



DIET AND LIFESTYLE CHANGES THAT MAY HELP MANAGE ENDOMETRIOSIS SYMPTOMS

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Lifestyle changes won't cure endometriosis, but research shows that they can sometimes help reduce pelvic pain and improve your overall quality of life.

DIETS AND NUTRITION

Mediterranean Diet (MD)

A well-studied diet that focuses on eating anti-inflammatory foods, like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, fish, nuts, and olive oil.

Gluten-Free Diet (GFD)

A diet that eliminates gluten-containing grains like wheat, barley, and rye, as well as the processed foods that contain them. Originally created to address Celiac's Disease.

Low FODMAP Diet (LFD)

A structured diet originally designed for IBS that limits short-chain carbohydrates (FODMAPs) that are harder for some people to digest.

Plant-Based or Vegetarian Diet

A diet that centers plant foods such as fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.

EXERCISE AND MOVEMENT

Yoga

A gentle practice that combines stretching, breathing, and relaxation to support both body and mind. It can be done at home or with an instructor.

- Helps reduce pelvic pain, stress, and tension.
- Linked to better sleep and overall quality of life.
- Accessible for many patients, even during flares.

Pilates

A low-impact form of exercise focused on strength, posture, and flexibility. It uses controlled movements to build endurance and core stability.

- May ease cramps and improve overall fitness.
- Encourages better alignment and balance.
- Can worsen pain if the pelvic floor is already tight.



EXERCISE AND MOVEMENT

Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy (PFPT)

A targeted therapy led by a trained physiotherapist to release and retrain pelvic floor muscles. It may include hands-on work, relaxation techniques, or biofeedback.

- Helps relax muscles that spasm and contribute to pelvic pain
- Supported by research for chronic pelvic pain and pain during sex
- Work with a licensed PFP therapist to avoid injuries or pain

Aerobic Activity (Walking, Swimming, Cycling)

Any activity that increases heart rate, such as walking, swimming, or cycling. Start with 5-10 minutes after checking with your doctor, then increase to 60 minutes 3 times a week.

- Boosts circulation and improves energy.
- May help lower endometriosis pain and cramping.
- Choose an activity you enjoy to stay motivated.



OTHER HELPFUL LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Stress Management

Taking a proactive approach to handling stress can help you cope with endometriosis. Consider activities like breathing exercises, meditation, art, journaling, or therapy.

- High stress raises cortisol levels in the body, which can trigger inflammation.
- Managing stress positively impacts both physical and emotional well-being.
- Works best when practiced consistently over time.

Sleep Hygiene

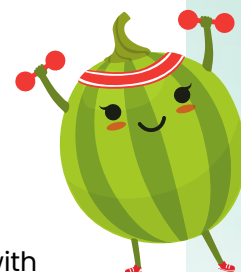
A set of habits that improve sleep quality, including consistent routines, avoiding screens before bed, and only using the bedroom for sleep/sex.

- Sleep is when the body heals (insomnia can impair the process).
- Good sleep routines directly improve fatigue and overall mood.
- Patients with pain may need to address that first to sleep well.

Cutting Back on Alcohol and Smoking

Drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes can increase inflammation and may interfere with hormone levels that make endometriosis worse. Limiting intake might help offset the risks.

- Reduce the number of drinks or cigarettes you have each week slowly over time.
- Replace smoking and drinking with healthier coping skills, like stress management.
- Call your doctor if you drink heavily or struggle to cut back. You may need help to quit.



FIND WHAT WORKS FOR YOUR ENDOMETRIOSIS

Individual experiences with endometriosis are unique. Factors like age, allergies, injuries, and medications can dictate whether the options in this handout are suitable for you. Speaking with your doctor is the best way to find the right fit.