

JESSICA So what is endometriosis? Just to get a background, in this room, how many people feel pretty comfortable with
OPOKU-ANANE: what endometriosis is and how patients are treated? I actually think that's almost the same as most of the gynecologists in the United States.

So endometriosis, it's a really debilitating cause of chronic pelvic pain. And we define chronic pelvic pain as at least six months of persistent pelvic pain. And it is associated with infertility in women, a very common disease. Most of the time we describe it as just the implantation of endometrial cells outside of the uterus. So your endometrial cells-- very weak pointer. See if I can make it work, oh. Not working anymore.

All right, well, the endometrial cells. So if this is your uterus or your womb here, the inside lining, the little red area in the middle of the triangle, that's your endometrium. And it's supposed to shed once a month when you have your period, go out through your cervix. But we know that in all women, a lot of the time, the cells actually go back through the fallopian tube and spill into the pelvis. So they can spill anywhere in the pelvis, in the bowel, on the bladder, and the ovaries. And when they do that, we call that endometriosis.

Now, the thing is that all women do this. All women, if you just take a look at women right after their menstrual period, will have some of these menstrual period cells inside the pelvis. But for some reason, women with endometriosis aren't able to naturally clear those cells. And those cells, if you think it's like menstruating inside your pelvis, cause a lot of inflammation and a lot of associated pain.

It is really common. So about 6% to 10% of women have endometriosis. And that's greater than 100 million women worldwide, yet most of us don't even know what endometriosis is. It's associated with chronic pelvic pain in 50%-- sorry. It's found in 50% to 70% of women with chronic pelvic pain, and in about 30% to 50%, this is actually a lower estimate, of women with infertility.

So I talked about it leading to a lot of inflammation. And the problem with inflammation is that the inflammation also leads to a lot of scar inside the pelvis. So we see women for endometriosis because of this associated pain from the inflammation. We also see women because of infertility. And those major causes lead to about \$20 billion spent annually in the United States for the treatment of endometriosis. It may include direct cost of the care and indirect cost of loss of work productivity.