GENERAL GYNECOLOGY

Diagnosis & Treatment

Ovarian Cysts

Symptoms & Causes Diagnosis & Treatment

Find an ovarian cyst specialist

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Ovarian Cysts Diagnosis

Diagnostic tests for ovarian cysts include:

- A **pelvic exam** that allows the doctor to see and feel any unusual changes in the reproductive organs
- Blood tests for specific hormone levels

To help diagnose ovarian cysts, your doctor may also need to obtain images of your ovaries and other abdominal organs. These tests, available through NewYork-Presbyterian's state-of-the-art **women's imaging services**, include:

- CT scans
- MRI
- Ultrasound

Ovarian Cysts Treatment Options

The usual treatment for ovarian cysts that do not cause any symptoms is periodic monitoring to ensure that the cyst is either disappearing, or at least not growing larger.

For mild pain, ibuprofen or another over-the-counter painkiller may be recommended. Sometimes a doctor will prescribe hormone therapy in the form of a birth control pill to prevent additional cysts from developing.

Surgery to remove the ovarian cyst may be recommended for those with symptoms that are interfering with their daily life, especially if there is any concern that the cyst is pressing on other abdominal organs or potentially threatening the patient's fertility. Surgical options for ovarian cysts include:

- **Minimally invasive gynecologic surgery** (also called laparoscopic surgery), in which the gynecologic surgeon makes a few small incisions and removes the cyst with miniaturized instruments. This procedure offers the advantages of a lower risk of complications and a faster recovery.
- **Traditional open surgery** that requires a larger incision may be necessary if the cyst is large or if other complications such as ovarian torsion (a twisted ovary) have occurred. In rare cases, the gynecologic surgeon may also have to remove the ovary, for example, if they're concerned that malignant tissue (cancer) is present or if the cyst cannot be safely separated from the ovary.

When should you seek treatment for ovarian cysts?

While it's always a good idea to seek medical care for an evaluation of any of **the symptoms associated with ovarian cysts**, if you feel a sharp pain in the abdomen with or without nausea or vomiting, you may have experienced either:

- **A ruptured ovarian cyst** - A condition that may also result in internal bleeding. The causes of ovarian cyst rupture are unclear, however, some experts believe that strenuous activity may cause this condition.
- **Ovarian torsion** - This can threaten the blood supply to this organ. This condition can occur when the ovary twists on its blood supply.

In both cases, immediate medical attention is necessary to determine whether surgery is required.

Long-term care for ovarian cysts

Long-term care for ovarian cysts depends on various factors, including the size of the cyst, any symptoms you are experiencing, and whether surgical treatment was necessary.

Patients going through menopause may want to discuss this condition with their gynecologist, though individuals who are post-menopausal are less likely to develop ovarian cysts.

Medically Reviewed

This content has been reviewed by the following medical editors.

Ja Hyun Shin MD, FACOG

Find Relief from Ovarian Cysts at NewYork-Presbyterian

Have you been diagnosed with an ovarian cyst? Do you have questions or concerns about the symptoms and causes of this condition? If so, call for an appointment with one of the expert clinicians at NewYork-Presbyterian. Our highly-experienced gynecologists can provide a complete evaluation and are knowledgeable in the range of available ovarian cyst treatment options.

CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT: 877-697-9355

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< Symptoms & Causes

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