



Lancashire  
Gynaecologist  
*Eric Mutema*



Raising Awareness of  
Endometriosis

Did you know that March 2023 was Endometriosis Action Month? Probably not because this condition which affects over 1.5M women in the UK has been woefully overlooked.

Here at the Lancashire Gynaecologist we want to help to raise awareness about this serious and painful condition, so please read on.

## What is endometriosis?

Endometriosis is when cells similar to those in the womb lining (uterus) are found elsewhere in the body – such as the ovaries and the fallopian tubes.

Each month these cells behave the same way as those in the womb, building up and then breaking down and bleeding. Unlike the cells in the womb that will leave the body as a period, this blood cannot escape.

Endometriosis is a serious and sometimes debilitating condition that can take a toll on a woman's mental well-being too. It's why it is so important that the condition is taken seriously and access to treatment improves. Fortunately, awareness of endometriosis has increased and there are now many treatments that can help.



## Symptoms

Endometriosis symptoms can vary and so can their severity. Common symptoms of endometriosis include:

- pain in the lower abdomen, pelvis or back – which worsens during your period
- incapacitating period pain
- pain during or after sex
- pain when urinating or having a bowel movement during your period
- nausea, constipation, diarrhoea, or blood in your urine or stools during your period
- difficulty getting pregnant
- heavy periods that need a lot of pads or tampons – some women will bleed through clothing.

As we've noted, it can also have a big impact on mental health and may sometimes lead to depression.



## Getting a diagnosis

Endometriosis is a complex condition; we know what it is, a disorder where the tissue that normally lines the womb (endometrium) is found elsewhere in the body, like the ovaries, or the bowels, but it is less clear why it happens. There are various theories but no conclusive explanation.

That is one of the reasons it can be so difficult for GPs to diagnose. The symptoms of endometriosis are wide-ranging and can be similar to those of many other conditions. A GP won't always be able to identify endometriosis as the problem immediately because it is not always apparent straight away.

You should not be discouraged by this. The charity Endometriosis UK which is leading the way in raising awareness of the condition encourages all women who think they might have endometriosis to share as much information as possible about their symptoms with their GP. This helps to speed up the process of diagnosis and enables women to get the care they need.

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## How the Lancashire Gynaecologist can help

It's good news about the increased awareness of endometriosis and the widespread concern that women who suffer from it are being neglected and deserve better treatment.

Less good news is that NHS England data published in October 2022 showed that here in the north west, we have one of the longest average wait times to see a gynaecologist on the NHS – a staggering 18.6 weeks.

No woman should wait so long for such important treatment, particularly if they are in pain and the impact it has on her life and relationship is negative.

The Lancashire Gynaecologist, Mr Eric Mutema is an expert in women's health and a Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist. If you are concerned that you might have endometriosis, his knowledge and expertise in women's healthcare; combined with his excellence in patient-centred care, empathy and consideration for the individual, will provide you with the best possible treatment to help you manage the condition. Please get in touch with us for more information or to book an appointment.

We also recommend visiting the **Endometriosis UK** website. It is a valuable source of information for any woman who has, or thinks she might have, endometriosis.



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