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PCOS and Heart Health

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I was diagnosed with polycystic ovary/ovarian syndrome (PCOS) when I was 16 (you can read more about my journey [here](#)). PCOS can lead to many complications, and with February being American Heart Month, I started thinking more about how PCOS can affect my heart. PCOS can lead to things like high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes, and heart disease. PCOS is not just a gynecological disorder; it's a metabolic and endocrine condition. It can affect your entire body.

Whether or not PCOS has a direct impact on heart problems, it's still a great motivator for me to take care of my general health. Maintaining a healthy body weight is one way to stay healthy that can have a huge impact. It can not only lower your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes but can also help keep your blood pressure under control and lower your risk of developing heart disease. This is **hugely** important to me! I try to eat a balanced diet without depriving myself of my favorite foods and make sure to get some movement each day. Some days, I go for a walk; others, I lift weights; and most days, I combine both. In the summer, I go for

hikes (they can get intense!). In the winter, I go skiing multiple times each month with an occasional snowshoe session or winter hike mixed in.

Avoiding smoking (or quitting if needed) is another excellent way to stay healthy. Smoking lowers the amount of oxygen that gets to your organs, which can cause high blood pressure, heart attacks, and strokes. I don't smoke, vape, or chew tobacco. I believe this not only helps me avoid Type 2 diabetes and heart problems but it also helps me stay physically active by not messing with my cardiovascular health and fitness. Living in Colorado means we get less oxygen per breath than people at sea level. I wouldn't do anything to make that number go down even more.

Seeing your doctor regularly can also help you stay healthy. They can help you monitor your health and track things like blood sugar, blood pressure, weight, and more to spot any minor issues (like high blood sugar) before they become more significant (like diabetes). I see my primary doctor yearly for a physical and other doctors as needed. I take an active role in my health by keeping detailed notes about any symptoms or changes I notice between visits and coming prepared with questions if needed.

Of course, I have no way of knowing if I'll have PCOS-related issues or other health issues in the future, but I do know that I'm doing everything I can to stay as healthy as possible by maintaining good habits that I hope to continue for the rest of my life.

Resources

[Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome: How Your Ovaries Can Affect Your Heart](#)

[Diabetes prevention tips from the American Diabetes Association](#)

[Menstrual Cycle Disorders May Be Linked to Increased Cardiovascular Disease Risk in Women](#)

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