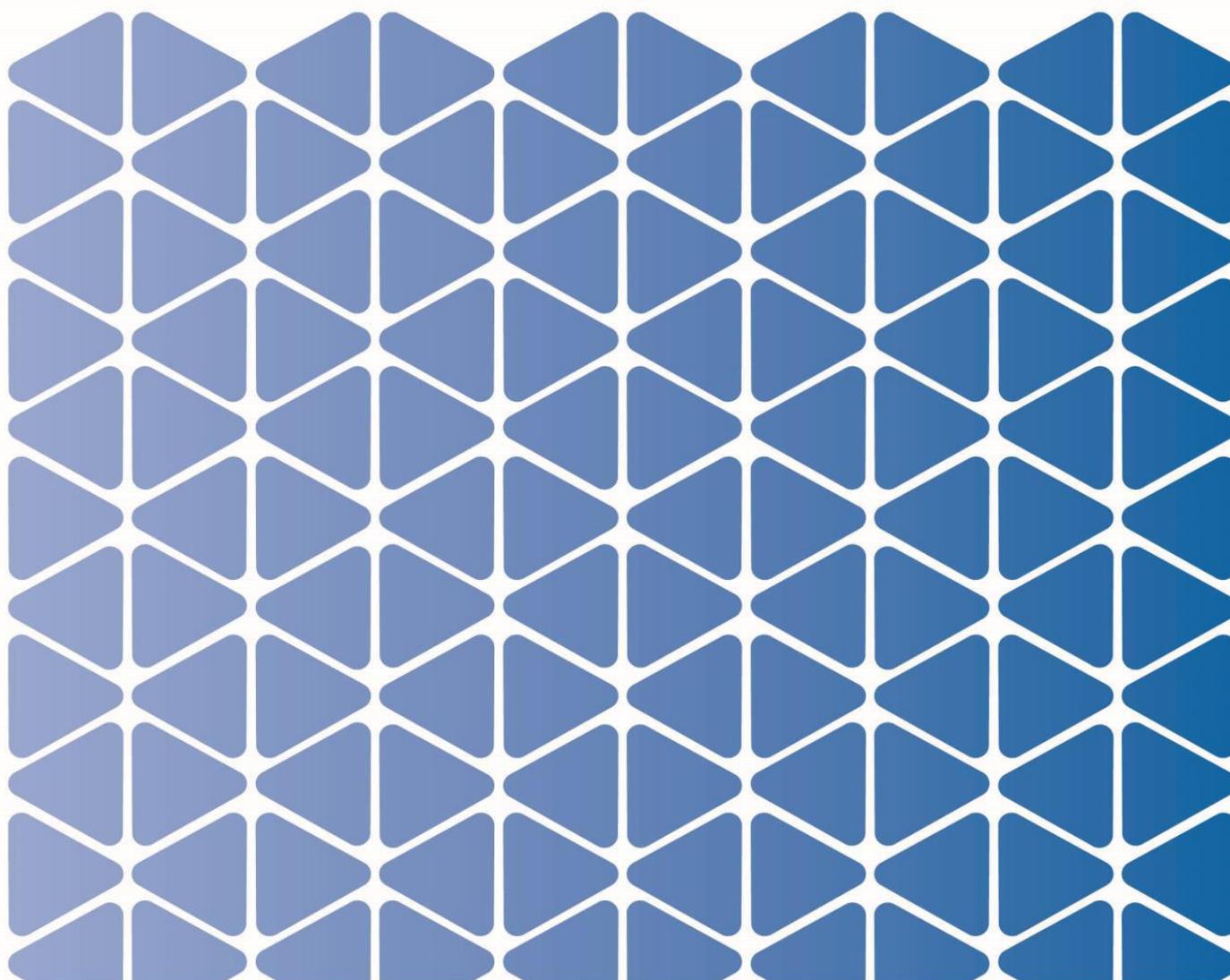




PATIENT INFORMATION

DIET AND ENDOMETRIOSIS



There is some thought that changes in your diet could help alleviate symptoms caused by Endometriosis. More research needs to be done in this area and because it is a condition that affects women differently, there is no 'one size fits all' answer but dietary changes can be a healthy, natural way to try and improve your symptoms.

Firstly, to understand the endometriosis diet we must understand inflammation. Acute inflammation is a healthy response our body makes to protect us from something like an infection. But chronic inflammation is the constant, unfocused immune activity that flares or causes disease.

As research shows that, some people suffer more with irritable bowel symptoms rather than straightforward pelvic pain. If this is the case, then an elimination diet (cutting out foods for at least 2 weeks and reintroducing them gradually) can help to pinpoint which foods trigger your painful bowel symptoms most. These foods can then be avoided. There are two main triggers with irritable bowel symptoms – soluble and insoluble fibres. Depending on the type of irritable bowel symptoms you struggle with (e.g. constipation, bloating and pain or diarrhoea, bloating and pain), then you would avoid the kind of fibre that usually most triggers those kind of symptoms. Please have a look at the website at the end of this leaflet to learn more.

Others struggle more with painful bladder symptoms. In this case we look at reducing the foods that can irritate the bladder such as acidic foods, alcohol, caffeinated drinks, carbonated drinks, spicy foods, chocolate and certain fruit – particularly berry fruits such as strawberries and tomatoes.

Foods that can influence hormone regulation, particularly oestrogen balance, can negatively affect those with endometriosis. In addition, avoid or limit foods that may promote inflammation in the body and lead to further pain or progression of the disorder.

These foods include:

- alcohol
- caffeine
- gluten
- red meat
- saturated and trans fat

What is the endometriosis diet?

A typical anti-inflammatory diet focuses on eating more fruits and vegetables, fatty fish, nuts, seeds and healthy fats. **Likewise, a reduction in alcohol, caffeine, dairy, refined sugar and carbohydrates, red and processed meat, toxins (pesticides and chemicals) and unhealthy fats.**

What should I eat?

- **FRUIT, ESPECIALLY BERRIES (Raspberries, blueberries, strawberries, peaches, oranges, pink grapefruit, red grapes, plums, blackberries, cherries, apples and pears – to name a few)**
they're packed with the antioxidant, anthocyanin's (the compound that makes our food pretty colours), which is known to have anti-inflammatory effects. Aim for a variety in colour to get a wide variety of nutrients.
- **VEGETABLES, ESPECIALLY CRUCIFEROUS and DARK LEAFY GREENS (spinach, kale, broccoli, cabbage, bok choy, cauliflower, sprouts and washed raw salad greens – to name a few)**
these are loaded with the antioxidant, sulforaphane, this is known to combat inflammation. Aim for a plate that is colourful to increase the variety of vitamins.
- **NUTS AND SEEDS (chai seeds, avocado, pecans, walnuts, almonds, ground flaxseed, and natural peanut butter)**
they're full of healthy omega-3 fats. And omega-3 fats fight inflammation.
- **BEANS AND LEGUMES (Chickpeas, black-eyed peas, lentils, black beans, kidney beans, soybeans – to name a few)**
they fight inflammation, and reduce cholesterol and stabilize blood sugar levels.
- **FISH AND SEAFOOD (Wild salmon, herring, sardines and black cod)**
Salmon is an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids which reduce inflammation. Eating sustainable, high quality salmon is important. Choose deep sea fish as they have a higher intake of omega-3.
- **TEA, ESPECIALLY GREEN TEA, PEPPERMINT AND CHAMOMILE.**
Green tea contains the anti-inflammatory compound, EGCG therefore it gets a lot of love, peppermint has been shown to have antioxidant properties and can help with digestion so is great post meal.
- **DARK CHOCOLATE**
it is packed with the antioxidant, flavanol known to reduce inflammation. The darker the chocolate the better.
- **WHOLE GRAINS (gluten free noodles and pasta, brown rice, basmati rice, wild rice, buckwheat, quinoa, oats)**
Whole grains like oats, quinoa, and brown rice are high in fibre, which contain anti-inflammatory powers. The added fibre promotes a healthy digestive tract and reduces spikes in blood sugar.

- **TURMERIC**

it has received a lot of love for its anti-inflammatory compound, curcumin.

Snacks are recommended between meal times. Some good snacks include:

- A handful of nuts or seeds
- A piece of fruit
- Carrots or baby carrots
- Berries or grapes

Make sure you pay attention to how your body acts when you eat certain foods. Keeping a journal of the foods you eat and any symptoms or triggers you have may be helpful. It is really about finding what works for you and a trial and error approach. This takes time and commitment but can be so worthwhile. Exercise is a good relief for pain symptoms and releases positive hormones ‘endorphins’ to help lift your mood. Remember to do whatever you are most comfortable doing and within your own limit and if unsure please ask your GP before starting any new exercise regime.

Useful Reading:

www.endometrisois-uk.org

www.nhs.uk/conditions/irritable-bowel-syndrome

<http://bladderheathuk.org/bladder-heath-uk>

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.