

# well & you

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## Pelvic Congestion Syndrome Patient Journey



Scan the QR Code  
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explaining your  
Pelvic Congestion  
Syndrome Journey

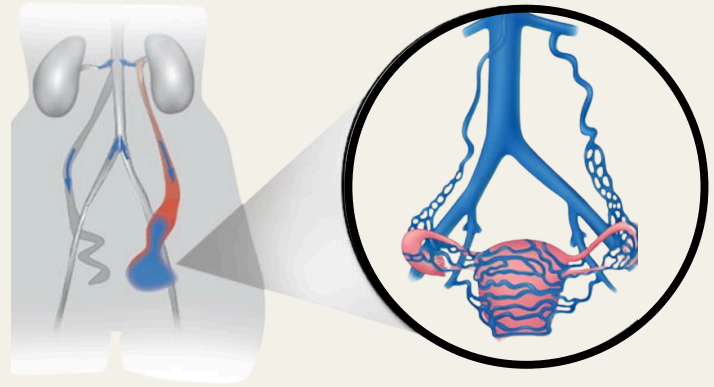


# Pelvic Congestion Syndrome (PCS)

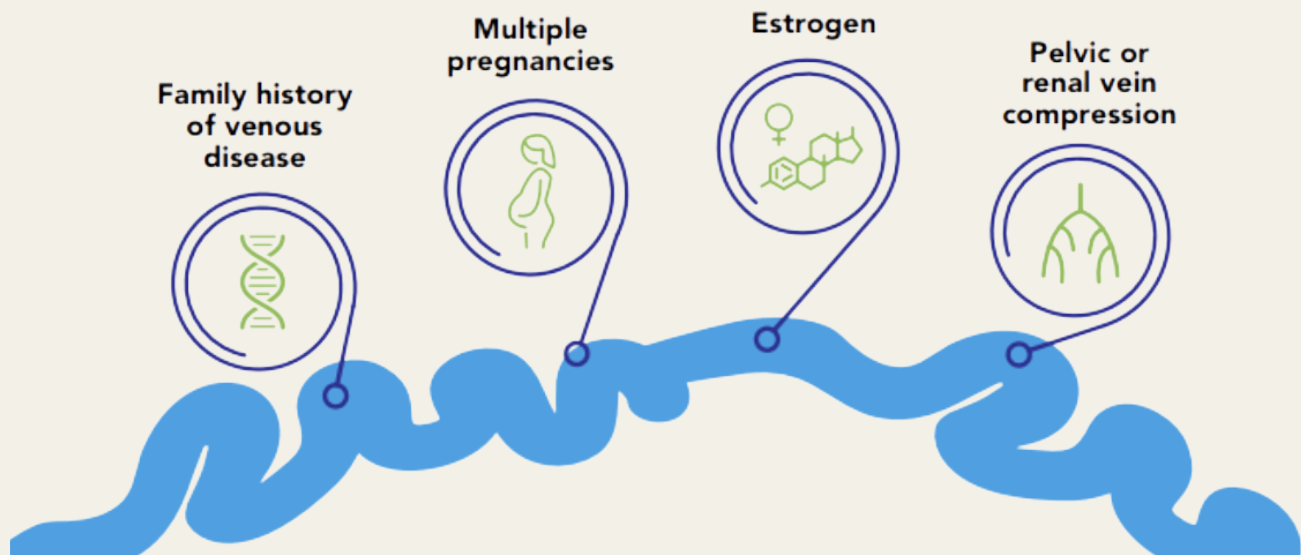
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## What is Pelvic Congestion Syndrome?

PCS is a condition that causes long-term pelvic pain, usually in women. It happens when veins in the pelvis get enlarged and don't work well, similar to varicose veins in the legs. Blood pools in these veins, leading to discomfort, pressure, or pain.



## What Causes PCS?



## Symptoms of PCS

- Dull ache and/or heaviness in the pelvis, often made worse by prolonged standing
- Bloating sensation
- Pain in the lower back
- Visible varicose veins on the buttocks, vulva, and upper thighs
- Painful menstrual cycles with referred pain in the legs
- Increased urination frequency
- Pain during and after intercourse

# Treatment: Vein Embolization

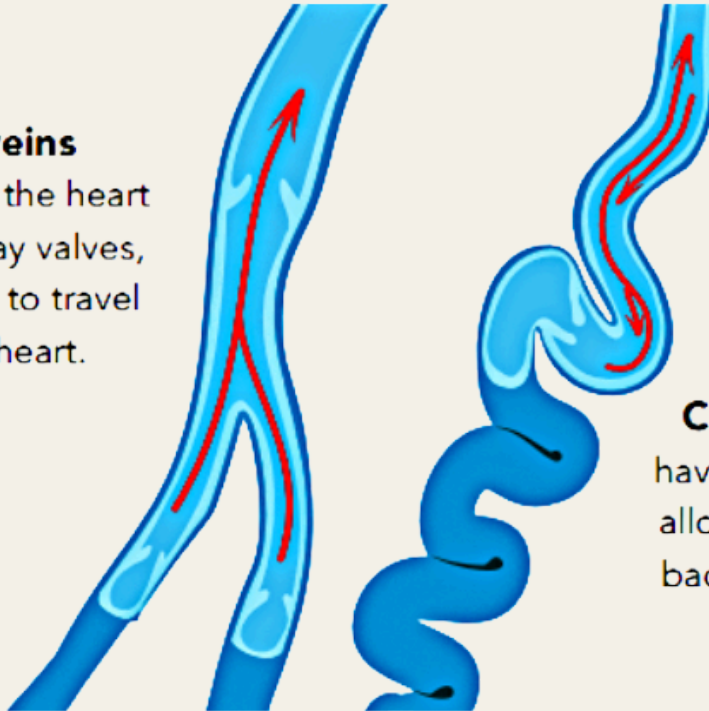
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## What is Vein Embolization?

It's a minimally invasive procedure to close off the problematic veins. This reduces blood pooling and relieves symptoms.

Embolization coils are used to close dilated veins in the pelvis.

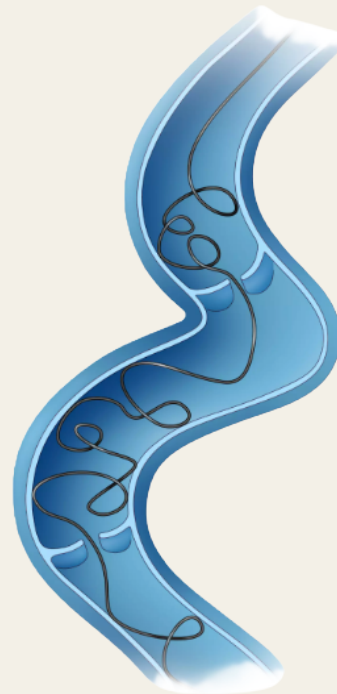
**Healthy veins**  
return blood to the heart  
through one-way valves,  
allowing blood to travel  
toward the heart.



**Congested veins**  
have weakened valves,  
allowing blood to flow  
backward and distend  
pelvic veins.

## Gonadal Vein Embolization

- Targets ovarian veins, a common source of PCS.
- A small tube (catheter) is inserted into a vein in your neck or groin.
- X-ray guides the tube to the ovarian veins, where tiny coils or a solution block the blood flow, shrinking the veins.



# Step-by-Step Treatment Journey

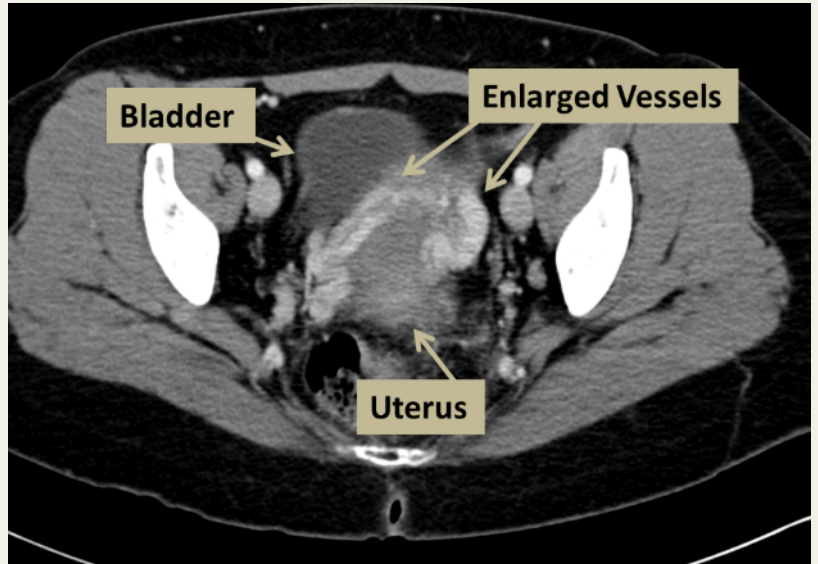
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## Step 1: Initial Consultation

- Share your symptoms (like pelvic pain lasting 3+ months).
- If needed, imaging tests (like an MRI) will be ordered.

## Step 2: Review Imaging

- If you have imaging results (CT, MRI, or ultrasound), your doctor will review them.
- If not, imaging will have been ordered.



Enlarged blood vessels surrounding the uterus.

## Step 3: Treatment Options

- Non-Dilated Gonadal Vein
  - If veins are not significantly enlarged, deeper veins may be checked using IVUS (Intravascular Ultrasound).
  - If a stent is needed, it will be placed, followed by regular check-ups (2 weeks, 2 months, and every 6 months for 2 years).
  - If not, alternative causes of pain will be explored.
- Dilated Gonadal and Iliac Veins
  - Step 1: Gonadal Vein Embolization to reduce symptoms.
  - Step 2: Assess for Iliac Vein Stenting
    - If stenting is done, follow-up includes regular check-ups.
    - If stenting is not suitable (due to age, pregnancy plans, or personal preference), symptoms will be monitored with follow-ups every 3-6 months for 2 years.

# Pelvic Congestion Syndrome FAQs

## What happens at my first appointment?

- Your doctor will ask about your symptoms in detail.
- If you have imaging (CT, MRI, or ultrasound), it will be reviewed.
- If no imaging is available, tests like a CT scan or MRI might be scheduled to check for enlarged veins.

## What happens during the procedure?

- You'll lie on a table, and the insertion site will be numbed with a local anesthetic.
- You might receive mild sedation to help you relax.
- The procedure usually takes 1–2 hours.
- You may feel slight pressure as the catheter is guided but no significant pain.

## What procedures might I need?

- **Gonadal Vein Embolization:** A small tube is inserted into a vein in the groin or neck and guided to the ovarian veins. Coils or agents are used to block faulty veins.
- **Iliac Vein Stenting (if necessary):** A stent is placed in deeper veins to improve blood flow.



## What are the benefits of vein embolization?

- **Minimally Invasive:** No big cuts, just a tiny puncture for the catheter.
- **Quick Recovery:** Most people are back to normal in 1–2 days.
- **Symptom Relief:** Many patients experience much less pain and discomfort.
- **Avoids Surgery:** No need for major procedures like hysterectomy or vein stripping.
- **Outpatient Procedure:** Done in a few hours, and you can go home the same day.

## How long do procedures take?

Each procedure typically takes 1–2 hours.

## Will it hurt?

- You might feel slight pressure during the procedure, but it shouldn't hurt.
- Some soreness or mild cramping is normal for a few days afterward.

## Do you use anesthesia?

Yes, a local anesthetic is applied to numb the catheter site, and light sedation is used to keep you comfortable.

## What's recovery like?

- You'll rest for 30 minutes to a few hours after the procedure.
- Mild soreness or bruising near the catheter site is common but goes away quickly.
- Most people return to light activities the next day and full activities within a week.

# Pelvic Congestion Syndrome FAQs

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## Are there risks?

- Mild pain or cramping for a few days.
- Low risk of infection or bleeding at the catheter site.
- Rarely, irritation in nearby tissues from the procedure.

## What if I don't treat PCS?

- Pelvic pain may get worse and affect your daily life.
- Blood pooling can cause varicose veins in the legs or other areas.

## How will I know if it's working?

- You'll likely feel less pain and discomfort within 2–3 weeks.
- Full results may take a few months as veins heal and shrink.
- If symptoms persist or worsen, let your doctor know.

## How many follow-ups will I need?

- With Stenting:
  - 2-week follow-up with an ultrasound.
  - 2-month follow-up.
  - Every 6 months for 2 years.
- Without Stenting:
  - 3-month follow-up.
  - Every 6 months for 2 years to monitor your progress

## Understanding Pain and Sedation During Your Procedure

Everyone experiences pain and sedation differently, and your comfort level during the procedure can depend on several factors, including your body's response to anesthesia. For example, individuals who regularly consume alcohol or those living with chronic pain may require adjustments to achieve the right level of sedation.

Our goal is to ensure you are as comfortable as possible while keeping your safety our top priority. While we aim to provide effective pain relief, it's important to recognize that over-sedation carries certain risks, which our medical team carefully monitors and manages.