



Dermoid Cyst; Symptoms and Treatment

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Introduction

A cyst is an abnormal growth that develops in a closed sac somewhere in the body. A dermoid cyst is a special type of cyst that contains skin and skin appendages, which include hair follicles and sweat glands. Dermoid cysts have different names depending on which part of the body they form and what types of structures are inside them. It can be a bit confusing. The dermoid cyst contains many types of cells, such as skin, hair, teeth, fat, bone and nerve cells, is called a teratoma.

Dermoid cysts may appear at birth and can be found in the face, spinal cord, or skull. Dermoid cysts may also develop in the ovaries in women during the child bearing years. Dermoid cysts of the ovary, also known as benign or mature teratoma, are the main focus of this article.

Dermoid cysts may be one or can occur in both ovaries. Their size ranges from tiny (about half an inch) to very large tumors that fill in the abdomen. These are the most common ovarian mass diagnosed in young adult women.

Many dermoid cysts of the ovary will not directly cause symptoms; however, if a dermoid cyst grows, it may result in complications due to encroachment upon neighboring structures. Some women with a dermoid cyst may have abdominal pain, abnormal vaginal bleeding, difficulty in urinating, or a dull ache in the lower back and thighs. In some cases, a dermoid cyst may grow large enough to put pressure on or twist the ovary. This may result in abnormal pain and bleeding. An enlarged dermoid cyst can also cause pain in the pelvic area, and pressure on the bladder may result in difficulty urinating.

Symptoms of a Dermoid Cyst

Possible symptoms of dermoid cyst include:

- Abdominal, pelvic, or severe lower back pain
- Dysuria (difficulty urinating) and urinary retention
- Menstrual pain that is worse than usual
- Nausea with or without vomiting
- Pain during sexual intercourse
- Unintentional weight gain
- Vaginal bleeding that is abnormal

Symptoms that might indicate a serious condition

In some cases, a dermoid cyst can be a serious condition that should be immediately cured in an emergency setting. Take immediate medical care if you, or someone you are with, have any of these serious symptoms including:

- Severe, sudden pain in abdomen
- Uncontrollable vomiting

Treatment

Treatment for a dermoid cyst begins with taking medical care from your health care provider. To determine whether you have dermoid cyst, your health care provider will ask you to undergo diagnostic testing.

Some women with a dermoid cyst may never have any of the symptoms. When symptoms do occur, however, you may need to undergo an abdominal ultrasound to determine the size and location of the cyst. Surgical removal is the treatment of choice for the dermoid cyst. A small number of ovarian dermoid cysts will become cancerous, so surgical removal is indicated.

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