

What is **Adenomyosis?**



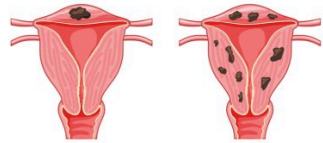
What is adenomyosis?

Adenomyosis (pronounced *ah-den-oh-my-oh-sis*) is a condition where cells and tissue similar to the lining of the womb (uterus) are found in the muscle layer of the womb (myometrium).

Unlike endometriosis, which happens where cells and tissue similar to the lining of the womb (uterus) grow in other parts of the body, adenomyosis affects the womb itself.

Types of adenomyosis¹

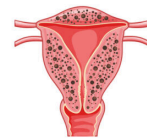
Focal adenomyosis: Focal adenomyosis happens when tissue similar to the lining of the womb grows into the muscle wall of the womb in localised areas.



Adenomyoma: An adenomyoma is a type of focal adenomyosis where this tissue forms a solid lump inside the muscle wall of the womb.



Diffuse adenomyosis: Diffuse adenomyosis is when this tissue is spread throughout much of the muscle wall of the womb, rather than being in just one spot.



What are the symptoms?

Adenomyosis can cause a range of symptoms.

Common symptoms include:

- Heavy periods
- Painful periods that stop your normal activities
- Pelvic pain
- Pain during or after sex
- Painful bowel movements
- Bloating
- Feeling of heaviness in your pelvis

It is important to remember that symptoms vary from person to person, and not everyone with adenomyosis will experience symptoms.



What causes adenomyosis?

The cause of adenomyosis is **unknown** and there is **no cure**.

However, several theories to explain its cause exist, including:

- Family history (genetic predisposition)
- Hormonal changes

More research is needed to better understand the causes of this condition.

Who is affected?

Adenomyosis can affect anyone with a womb.

However, it is most common in:

- People assigned female at birth over the age of 30
- People who have been pregnant in the past
- People with endometriosis

How is adenomyosis diagnosed?

In the UK, a diagnosis of adenomyosis can take some time as the symptoms often overlap with those of other conditions.

The process usually begins with a visit to your GP, who will assess your symptoms, medical history, and family history.

Keeping a symptom diary can help you track your symptoms over time and provide your GP with useful information.

Your GP cannot diagnose adenomyosis, but they can refer you for additional tests to help understand the cause of your symptoms.

An ultrasound scan may be recommended to look for physical signs of adenomyosis and rule out other possible causes of your symptoms.

In some cases, your doctor may suggest more detailed imaging, such as an MRI scan.

Sometimes adenomyosis may not be seen during scans, but this does not always mean you do not have the condition.

In some cases, adenomyosis is diagnosed after a hysterectomy, where tissue can be examined under a microscope.

Treatment of adenomyosis

While there is no cure for adenomyosis, there are different treatment options available.

Pain management

As pain is a common symptom of adenomyosis, effective pain management can help relieve these symptoms.

Deciding on the right pain management depends on many factors, and you will need to speak with your doctor to find what works for you.

Hormonal treatment

Hormonal treatments are commonly recommended to manage symptoms associated with adenomyosis.

Deciding on the right hormonal treatment depends on many factors, and you will need to speak with your doctor to find what works for you.

Medication

Other medication to help with heavy bleeding can also be used to manage symptoms associated with adenomyosis.

Deciding on the right medication depends on many factors, and you will need to speak with your doctor to find what works for you.

Surgical treatment

Surgical treatment for adenomyosis can include:

Uterine artery embolisation, where a small incision is made in the groin, and the blood supply to the affected area is blocked off.²

Adenomyomectomy, where focal adenomyosis is removed (excised).³

Hysterectomy, where the womb is removed. This is usually recommended for people who do not respond to other treatments and have no plans to get pregnant.

Reminder

Each person's treatment journey is individual to them, and what works for one person may not work for you.

The approach that is best for you will depend on different factors, such as your age, medical history, the severity of your symptoms, whether you plan to have children, and the potential risks of side effects and complications.





Adenomyosis and daily life

Symptoms of adenomyosis, such as heavy bleeding and pain, can impact many areas of life, including school, work, relationships, and emotional wellbeing.

Seeking medical help, joining support groups, and talking openly about the condition can help manage these challenges.

We're here to support you



www.endometriosisouthcoast.com



admin@endometriosisouthcoast.com



@endosouthcoast



@endometriosisouthcoast



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Large print and accessible formats are available upon request — [just get in touch](#).

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