What Is Endometrial Cancer?

Endometrial cancer is a type of uterine cancer that develops in the inner lining of the uterus and is the most common cancer that affects a woman's reproductive system.

Why Postmenopausal Women Are High-Risk

Although ovaries stop making estrogen and progesterone after menopause, estrogen is still made in fat tissue. This causes a hormone imbalance that leads to a higher risk for endometrial cancer.

Some Common Signs & Symptoms

- Bleeding or spotting between periods
- Vaginal bleeding after menopause
- Pain during sex
- Pelvic pain or pressure

These are not all of the symptoms of endometrial cancer and they could be caused by other conditions. These symptoms could be easily overlooked, so it is important to talk to your healthcare provider about any symptoms of concern as soon as they arise. If you experience any of these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider.

Methods of Diagnosis

- Pelvic exam: An examination where a HCP carefully feels the uterus, vagina and ovaries to check for any abnormalities
- Ultrasound: An exam that measures the endometrium thickness and uterus size
- Tissue sampling:
  - Biopsy: A procedure that removes a small amount of tissue for examination under a microscope
  - Hysteroscopy: The insertion of a thin, flexible tube with a light on it through the vagina so the HCP can view the lining of the uterus and take a tissue sample
  - Dilation & curettage (D&C): A procedure to remove tissue samples from the uterus to examine for cancer cells

Survival Rate Disparity

Although women overall have a 95% chance of surviving endometrial cancer, a study found that Black women have a 90% higher five-year mortality risk compared to white women.

Fun Fact

The uterus is 3” long (in most non-pregnant women).

Postmenopausal Women and Endometrial Cancer

Fluctuating hormones and higher levels of estrogen can increase the risk for endometrial cancer

Who Is at Risk for Endometrial Cancer?

Anyone with a uterus can be diagnosed with endometrial cancer, but most cases are found in postmenopausal women.

Some Common Risk Factors

- Being overweight or having obesity
- Being underweight
- Never having been pregnant
- Having Lynch syndrome
- Having metabolic syndrome, a cluster of conditions that put you at higher risk for heart disease and Type 2 diabetes
- Having conditions, such as polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), or taking medications, such as estrogen, that affect hormone levels
- Getting your period early or late menopause
- Being overweight or having obesity
- Having a family history of breast, ovarian, or endometrial cancer

Did You Know?

The uterus is 3” long (in most non-pregnant women).

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