

Appendix 1.1: Drug treatment and procedures for endometriosis

Name of drug/procedure	Effect of drug/procedure
Antiprostaglandins	Antiprostaglandins are administered as pain-relieving drugs that inhibit prostaglandin production associated with uterine contractions.
Combined oral contraceptive pill (COC)	COC's contain both oestrogen and progesterone hormones which when taken continuously, prevents menstrual periods and also the associated dysmenorrhoea and further retrograde menstrual transport.
Progestins	Progestins are the synthetic derivative of progesterone, which prevent endometrial implant growth by inhibiting oestrogen.
Danazol	Danazol provides a menopause like state by containing a weak testosterone derivative. It is taken continuously for six months and helps to decrease endometrial implants by its low oestrogen content. Danazol however needs to be taken with caution, as excessive or improper use can exacerbate symptoms associated with menopause as hot flushes and irritability and also masculinizing effects due to testosterone as increased body hair and a deeper voice.

Appendix 1.1: Drug treatment and procedures for endometriosis (continued)

Name of drug/procedure	Effect of drug/procedure
GnRH agonists	<p>These drugs are analogous to the gonadotrophin releasing hormones released from the anterior pituitary gland, which prevent the ovarian production of oestrogen and progesterone, causing an artificial menopause and aids in the degeneration of implants.</p>
Surgical treatment	<p>Currently, the only accurate way of diagnosing endometriosis is via laparoscopy or laparotomy.</p> <p>Laparoscopy involves a minor surgical incision where a thin optical device is inserted to help in the location of endometrial implants. Gas is pumped into the area to separate organs for better visualization of the lesion area and aid in its removal through surgical excision, an electric current or laser surgery.</p> <p>Laparotomy is a major surgical procedure used on women with extensive endometriosis adhesions affecting other abdominal areas as the bladder. This procedure is not frequently conducted for it involves a longer recovery period and exposure to anaesthetics.</p>