans for your specific health needs.



SouthAsianHER

Instagram: @southasianher | www.southasianher.com