

## Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)

This fact sheet offers generic advice on PCOS but everyone is different. It is therefore beneficial to have a personal health and nutrition assessment to get specific advice for YOU!

All hormones in the body are produced and regulated by the endocrine system. Organs and glands in the endocrine system include the pituitary gland, thyroid, pancreas, adrenal glands and ovaries. PCOS is caused by hormonal imbalance of the ovaries but, quite often, other endocrine organs are also affected. It is advisable to keep an eye on your blood sugar levels to ensure the pancreas is producing sufficient insulin.

PCOS symptoms are varied and quite obscure which is why it often goes undiagnosed.

Common symptoms include:

- acne
- increased facial and body hair
- irregular periods
- intolerance to heat/hot weather
- insulin resistance
- weight gain

*On the latter point, if weight gain is a symptom for you (it isn't for everyone) then reducing your carbohydrate intake at night will help.*

### **Food**

#### **Include:**

- Mostly low Glycaemic Index (GI) foods
- Plenty of fresh 'low sugar' fruit (e.g. apples oranges, mandarins)
- Non-starchy vegetables (e.g. carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, spinach)
- Fish - at least 3 times a week
- Whole grains, seeds and nuts
- Watercress in your salads
- Flax seeds

#### **Exclude:**

- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Processed foods (i.e. lots of additives, preservatives and colourings)
- High fat foods

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- Sugary foods, including honey and syrup
- Food additive 320 (butylated hydroxyanisole)

### Helpful Supplements

- Zinc (15mg)
- Chromium (500mg)
- Omega-3 (with at least 800mg of both EPA & DHA)
- Inositol (1000mg)
- Magnesium (500mg)
- Vitamin B6 (100mg)
- Vitamin B12 (100mcg)

### Beneficial Herbs

- Kava kava
- Siberian ginseng
- Bladderwrack
- St John's Wort (*but not if you are taking anti-depressants or oral contraceptives*)