

Does your partner
have endometriosis?

Do you feel helpless
while watching her
battle this disease?

Do you want to learn
more about the
disease and figure
out ways to help
your partner cope?

Even though you
can't stop the pain,
there are many ways
you can support her and
your relationship.



The Endometriosis Foundation of America (EFA) strives to fund research, raise disease awareness, educate the public and healthcare professionals, as well as advocate for patients. Our ENPOWR Project (ENDometriosis: Promoting Outreach and Wide Recognition) is an education program that promotes early intervention for the disease in schools and community-based organizations. If you would like The ENPOWR Project to visit your school, please contact us!

FOR RESOURCES AND INFORMATION,
OR TO MAKE A DONATION IN SUPPORT
OF OUR INITIATIVES, VISIT US ON THE WEB:
WWW.ENDOFOUND.ORG

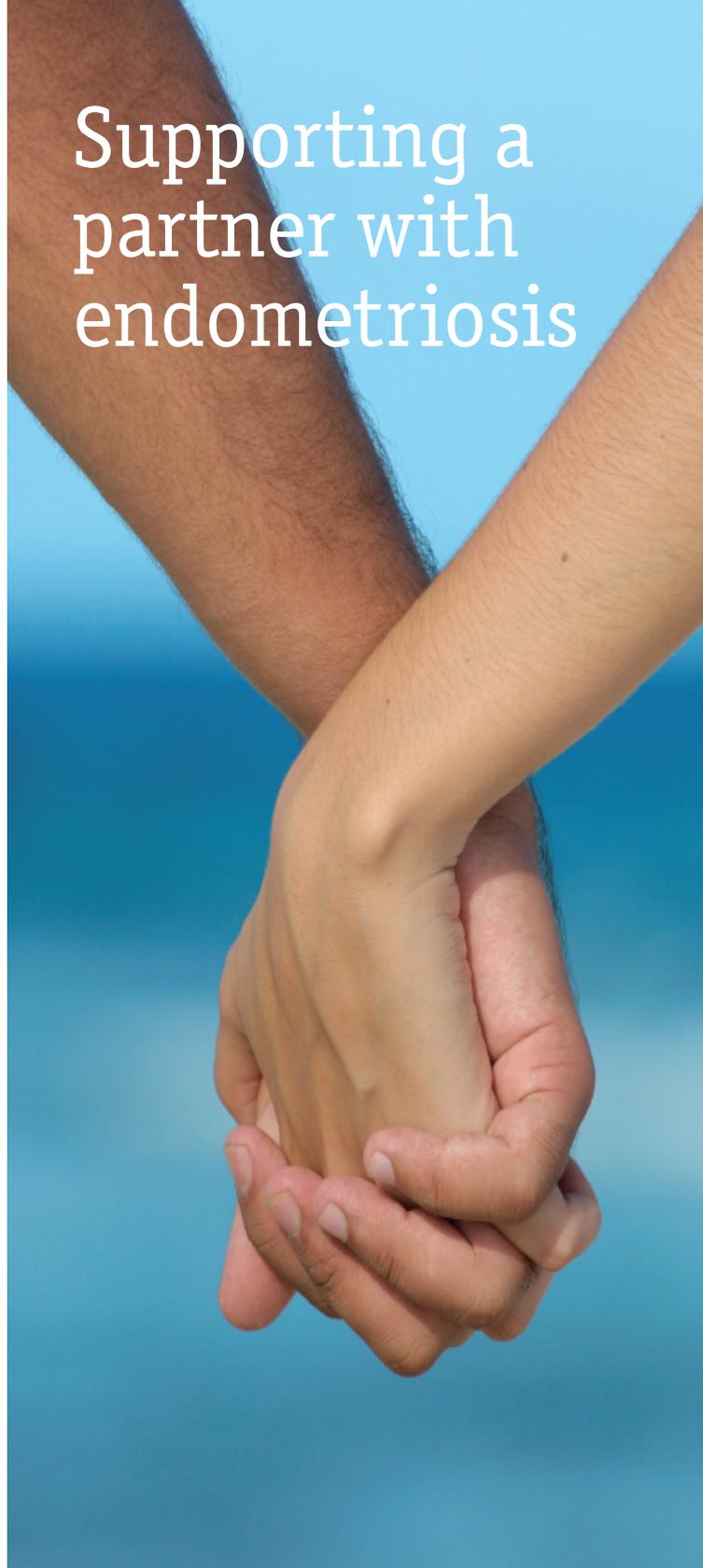
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Supporting a
partner with
endometriosis

Endometriosis affects your relationship.

Communication is key.

Find ways to enjoy each other.

Endometriosis is a debilitating disease, affecting 1 in 10 girls and women in the US. Those with mothers or close female relatives who have endometriosis are 5-7 times more likely to have it. Women can experience symptoms of endometriosis throughout their entire menstrual cycle, although for many women, the most severe pain is just before and during their period. Some women have asymptomatic endometriosis, but experience infertility and/or pregnancy loss due to the disease.

Endometriosis affects not only the woman herself, but her relationships. Those who fall in love and spend their life with a woman with endometriosis need to have the information and coping skills to help her as she struggles with the disease. Conversations about endometriosis include: discussions about diagnosis and treatment; physical, sexual and mental health; the impact on daily life and overall quality of life; and acceptance of a chronic disease. Your unwavering support, from diagnosis through continued care, can make a positive difference in a patient's physical and emotional wellbeing. It is important to balance the role of caretaker and advocate, while also making sure the patient feels like an equal and needed part of the relationship.

Although excision surgery is the gold standard of treatment, even the best surgical care cannot completely cure endometriosis. It is important to recognize that although a surgery or a treatment may improve a patient's quality of life, endometriosis is a chronic and often unpredictable disease. Keeping attuned to your partner's changing needs through open communication is a way to make her feel loved and supported.

Be Educated

Learn about all aspects of endometriosis, from the medical, to the emotional and social. By understanding all aspects of the disease, it will make you a more patient and aware partner.

Be Helpful

Recognize that each day fighting this disease can look different from the next. Ask questions like, "What are your pain levels today?" and then plan the day accordingly. If you see her frustrated and overwhelmed ask, "Can I do anything to make today easier?"

Become an Advocate

Go to doctor appointments, take notes and ask informed questions. If your loved one has to miss family events, make sure your family understands exactly why. Stand up for her!

Be Mindful

Remind her that self-care is important and encourage her to take advantage of any and all resources that promote her wellbeing.

Endometriosis can be incredibly isolating. Your partner often may not be able to do the things her friends are doing. It is important to try and take everything one day at a time. Look to build each other up and remember your love for each other.

Take Advantage of the Good Days

Is your partner feeling great? Go on a date, see a movie, or take a walk in the park. Utilize this time by simply enjoying each other's company.

Be Thoughtful

Any way you can make your loved one smile is a way to give her the good energy she will need to keep fighting this disease.

Be Intimate

Physical intimacy is a very important part of a relationship. But intercourse can be incredibly painful for some patients due to the location of their disease. Be supportive of your partner's needs and explore creative ways to be intimate that are not painful for her.

Be Aware

Living with endometriosis can be stressful. Make sure not to take your anger and frustration with the disease out on your partner. Practice good self-care and recognize when you feel depleted and need a break.

**For more information visit
www.endofound.org.**

