

10 Tips for Getting Pregnant with Endometriosis Naturally

by Iva Keene MRMed. ND. - Qualified Naturopathic Physician - Thursday, November 19, 2009

<https://natural-fertility-prescription.com/getting-pregnant-with-endometriosis/>

Can you have a baby when you have endometriosis? Yes! Despite the disease being identified as one of the leading causes of infertility in women, getting pregnant with endometriosis is possible. According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, **about 40% of women with infertility have endometriosis**. Women in their 30s and 40s are the ones commonly diagnosed with endometriosis. These women typically suffer from pain and heavy bleeding. If you have endometriosis and you're trying to conceive, there are natural remedies you can try first before resorting to surgery for your medical condition. This article introduces getting pregnant with endometriosis through natural treatment. Evidence shows endometriosis can respond well to diet and other non-invasive adjustments.

What is Endometriosis?

A painful condition which can impact fertility, endometriosis is a condition where the endometrial tissue which lines the uterus, can appear in the pelvic cavity and elsewhere in the body where it doesn't belong. One of the most frequent diseases in gynecology, endometriosis affects 15-20% of women who are getting pregnant, contributing to 5% cases of [infertility](#). A pelvic exam, ultrasound, MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) or laparoscopy confirms the presence of endometriosis. Women suffering from endometriosis may be diagnosed with one of four stages of endometriosis:

- **Stage I (minimal)**. A few small lesions/wounds/implants found on pelvic or abdominal tissue, or on the organs.
- **Stage II (mild)**. Slightly more small lesions/implants than in the first stage. The wounds are deeper and there may be the presence of scar tissue.
- **Stage III (moderate)**: There are many deep implants. You may also have small cysts on one or both ovaries, and thick bands of scar tissue called adhesions.
- **Stage IV (severe)**: This is the most widespread. You have many deep implants and thick adhesions. There are also large cysts on one or both ovaries.

So, How Does Endometriosis Happen?

Scientists do not know exactly how the tissue ends up where it doesn't belong but there are a number of theories which I mention below. Regardless of where it is located, this endometrial tissue will behave in the same way as the uterus lining by responding to the monthly cycling of hormones and bleeds during menstruation. In the case of endometriosis, because the shed endometrial tissue and blood in other parts of the body can not leave the body through the vagina as the menstrual blood can, it forms **scar tissue and painful adhesions**. Typically, endometrial growths appear in the pelvic cavity. They grow on the ovaries, pelvic ligaments, tubes, bowel and bladder. There are a few theories as to how the tissue manages to migrate:

Retrograde Flow of Menstrual Blood

Some suggest the retrograde flow of menstrual blood and seeding or attaching to other tissues.

Errors in Embryologic Development

Endometrial cells being laid down in the wrong places during the embryologic development of the fetus. This theory emerged as it could not be explained how endometrial tissue reached the brain through the retrograde flow of menstrual blood. Many women experience retrograde flow into the abdominal cavity via the fallopian tubes. But, this is usually picked up by the immune system and cleaned up by macrophages.

Autoimmune Disease

Scientists suggest that endometriosis is an autoimmune disease. This is because endometriosis has been associated with the presence of auto-antibodies and other autoimmune diseases.

Combination of Factors

Another theory suggests that endometrial growths start from stem cells and are caused by a combination of factors. However, while genetic predisposition, environmental factors and altered immune and endocrine function are believed to play a significant role in endometriosis, the true cause still remains unclear.

Symptoms of Endometriosis

What are the first signs of endometriosis? Experts say that women have various experiences when it comes to endometriosis. Some women may experience no symptoms at all, but generally, endometriosis can cause heavy and painful periods, abnormal bleeding and infertility. Common symptoms of endometriosis in women include:

- heavy, painful or [irregular periods](#)
- [ovarian cysts](#)
- chronic pelvic pain (6 or more months)
- pain in the lower abdomen, pelvis or lower back around ovulation time, but also throughout the cycle
- painful intercourse (or pain after sex)
- [difficulty trying to conceive](#)
- painful bowel movements and urination

How Can Endometriosis Lead to Infertility?

When left unchecked, endometriosis may significantly affect your chances of getting pregnant. While endometriosis does not necessarily cause infertility, the endometriosis symptoms may make it difficult for women to conceive. Here are some ways on how endometriosis may affect your ability to conceive:

Blocked Fallopian Tubes

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If the endometrial tissue grows within the [fallopian tubes, it can block them](#). Where there are blocked fallopian tubes, there may be infertility — blocked fallopian tubes are responsible for **25 to 30% of cases of female infertility**.

Inflammation

Due to inflammation, there are a high number of macrophages in the area that can destroy the sperm and interfere with implantation when attempts of getting pregnant with endometriosis are being made.

Failure to Ovulate Due to Hormonal Problems

In women with endometriosis, ovulation may or may not occur, and even if it does occur, there may not be enough progesterone to support the implantation since endometriosis may cause [hormonal imbalance](#).

Is It Dangerous to Get Pregnant With Endometriosis?

Several studies were able to identify a link between endometriosis and miscarriage — according to one study, women with endometriosis had a higher miscarriage risk than women without endometriosis. In addition, another study found out that endometriosis is a risk factor for miscarriage. This same study revealed that women with endometriosis were exposed to an **80% increased risk for miscarriage** compared to non-endometriosis women. Also, the risk of ectopic pregnancy is higher than usual in women with endometriosis. Anti-endometrial antibodies may be responsible for the high incidence of miscarriages and poor implantation often associated with this condition.

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Since endometriosis is viewed as an estrogen-dominant condition and since the endometrial implants (or lesions) have been shown to reduce in size when estrogen levels in the body normalize or drop, the natural treatment of endometriosis mainly involves ways to [reduce estrogen dominance](#) in the body. Studies have found that inflammation resulting from bleeding of the endometrial implants each month actually increases estrogen activity. Similarly, another contributing factor is low progesterone which can lead to anovulatory cycles. If you are wondering how to get pregnant with endometriosis naturally, treatment for endometriosis primarily involves diet and lifestyle changes. You should know what foods to avoid if you have endometriosis and consider detoxification, supplementation and exercise. Here are 10 tips that may help you conceive naturally even with endometriosis:

1. Eat organically grown food and avoid exposure to commercial insect repellants.

Studies have found that exposure to **chlorinated hydrocarbons** (e.g., DDT, PCB, pentachlorophenol, hexachlorocyclohexane) has been associated with an increase in rates of [miscarriage](#) and endometriosis.

2. Avoid soft plastics.

This includes drinking out of plastic water bottles, storing your food in plastic food wrappers, wearing

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surgical gloves, buying products in food wrap and touching printing ink with your hands when getting pregnant with endometriosis. What do all these have in common? They contain [Phthalates](#) and PVC. Unfortunately, these substances act as endocrine disruptors and estrogen mimickers. Likewise, they may cause asthma, negative developmental and birth defects, immune system dysfunction, endometriosis and infertility.

3. Reduce your intake of animal products.

The first line of natural treatment for getting pregnant with endometriosis, minimizing the intake of endocrine disruptors like animal products due to their high content of hormones, pesticides and herbicides, will help you manage endometriosis better.

4. Eat bitter foods to support the clearance of estrogen via the liver.

They are grapefruit, lemons, limes, rocket, endive, romaine lettuce, artichokes. Similarly, you can drink dandelion and St. Mary's thistle tea.

5. Avoid allergens and take immune system supplements.

As you've seen, the immune system plays a role in endometriosis. As such, you want to make sure you provide your immune system with all the key elements required for optimal function when getting pregnant with endometriosis. They are vitamin C, vitamin E, beta carotene, zinc and selenium and probiotics. In addition, have an IgG 90 foods intolerance test. This will show you what foods you are intolerant to (and that you should need to avoid) to help balance the immune system.

6. Exercise regularly to improve circulation, toxin and waste removal.

[Exercise](#) also boosts your metabolism (which is good for your endocrine function) and immune system. Both of which are crucial in the treatment of getting pregnant with endometriosis.

7. Include foods that promote circulation and waste removal.

For example, the following foods and spices promote circulation and waste removal: cayenne, basil, chives, eggplant, garlic, ginger, kohlrabi, leek, nutmeg, pepper, rice, rosemary, scallion, spearmint, turmeric, cinnamon, lemons, zest of lemon, seaweed.

8. Increase your fiber intake to improve estrogen clearance from your intestines

Fiber-rich and great for estrogen clearance, foods like adzuki beans, psyllium husks, apples, other legumes, nuts and seeds are a great addition to your diet.

9. Take a high-quality fish oil.

Choose a fish oil tested for mercury and stabilized with vitamin E. Fish oil reduces inflammation associated with endometriosis, minimizing associated pain and improving the odds of healthy implantation and getting pregnant with endometriosis. I recommend Krill oil (the plankton whales and

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other fish eat) as it's less likely to be contaminated. Ideally, you want to have 1000mg three times a day with food. Store it in the fridge.

10. Take an iodine supplement.

There is an established link between hypothyroidism and endometriosis and so taking an **iodine supplement** may correct underactive thyroid function.

Getting Pregnant With Endometriosis Is Possible

Treatment with diet and other steps as introduced in this article can address underlying imbalances which are often at the root cause of endometriosis-related infertility. If your goal is getting pregnant with endometriosis and you are looking for natural therapies, our 10 tips may help. However, for more information about **getting pregnant with endometriosis**, you can read our related articles (listed below) or consider the help of a certified natural fertility specialist for personalized help.

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