

# PCOS Magazine

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## Food = Abuse?

also:

- ~A review of the documentary, "Scrambled"
- ~PCOS on TV!
- ~Artificial Sweeteners



# Live Happier and Healthier with PCOS



Dr. Gretchen Kubacky, Psy. D.

## Question:

My health is a big concern to me, and my friends and family, but I'm uncomfortable talking about PCOS. How do I talk to them about such an intimate matter?

## Answer:

Sometimes feeling uncomfortable is about not having enough knowledge or information to feel like you can effectively communicate, but more often it's about feeling embarrassed or ashamed. The first thing to remember is that PCOS is not your fault – you didn't get it because you ate a bad diet, or didn't exercise enough, or anything like that.

PCOS is a genetically based disorder that you inherited, and/or that manifested as a result of a hormonal imbalance that you couldn't possibly have known about until you were diagnosed. As long as you're clear on that fact, you should be able to overcome any initial embarrassment.

Getting educated about the condition, and, in particular, how it affects you, your moods and feelings, your eating behaviors, your sleep, your fertility, etc. will also help you feel more confident talking about PCOS. As you learn more about what works for you – what makes you feel better, as opposed to worse – you'll be able to talk more effectively to your friends, family, and coworkers. Depending upon the extent of your PCOS, and how it impacts you, you might want to talk about:

- why you need to adhere to a schedule for eating (especially important in some work settings) or exercising;
- why you need to dedicate a bigger part of the family budget to medical appointments, supplements, or professional hair removal;
- why eating/exercising “normally” doesn't result in weight loss for you, and how frustrated that makes you feel;
- how sometimes you feel moody, irritable, depressed or anxious about PCOS;
- the time you need to take for yourself for self-care, stress reduction, and ensuring that you get plenty of sleep;

- how infertility affects you (if at all, or if you fear it might be a problem for you), and what your limitations are on talking about this potentially painful topic.

I recommend starting slowly, with your most intimate circle – spouse or partner, and immediate family members. Answer what you can and point them to resources such as this magazine so they can get better educated about your condition. As you feel more comfortable, introduce the topic with friends, extended family, or perhaps your boss.

The more you're able to own your PCOS, be knowledgeable about it, and empower and incorporate others to support you in your PCOS management, the more confident you'll feel with sharing your personal health concerns, worries, and triumphs. People want to help (most of the time), but they can't help you with the often invisible condition of PCOS unless you start making efforts to educate them, and enlist their support.

## About the Author:

Gretchen Kubacky, Psy.D. is a licensed clinical psychologist in West Los Angeles, who specializes in PCOS. She counsels you through your health challenges, work/life balance issues, and relationship issues. If you have questions for Dr. Gretchen or would like to learn more about her practice, please visit her website at [www.drkubacky.com](http://www.drkubacky.com).

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