# What is endometriosis – video transcript

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (00:02):**

So endometriosis is a medical condition, where cells that are similar to the lining of the uterus are found outside the uterus. And this can be from anywhere like the ovary, the bowel, the bladder, and even within the muscle of the uterus itself.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (00:18):**

The symptoms can vary in everyone. Some people have no symptoms at all. For other people, it's severe period pain, pain with sex, pain when they go to empty their bowel or their bladder, and they can have symptoms that occur with their periods, like fatigue and bloating, that occur once every cycle.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (00:38):**

So we can make a working diagnosis of endometriosis based on your history and sometimes performing an examination. We also have specialist ultrasound scans that can give us some information that endometriosis might be present. We might do this in patients who are younger, or in patients who want to avoid surgery. Ultimately, the only way to know for certain if you have endometriosis is to perform a laparoscopy, which is keyhole surgery, where we put a camera in through your belly button to have a look and see whether there's endometriosis there. We can often treat the endometriosis at the same time if we find it.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (01:15):**

Endometriosis is an inflammatory condition, so when we manage endometriosis, we try and target all the different areas that may increase that inflammation. We use triangular approach when we manage endo, so we look at the conservative stuff, the medical stuff and the surgical stuff in managing you properly.

The conservative stuff can include things like optimising your diet, increasing exercise, looking at your sleep, and minimising stress overall. From a medical point of view, we look at non-hormonal strategies, which can be painkillers, like paracetamol, or anti-inflammatories, to manage your symptoms when they're there, but they do nothing to stop the progression of the disease

So in the mainstay of medical management, we are looking at hormone therapy, and that can include things like the old contraceptive pill or other progesterone hormones to manage your symptoms. The last part of the triangle is surgical management, and that can include a laparoscopy, a camera in through your belly button to have a look and treat endometriosis if it's there.

**Dr Pav Nanayakkara (02:16):**

For anyone with severe period pain, the most important thing to recognise is that it's not normal and you don't need to put up with it. So go and speak to your GP, who may or may not refer you on to a women's health specialist or a gynaecologist to chat further. There's also plenty of online information and resources you can go to for help.

**End of transcript**

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