

## INITIATIVES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Engaging in institutional collaborations with the leading global scientists, physicians, researchers, surgeons and societies including Johns Hopkins University, MIT's Center for Gynepathology, Michigan State University Department of Women's Health Research and AAGL.
- National dissemination of the country's first "Do you have endometriosis?" poster in schools, community centers, universities, and other public forums.
- Presenting keynote lectures to over 100 legislators in Washington, DC about the critical shortcomings in endometriosis education and advocacy, and recommending solutions to improve the lives of women across the nation.
- Establishing and supporting the nation's first Pathology Biorepository Research Core/Tissue Bank.
- Execution of the first CNE school nurse and nursing professional event designed to raise awareness among those closest to the adolescent endometriosis population. This program has been implemented as an annual event.
- Providing surgical fellowships and hosting annual scientific/surgical symposia to promote professional education and training for the next generation of surgeons, physicians, scientists, and nurses.
- Raising awareness through high-impact media campaigns and the support of notable public figures, including Susan Sarandon, Dr. Oz, Fared Zakaria, Whoopi Goldberg, Tyra Banks, Danskin®, Dial®, Google®, Kiehl's, *Glamour Magazine*, *The Today Show*, *The Wall Street Journal* and many others.
- Hosting our annual red carpet fundraising and awareness gala, The Blossom Ball.

**For more information about our activities and initiatives, please visit us online: [www.endofound.org](http://www.endofound.org)**



For resources and information,  
or to make a donation in  
support of our initiatives,  
visit us on the web:

[www.endofound.org](http://www.endofound.org)

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The Endometriosis Foundation of America  
is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

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ENDOMETRIOSIS  
FOUNDATION OF  
AMERICA



[endofound.org](http://endofound.org)

## WHAT IS ENDOMETRIOSIS?

During monthly menstruation, the female body sheds the endometrium - uterine lining - in the process commonly known as a "period". In women and girls who have endometriosis, some of these menstrual fluids are retained in the body and abnormally implant in areas outside of the uterus. These fluids have no way to exit and eventually accumulate on the bladder, bowel, ovaries, top of the vagina (the "cul de sac"), or other nearby organs, leading to the development of adhesions, scarring and invasive nodules.

Endometriosis can cause symptoms that vary from painful periods, chronic pelvic pain & inflammation, painful bowel movements, rectal pain and urinary pain or difficulty, to painful sexual activity and infertility.



**EARLY DETECTION** and  
**EARLY INTERVENTION**  
are the best prevention.

## POSSIBLE SIGNS OF ENDOMETRIOSIS

- **Painful menstruation**
- **Intermittent and/or chronic pelvic pain**
- **Bowel or urinary disorders**
- **Gastrointestinal and urinary tract distress**
- **Rectal pain**
- **Painful intercourse**
- **Severe cramps lasting more than 1-2 days**
- **Infertility and pregnancy loss**
- **Autoimmune-related disorders**

## WHO DOES ENDOMETRIOSIS AFFECT?

*Globally, an estimated 176 million women and girls suffer from endometriosis - at a staggering annual cost of nearly \$110 billion.*

As a leading cause of female infertility and debilitating pelvic pain, endometriosis is a disease characterized by missed opportunities for women in their most productive years. Those affected can experience great pain and severely diminished physical and emotional health – causing a negative impact on every aspect of a woman's life and of those who love her.

## OUR MISSION

The Endometriosis Foundation of America strives to increase disease recognition, provide advocacy, facilitate expert surgical training, and fund landmark endometriosis research. Engaged in a robust campaign to inform both the medical community and the public, the EFA places particular emphasis on the critical importance of early diagnosis and effective intervention while simultaneously providing education to the next generation of medical professionals and their patients.

## DISPELLING THE MYTHS

A common myth about endometriosis is that the more endometrial cells accumulated in the body outside of the uterine cavity, the more pain it causes for the woman. Any amount of endometriosis can cause pain, and the disease does not need to be advanced to cause significant symptoms. Likewise, higher stage disease may cause little to no symptoms in some women. Situations vary; moderate growth can trigger intense pain in some women while advanced growth causes less severe pain in others. Every woman's situation is unique and, therefore, expert medical evaluation is absolutely essential.



## TREATMENT OPTIONS

Although there is no cure for endometriosis, the disease is treatable. **Early diagnosis and timely intervention are crucial.** Unfortunately, women and girls are often misdiagnosed or directed to "manage" the pain with painkillers and other medications, but these simply mask symptoms of the disease. Patients are also misled to believe that the only long-term solution is the removal of the reproductive organs. This dangerous misconception is responsible for a majority of the countless and needless hysterectomies performed each year.

Laparoscopic excision surgery – when performed by experienced and specialized surgeons – is an effective and organ sparing option, largely considered the gold standard of treatment. Alternative therapies, such as diet and nutrition, acupuncture and other complementary treatments, may also help manage symptoms