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PCOS on the rise: Younger women are being diagnosed

Associated with irregular menstrual cycles, excess facial and body hair, acne, heavier weight, reduced fertility, and increased risk of diabetes, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a complex hormonal condition that affects about 10% of women



Aneska Fonseca

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), one of the most common hormonal disorders among women, is now affecting girls long before they finish school. Characterised by high levels of male hormones, irregular periods, and cysts on the ovaries, PCOS impacts approximately 1 in 5 women in India. "My youngest patient was just 8. I've treated girls as old as 16 who still haven't gotten their first period," says Dr Neha Khadpe, a gynaecologist practicing in St Inez. "In the past 30 years, cases have increased in leaps and bounds, almost every other woman struggling with infertility has PCOS," says Dr Roque Ribeiro, a gynaecologist with over five decades of experience.

Junk food and sedentary routines: THE MAIN CULPRITS



The modern lifestyle, characterised by high sugar intake and prolonged periods of sitting, is a major contributing factor to PCOS. Excess sugar, particularly from soft drinks and processed snacks, leads to the overproduction of insulin, the hormone responsible for regulating blood glucose levels. Elevated insulin levels, in turn, increase the production of male hormones (androgens), which disrupts ovulation, a key feature of PCOS. High androgen levels can result in symptoms such as excessive hair growth, acne, and irregular periods. Dr Neha says, "We're seeing more young women develop PCOS, almost 20 percent of the population, due to the prevalence of junk foods in the diet. Unhealthy eating patterns, lack of exercise and high stress levels are the leading cause behind PCOS."



DID YOU KNOW?

- According to the WHO, 1 in 6 people suffer from infertility
- 1 in 5 Indian women suffer from PCOS
- Nearly 70 percent of PCOS cases remain undiagnosed according to the WHO

Taking charge: SIMPLE LIFESTYLE SHIFTS TO MANAGE PCOS

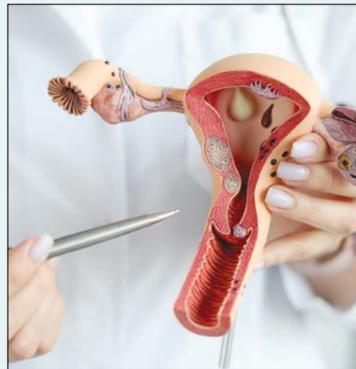
While many practitioners prescribe oral contraceptive pills (OCPs) to regulate menstrual cycles and Metformin to regulate blood sugar levels, "The mainstay of treatment of PCOS is lifestyle changes," advises Dr Roque. The pillars of PCOS management include reducing sugar intake, exercising regularly, and managing stress.

"When I was first diagnosed at the age of 16, I was prescribed medication to regularise my periods, but over time I've realised exercise is what works best. Compared to medication, I feel exercise should be the first priority," says 22-year-old Siyanda Rodrigues.

When it comes to diet, say no to refined carbs, sugary drinks, and junk food, and instead opt for whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Regular exercise is also key, aim for at least 30 minutes of movement daily, as even brisk walking and yoga can make a noticeable difference over time. Additionally, managing stress is crucial, as chronic stress can worsen hormonal imbalances. Techniques like deep breathing, meditation, or simply ensuring you get enough sleep can help in managing stress levels effectively.



PCOS SYMPTOMS ARE NOT ONE SIZE FITS ALL



For many women, PCOS first manifests as irregular periods or difficulty conceiving, often leading to a visit to the gynaecologist. Common symptoms also include weight gain, difficulty losing weight, and excessive facial or body hair. Jerusha D'Souza, 26 shared, "My periods used to be very irregular sometimes lasting as long as 29 days, often accompanied with painful cramps. This eventually led to my diagnosis at the age of 19." However, PCOS is a spectrum,

manifesting in different ways for each woman. Lesser-known and often overlooked symptoms include fatigue, mood swings, skin darkening around the neck, groin, or underarms, and cystic acne. Many young women, like 21-year-old Anaruella Pereira, who struggle with breakouts often visit a dermatologist, initially seeking treatment for cystic acne. Dr Neha Khadpe says, "We work in conjunction to rule out PCOS, since skin issues like acne or excess hair growth can often stem from underlying hormonal imbalances."

If left untreated, women with PCOS are at higher risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, anxiety, depression, and infertility.



Pedal for the planet: Celebrating World Bicycle Day

World Bicycle Day, observed annually on June 3, is a global celebration of one of the simplest yet most impactful modes of transport: the bicycle. Many celebrities from both Hollywood and Bollywood have embraced cycling, using it not only for leisurely rides but also as a means of daily commuting

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Declared by the United Nations General Assembly in April 2018, World Bicycle Day on June 3, recognises the bicycle's uniqueness, longevity, and versatility,

calling it a "simple, affordable, reliable and environmentally fit" way to move through the world.

In 2025, the theme 'Cycling for a Sustainable Future' highlights how this humble two-wheeler continues to promote unity, good health, and eco-conscious living. Across the globe, cycling has gained popularity not just as a fitness trend but also as a sustainable way to connect with nature and reduce one's carbon footprint.

The charm of cycling lies in its flexibility—riders can choose their own routes, enjoy the peace and cool of early mornings, avoid traffic and pollution, and even meet fellow cyclists, turning it into a social activity. Many celebrities have



Saiyami Kher embraced cycling both for leisure and commuting.

A heartwarming video of Shahid Kapoor teaching his son Zain to cycle, using a towel for balance, recently went viral. Tennis legend Novak Djokovic, 38, described a bike ride around the Arc de Triomphe—just before his French Open win over Corentin Moutet—as an "adrenaline experience."

HOLLYWOOD AND BOLLYWOOD STARS ON TWO WHEELS

Hugh Jackman includes cycling in his daily routine to maintain his Wolverine physique and has credited it for helping him through his separation from Deborra-Lee Furness.

Jennifer Aniston was once a bike messenger in New York City at 19. She still cycles and follows the "15-15-15" workout, 15 minutes each on a bike, elliptical, and treadmill.

Leonardo DiCaprio, a long-time environmentalist, is regularly seen cycling through major cities, making it part of his eco-friendly lifestyle.

Saiyami Kher, an actress and sports enthusiast, became the first Indian actress to complete the Ironman 70.3 triathlon in 2024. She frequently cycles for fitness and as a means of sustainable commuting.

Neha Dhupia combines cycling and sprinting as part of her fitness routine and advocates eco-conscious living. She's often seen cycling through Mumbai and



Neha Dhupia and Angad Bedi

encouraging her followers to reduce emissions.

Angad Bedi, known for his fitness and discipline, chooses to cycle rather than drive, promoting a cleaner, less congested environment.

As World Bicycle Day rolls in, it's the perfect excuse to hop on a bike, breathe in the fresh air, and make a small but meaningful step towards a healthier, greener planet.



Taylor Swift and Selena Gomez enjoyed a stylish girls' night out in New York, days after Taylor celebrated regaining ownership of her masters. Taylor wore a chic black dress, while Selena opted for a cosy all-brown look with an oversized coat.

SWIPE RIGHT Lady Gaga joins the cast of 'Wednesday' Season 2



Netflix thrilled fans at its Tudum 2025 live event by revealing the first six minutes of 'Wednesday' Season 2 and announcing Lady Gaga as a guest star. The surprise came during the event's dramatic finale at the Kia Forum in Los Angeles. Lady Gaga emerged from a coffin to join series lead Jenna Ortega on stage, performing 'Zombieboy' and 'Abracadabra' from her upcoming album 'Mayhem', along with fan-favourite 'Bloody Mary' from 'Born This Way'. Dressed in a structured blood-red gown, voluminous blonde hair and bold gothic makeup, Gaga captivated the crowd with a performance fit for the Addams Family. Before her set, the cast of 'Wednesday', including Ortega, officially confirmed Gaga's role in Season 2.

Vanessa Kirby debuts baby bump at 'Fantastic Four' event

Vanessa Kirby, the 37-year-old actress, revealed she is expecting her first child while attending 'The Fantastic Four: First Steps' panel at the CCXPMX Film Festival in Mexico City. Kirby graced the red carpet in a shimmering, form-fitting Schiaparelli dress in cobalt blue, paired with black sandals, proudly cradling her baby bump as she posed for photographers. She was joined at the event by her Marvel co-stars Pedro Pascal, Joseph Quinn, and Ebon Moss-Bachrach. Kirby is currently in a relationship with retired American lacrosse player Paul Rabil. The couple went public via Instagram in November 2023, when Rabil, 39, shared several photos of them together with a heartfelt caption, calling life with Kirby "far better, more purposeful and more beautiful."



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