

The Association between the Mediterranean diet (MD) & Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS)



Maria Aoun
Licensed Dietitian

Faculty of Health Sciences, NDU



Nancy Trezia
Licensed Dietitian

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a common yet often undiagnosed health condition affecting a significant number of women worldwide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the prevalence of PCOS ranges from 8 to 13%, with an alarming 38-88% of affected women being overweight or obese. Currently, 70% of women with PCOS remain undiagnosed, highlighting the need for increased awareness and early detection.

PCOS is a multifaceted disorder that can have far-reaching consequences if left unaddressed. It is recognized as the leading cause of infertility among women, making it crucial for individuals and healthcare professionals alike to understand and manage its complexities.

The exact cause of PCOS remains unknown, but it is characterized by several key factors: irregular menstruation, polycystic ovaries, ovarian dysfunction, hyperandrogenism, anovulation, and hormonal imbalances. These manifestations contribute to a range of potential complications, including metabolic issues, obesity, infertility, an elevated risk of pregnancy complications, cardiovascular disease, and even endometrial cancer.

Fortunately, proactive management strategies can significantly improve the quality of life for individuals with PCOS. Nutritional interventions play a pivotal role, with a focus on achieving a 5% weight loss through a combination of a balanced diet and regular exercise. Dietary recommendations include the incorporation of omega-3 fatty acids, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, along with the importance of regular, balanced meals, non-fat dairy, and low glycemic foods.

One of the promising dietary approaches that caught attention in recent studies is the Mediterranean diet (MD). While research is ongoing, initial findings suggest that the MD may offer benefits for PCOS management. This diet, rich in monounsaturated fatty acids and whole grains, has shown positive outcomes such as weight reduction, improvements in lipid profiles, anthropometric measurements, as well as restoration of menstrual regularity.

The Mediterranean diet's emphasis on a variety of nutrient-dense foods, coupled with its potential to address specific PCOS-related concerns, makes it a compelling option for those navigating the challenges of this syndrome. While more research is needed to establish conclusive evidence, the initial positive results underscore the importance of considering dietary choices in the comprehensive management of PCOS.

In conclusion, raising awareness about PCOS, its prevalence, and associated risks is crucial for early detection and intervention. By incorporating holistic approaches, including nutritional management and lifestyle modifications, individuals with PCOS can take proactive steps towards improving their overall health and well-being. The journey may be challenging, but with informed choices and ongoing research, the path to managing PCOS becomes a more navigable one.



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