🏥 What is PCOS?

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a common hormonal disorder that affects individuals of reproductive age. It occurs due to an imbalance of reproductive hormones, leading to:

- **Irregular ovulation or anovulation** (lack of egg release), which can cause infertility.
- **Irregular or absent menstrual cycles**.
- **Acne and excessive hair growth (hirsutism)**.
- **Weight gain or obesity**.

⚠️ Long-Term Health Risks of PCOS

If left untreated, PCOS can have several long-term health implications: ✅ **Endometrial Cancer Risk**: Infrequent menstrual periods (less than two in six months) can lead to an overgrowth of the uterine lining (endometrial hyperplasia), increasing the risk of endometrial cancer. ✅ **Metabolic Health Risks**: Higher risk of **insulin resistance, Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and abnormal cholesterol levels** – all of which contribute to cardiovascular diseases. ✅ **Mental Health Considerations**: PCOS may be associated with **anxiety, depression, and body image concerns** due to hormonal imbalances and physical symptoms.

🔷 Long-term management with a **GP, endocrinologist, and dietitian** is key to preventing complications.

🔬 How is PCOS Diagnosed?

PCOS is diagnosed using a combination of:

- **Symptoms**: Irregular periods, acne, excessive hair growth.
- **Blood Tests**: Measuring hormone levels.
- **Ultrasound**: Checking for enlarged ovaries with multiple small follicles.

✔️ According to the **Rotterdam Criteria**, PCOS is diagnosed if at least two of the following are present:

- **Irregular or absent ovulation** (causing menstrual irregularities).
- **Elevated androgens (male hormones)** leading to acne and excessive hair growth.
- **Polycystic ovaries on ultrasound**.

Other medical conditions that mimic PCOS should be ruled out before confirming the diagnosis.

🩺 How is PCOS Treated?

PCOS management is **personalized** based on symptoms, reproductive goals, and long-term health risks.

🔷 Lifestyle Modifications

- 🏋️ **Weight Loss**: Losing **5% of body weight** can restore ovulation, improve menstrual regularity, and reduce symptoms.
- 🍏 **Healthy Diet**: A balanced, low-glycemic index diet improves insulin sensitivity.
- 🚶 **Regular Exercise**: At least **150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week** benefits metabolism and hormone balance.

🔷 Fertility Treatment

- If pregnancy is desired, ovulation-inducing medications like **letrozole or clomiphene citrate** may be prescribed.
- **Metformin** (to improve insulin sensitivity) can aid ovulation.
- **In-vitro fertilization (IVF)** may be considered if other treatments are unsuccessful.

🔷 Menstrual and Hormonal Regulation

- If pregnancy is not desired, **combined oral contraceptives** or **cyclic progestogens** help regulate periods and protect the uterine lining.
- **Anti-androgen medications** reduce excessive hair growth and acne.

📌 When to See a Doctor

Seek medical advice if you experience:

- **Irregular or absent periods**.
- **Difficulty conceiving**.
- **Excessive hair growth, acne, or unexplained weight gain**.

💡 **Early management of PCOS can help prevent complications and improve quality of life. Consult your healthcare provider today!**