

ENDOMETRIOSIS

What you need to know

THERE IS HELP AND SUPPORT AT HAND IF YOU SUFFER FROM THIS DEBILITATING CONDITION



Endometriosis is a chronic condition that affects one in 10 women of reproductive age, with an estimated 176 million sufferers worldwide. Celebrities including Lena Dunham, Susan Sarandon, Yellow Wiggle Emma Watkins and former Spice Girl Emma Bunton have all helped raise awareness of endometriosis by sharing their personal struggles. We've asked a medical expert in women's health to explain the disorder.

After years of severe pain, Lena Dunham (far left) underwent a hysterectomy at age 31 to stop the symptoms of endometriosis. Susan Sarandon (left) also suffered with the condition.

THERESE'S STORY



THERESE KERR, MUM OF MIRANDA, WELLNESS EXPERT AND AMBASSADOR FOR ENDOMETRIOSIS AUSTRALIA

In 1995, at the age of 30, I had developed endometriosis to the level where I had an operation that prevented me from having any more children. I am extremely blessed to have two beautiful children and I never take that gift for granted. It was, however, always our dream to have four children, but due to endometriosis we were unable to.

Then, in 2001, I developed tumours in my spleen after having endometriosis and Hashimoto's. I was 36 at the time and that was my wake-up call. Prior to that I thought I was healthy, but I was far from healthy. I started researching the causes

of endometriosis and Hashimoto's, and in particular delved deep into the endocrine system, its role and the health challenges that relate to it.

By chance, I met Bill Statham, author of *The Chemical Maze*, who specialises in chemicals and their health implications. It was from him that I learned of phthalates and many other chemicals that are endocrine disruptors (chemicals that mimic the female hormone oestrogen) causing oestrogen dominance in the body, leading to many diseases, including endometriosis.

I switched to a chemical-free lifestyle in every aspect of my home, including what we ate, what we used in our



home for cleaning, personal care, skincare products etc. Then I went on a detox program and within a relatively short period of time my Hashimoto's had cleared and I no longer had the endometriosis symptoms.

I am now healthier than I have ever been in my life. Honouring your health and educating yourself on these issues is a key to staying vibrant and healthy and/or getting your health back. For more, visit theresekerr.com or endometriosisaustralia.org.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

In endometriosis, cells similar to those that line the uterus are found in other parts of the body, particularly in the pelvis. Some women have no symptoms, but around three in four women with 'endo' suffer from bad period pain. "Women can suffer from painful periods that are so bad they stop you doing your normal work, study, going to the gym – anything that's part of your normal life – and you have to stay home and stay in bed," says Dr Elizabeth Farrell, gynaecologist and medical director of Jean Hailes for Women's Health. "It can also be associated with bloating, or pain passing urine and opening your bowels," she says.

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED AND TREATED?

The only way to diagnose endo is to have a laparoscopy. "This is an operation to look inside your belly to see if endo is there," says Dr Farrell. "Endo is usually treated by cutting it out at the time of a laparoscopy. Afterwards, your doctor will recommend the Pill or maybe an IUD or an implant that's going to stop your periods because unfortunately, endo can always come back."

HIGH TIME FOR TEA

On Saturday, March 30, high tea events

will be taking place around Australia for EndoMarch, a campaign that raises money and awareness of endometriosis. To host an event at home or at work, or to register for an organised event, visit endometriosisaustralia.org.

STRATEGIES THAT HELP

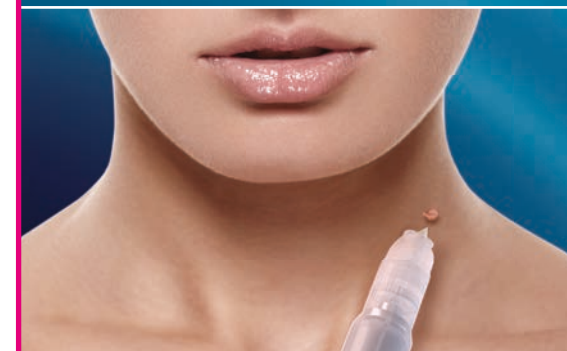
An important part of managing the condition is being fit and healthy, says Dr Farrell. "Looking after yourself with exercise, a healthy diet and making sure that you're not overweight or underweight are all important," she explains. "If you really struggle with having endo, then maybe it's a good idea to go to see your doctor and see if they can refer you to a counsellor."

For more information, visit jeanhailes.org.au.

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Now you can remove unsightly skin tags at home easily with the new Skin Tag Remover from Medi Freeze.

Medi Freeze freezes skin tags whilst protecting the healthy skin around it.

This innovative product makes skin tag removal an easy and simple way to a blemish free you.



Available at Pharmacies

Always read the label. Follow the instructions for use. If symptoms persist, talk to your healthcare professional.