What is Pelvic Congestion Syndrome?

Pelvic congestion syndrome is a chronic medical condition characterized by dull, aching pain in the lower abdomen and back. The pain can increase during and after intercourse, during menstrual periods, after being on your feet all day and during pregnancy. Caused by abnormal veins in the lower abdomen, pelvic congestion syndrome is similar to varicose veins in the legs. In both cases, the valves that help return blood to the heart become weakened and don’t close properly, which allows blood to flow backward and pool in the veins causing bulging veins, pressure and pain.

Many women with this disorder spend years trying to get an answer to their pelvic pain. Living with chronic pelvic pain not only affects her, but extends to interactions with her family, her friends, and her general outlook on life. If your doctor suspects pelvic congestion syndrome they may order further tests or scans to look for these enlarged pelvic veins.

What is the Embolization Treatment?

Embolization is a minimally invasive procedure performed by an interventional radiologist using imaging for guidance. During the outpatient procedure the interventional radiologist inserts a thin catheter, about the size of a strand of spaghetti into the femoral vein in the groin and guides it to the affected veins using X-ray guidance. In order to relieve the painful pressure, the interventional radiologist occludes the veins. Closing the faulty veins is completed by using tiny coils, and a sclerosing agent (the same type of material used to treat varicose veins).

What Happens Before the Procedure?

You will be contacted by one of our nurses to schedule a consultation where you will meet with the doctor and your questions will be answered. Your history and physical will be performed at that time.

Our office will check with your insurance provider and obtain the authorization if needed. This can take up to two weeks.

How do I prepare for the procedure?

- Do not eat anything solid after midnight the night before your procedure. You may drink sips of clear liquids such as coffee, juice, or water but avoid any milk products.
- **IV sedation and pain medication will be administered so you will need to have a driver when you leave the hospital.**

On the day of the procedure:
Please check in 1 hour and 15 minutes prior to your appointment time. This is at the main entrance (number 2) on the north side of Unity Point Iowa Methodist Medical Center. (Refer to map given to you at your consultation.).

Do You Have Questions Regarding Your Test?

Call: 515-226-9810  
E-Mail: schedule@iowaradiology.com