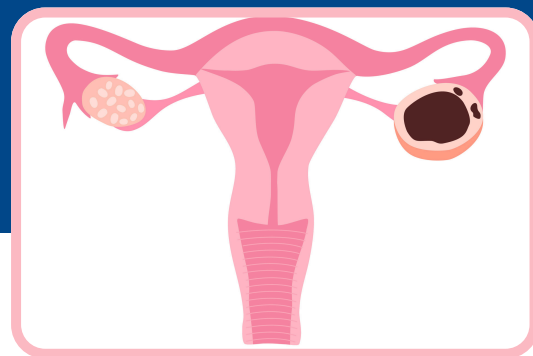


# Ovarian Endometrioma (Chocolate Cysts)



## Overview

**Endometriosis** occurs when tissue similar to the uterine lining, or endometrium, grows outside the uterus. This tissue can attach to your ovary, in which case it is called an **endometrioma**. These cysts can be filled with a brown fluid composed of old blood and endometrial-like tissue.

Approximately **1 in 10** women of reproductive age have endometriosis, and ovarian endometriomas occur in **17-44%** of women with endometriosis

## What causes it?

Researchers are still studying the biological mechanisms behind endometriosis, but current leading theories include:

- 1 Retrograde Menstruation Theory**  
Some menstrual tissue flows backward through fallopian tubes and implants in pelvic cavity
- 2 Metaplasia**  
Cells located outside the uterus undergo metaplasia and differentiate into endometrial cells
- 3 Metastatic Theory**  
Viable endometrial cells are seeded via blood and lymphatic channels

## Treatment Options

- **Monitoring:** Small, nonsymptomatic cysts may be watched over time
- **Medications:** Hormonal treatments (ex. birth control pills) help reduce symptoms
- **Surgery:** Laparoscopic removal or drainage of endometriomas

## Resources

Scan for more information!



## Impacts on Infertility

Endometriomas can increase infertility risk by causing inflammation, scar tissue, and damage to ovarian function. However, studies show surgery can improve fertility. For example, one large study found that over 50% of women became pregnant within two years after surgical removal of the endometrioma.

**If you are concerned that you may be suffering with an ovarian endometrioma, contact a healthcare provider to form a personalized care plan.**