Participant Information for Participation in Medical-Scientific Research

Research on a Special Program for Pain After Endometriosis Surgery: The REHEP Study

Official Title: RTC on added value of multidisciplinary (multiple healthcare professionals) Rehabilitation for Recurrent Endometriosis Pain (REHEP).

Introduction

Dear Madam,

With this information letter, we would like to invite you to participate in a medical-scientific research study. Participation is voluntary. You have received this letter because you continue to experience abdominal pain after surgery for your endometriosis. In this letter, you will read about what the research entails, what it means for you, and the potential benefits and risks. There is a lot of information. Please take your time to read it and decide if you would like to participate. If you would like to participate, please fill out the form in Appendix D.

Ask Your Questions

You can make your decision based on the information in this letter. We also encourage you to do the following:

- Ask questions to the researcher providing you with this information.
- Discuss the study with your partner, family, or friends.
- Ask an independent expert for advice. Contact details are in Appendix A.
- Read more information on www.rijksoverheid.nl/mensenonderzoek.

1. General Information

The Máxima Medical Center has organized this research. Hereafter, we will refer to it as the ‘sponsor’. Researchers are conducting the study at various hospitals, including doctors, therapists, and research nurses.

We expect 178 participants in the study. The medical-ethical review board at the Máxima Medical Center has approved this study.

2. What is the aim of the research?

In the REHEP study, we evaluate how well the ‘Grip on Endometriosis’ program works for individuals with endometriosis who continue to experience pain after surgery. The program aims to reduce pain and improve quality of life. The 'Grip on Endometriosis' program is provided alongside normal care. We compare its effectiveness with normal care alone.

3. What is the background of the research?

1 in 10 women of reproductive age have endometriosis. In this condition, tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterine cavity. This can cause severe pain in the abdomen, back, and pelvis. This pain can be long-lasting (chronic). It can also cause infertility and a reduced quality of life. Surgery is a common treatment for endometriosis, but 10 to 58% of women still experience pain after surgery. Currently, there is no scientific evidence for alternative treatments. This study explores new treatments. We investigate whether a special pain program can help reduce pain and improve quality of life for these women[1]. This is important because patients with endometriosis want more than just painkillers, hormones, or another surgery. They want a more comprehensive approach that focuses on their life, not just the disease.

The program ‘Grip on Endometriosis’ lasts up to 4 months and is provided by different therapists:

- A pelvic physiotherapist helps with pain in the abdominal and pelvic floor areas. You will learn how to tighten and relax your pelvic floor muscles and how to improve your breathing. The pelvic physiotherapist will do an internal examination after the intake to find out what will help you the most and will then treat you, this will be a maximum of 6 internal examinations when needed. The internal examination will be done up to 7 times. If you do not consent to the internal examination, it will not be performed. It will also be stopped if it is too painful.
- A pain specialist physiotherapist helps with managing pain complaints.

[1] and persons born as women but who identify as men

- An occupational therapist and physiotherapist who help with managing your energy during daily activities (occupational therapy and graded activity).

In some cases, you may also receive an online mindfulness module.The program is tailored to each patient's needs. This is important because each patient has different symptoms, pain complaints, and unique needs and circumstances.

In addition to treatments, the program includes online education about pain (pain education). This helps patients better understand what pain is and how to manage it. This is an online module with several videos that explain pain education and include exercises. It takes about 1 hour in total.

4. How does the research proceed?

How long will the study last?

If you participate in the study, it will last approximately 18 months in total. The program 'Grip on Endometriosis' lasts up to 4 months. You will be followed for up to 18 months using questionnaires.

Step 1: Are you eligible to participate?

We first want to determine whether you are eligible to participate. You can participate in this study if:

- You are 18 years or older and have not yet reached menopause.
- You had surgery for endometriosis 3 to 24 months ago.
- You still experience or have recurring abdominal pain after the surgery.
- You are not satisfied with the outcome of the surgery.

Step 2: Treatment

We will divide participants into two groups:

- **Group 1:** People in this group will receive the tailored 'Grip on Endometriosis' program along with normal care.
- **Group 2:** People in this group will receive normal care, which could include medication, watchful waiting, or another surgery, depending on what you and the gynecologist decide is the best next step.

You will be randomly assigned to one of the groups.

Group 1: If you are assigned to the 'Grip on Endometriosis' program, you will receive both the program and normal care. The program lasts a maximum of 4 months, depending on your personal goals. It always includes education about how pain works, pelvic physiotherapy aimed at relaxation and pain reduction and graded activity and occupational therapy that helps with managing energy during daily activities. Together with the pelvic physiotherapist, you will decide what aspects of the program will be most beneficial for you. You will have an appointment with a physiotherapy practice near you about 1-2 times per week, which takes a maximum of one hour. This sums up to a minimum of 21 and a maximum of 36 appointments spread over 4 months. The practice is accessible to people with disabilities. You will also receive exercises to do at home. This means that in total, you will spend about 35 hours on all appointments and exercises, spread over 4 months. In Appendix C, you can find a schedule of what a treatment might look like.

Group 2: If you are assigned to normal care, you and your gynecologist will decide what the best next step is, whether that be medication, waiting, or a new surgery. After the study, if you wish, you can access the online pain education for free. **Step 3: Tests and Measurements**
For this research, you will not need to visit the hospital more frequently.

You will receive a series of questionnaires at the start of the study and at 6, 12, and 18 months after the treatment begins. These questionnaires will include questions about your ethnic background, sexual functioning, depressive symptoms, and possible history of sexual abuse. You will also need to provide a small hair sample (pencil thickness) from the back of your head (just under a parting) at the start and after 12 months. You will mail the sample to the lab.

The questionnaires will be sent by email or, if you prefer, by mail. They ask about how you feel, your pain, your health, work, and how much care you need. It will take you about 30-35 minutes to complete each questionnaire. If you need help completing them, that can be arranged, u can contact the research coordinator, see appendix A. The hair sample will be analyzed for cortisol, a stress hormone, to measure prolonged stress. If you would like the results of the cortisol test, you can request them.

The comparison of the questionnaires and hair analysis from both groups is crucial to determine the effectiveness of the 'Grip on Endometriosis' program.

What is different from normal care?
If you are assigned to the 'Grip on Endometriosis' program, it is an addition to normal care.

5. **What agreements do we make with you?**
   We want the study to go smoothly, so we make the following agreements:

- If you are assigned to the pain program, you will attend the appointments with the therapists and follow the prescribed exercises, if applicable.
- You will not participate in another medical-scientific study during this research.
- You will complete the questionnaires that you will receive by email.
- Only if you wish, you will provide a hair sample at the start and after one year, which will be mailed to the laboratory in a provided envelope.
- You will contact the researcher in the following situations:
    - You want to start using other medications, including homeopathic remedies, herbal medicine, vitamins, or over-the-counter drugs.
    - You are hospitalized or treated.
    - You experience any sudden health problems.
    - You no longer want to participate in the study.
    - Your phone number, address, or email address changes.

6. **What side effects, adverse effects, or discomforts might you experience?**
   If you participate in the study, we do not expect any additional side effects or discomforts. During the pain program, you will be guided by a specialized pelvic physiotherapist.

7. **What are the benefits and disadvantages of participating in the study?**
   Participation may have both benefits and disadvantages. Below, we summarize these points. Think carefully about them, and discuss them with others.

Benefits of participating in the study:
Group 1:

- You will gain access to a special pain program developed for endometriosis patients.
- The pain program may reduce your pain and improve your quality of life, but this is not guaranteed. At any time during this study, your endometriosis symptoms may come back or get worse.

Group 2:

- You will receive access to online module pain education at the end of the study if you want. The pain education may help you understand and manage your pain better, but this is not guaranteed.

Both groups:

- Your participation helps doctors in the search for better treatments for endometriosis.
- Your participation helps researchers gain more knowledge about the treatment of endometriosis.
- The data from this research may be useful for other women in your situation in the future.

Disadvantages of participating in the study:

- Participating in the pain program will take up extra time.
- You must adhere to the agreements related to the study.
- You will need to complete 4 questionnaires, each taking approximately 30-35 minutes. These questionnaires may ask questions about quality of life and pain, which you may find confronting.
- You will lose, only if you wish, a small hair sample at the start and end of the study.

Do you not want to participate?
You decide whether or not to participate in the study. Participation is voluntary. If you do not want to participate, you will still receive the usual treatment. You do not have to explain why you do not want to participate. If you decide to participate and later change your mind, you can stop at any time, even during the study.

8. When does the study end?

The researcher will inform you if any new information arises that is important for you. Afterward, the researcher will ask whether you want to continue participating.

The study will end for you in these situations:

- All the scheduled tests have been completed, 18 months after the study starts, and all questionnaires have been filled out.
- You want to stop participating in the study. You may stop at any time. Please notify the researcher immediately, and you do not need to explain why. You will then receive standard treatment. The researcher may arrange further safety checks if necessary.
- The researcher decides that it is better for you to stop. You may still be invited for follow-up care.

- The study is stopped by one of the following entities:
  - The government, or
  - The medical-ethical committee that approved the study.

What happens if you stop the study?
If you take part in this study, you can change your mind and stop at any time. You don't have to say why you stop. But you must inform the researcher right away. The researchers will use the data and hair samples collected up to the point of your withdrawal. The study will be concluded once all participants have completed it.

9. What happens after the study?

Will you receive the results of the study?
Once the study is completed and the results are ready for publication, the researcher will inform you about the key findings of the study.

10. What do we do with your data and body material?

By participating in the study, you also give permission for your data and hair samples to be collected and used.

Which data will we store?
We will store the following data:

- Your name
- Your gender
- Your address
- Your date of birth
- Your email address
- Health-related data
- (Medical) data collected during the study

Which body material will we store?
We will destroy your hair samples immediately after the analysis, so the hair samples will not be stored.

Why do we collect, use, and store your data?
We collect, use, and store your data to answer the research questions of this study and to publish the results. Your email address will be used to send digital questionnaires.

How do we protect your privacy?
To protect your privacy, we will assign a code to your data and body material. Only this code will appear on your data. The key to the code will be stored securely at the Jeroen Bosch hospital. When your data and body material are processed, we will only use the code. In reports and publications about the study, it will not be possible to identify you.

Who can see your data?
Certain individuals may access your data without the code. These include people responsible for ensuring the study is being conducted properly and reliably, participants in this study do not have access to this data. These individuals include:

- Members of the committee monitoring the safety of the research.
- An auditor hired by the researcher.
- National regulatory authorities.

These people are obligated to keep your information confidential. We ask for your permission to allow these individuals to access your data for monitoring purposes. The Health and Youth Inspectorate can access your data without your consent.

How long will we store your data and body material?
We will store your data for 15 years at the Jeroen Bosch hospital. Your hair samples will be destroyed immediately after use.

Can we use your data and body material for other research?
The collected data may also be relevant for other scientific research on endometriosis. For this, your data will be stored for 15 years at the Jeroen Bosch hospital. You will indicate in the consent form whether you agree to this. If you do not agree, you can still participate in the study and receive the same care.

What happens if unexpected findings are made?
During the study, we may discover something that is important for your health. The researcher will contact your GP or treating physician. You can then discuss what actions need to be taken with your GP or treating physician. You give consent for your GP or specialist to be informed about any such findings.

Can you withdraw your consent for the use of your data?
You can withdraw your consent for the use of your data at any time. Notify the researcher if you wish to withdraw your consent. However, if data has already been collected for the study, the researchers may still use this data. For body material, the researchers will destroy it after you withdraw consent. However, if measurements have already been taken using your hair sample, the researcher may continue to use the results.

Want to know more about your privacy?

- For more information about your rights regarding the processing of personal data, visit www.autoriteitpersoonsgegevens.nl.
- If you have questions about your rights or a complaint about how your data is processed, contact the researcher or the responsible party for your data processing. For this study, this is:
    - Jeroen Bosch hospital.. See Appendix A for contact details and website.
    - If you have a complaint about how your data is processed, we recommend discussing it with the research team. You may also contact the Data Protection Officer Jeroen Bosch hospital. or file a complaint with the Dutch Data Protection Authority.

Where can you find more information about the study?

Information about this study is also included in an overview of medical-scientific research, namely at https://zorgevaluatienederland.nl/. No information that can identify you is included there. After the study, the website may show a summary of the results. You can find this study under 'REHEP'.

Will you receive compensation for participating in the study?

You will not receive compensation for participating in this study. However, you will receive reimbursement for your (additional) travel expenses if assigned to group 1. You will receive €40 travel compensation for each month you participate in the pain program (up to 4 months). If you exceed this €40 travel allowance, you can contact the investigator, see **appendix A**. If you participate in group 2, you will receive free access to the online pain education at the end of the study. The costs of the 'Grip on Endometriosis' program will be paid for you. However, you might have to pay part of it yourself from your own deductible.

11. **Are you insured during the study?**

    For everyone who takes part in this study, insurance has been arranged. The insurance covers damage caused by the study, but not all damage. In Appendix B, you can find more information about the insurance and the exceptions. It also states who you can report damage to.

12. **We will inform your GP**

    The researcher will send a letter to your GP to inform them that you are participating in the study. This is for your own safety. If you do not agree with this you cannot take part in this study.

13. **Do you have questions?**

    Questions about the study can be directed to the research team at the hospital where you are receiving care. If you want advice from someone with no stake in the research, you can contact the independent expert. Contact details are in Appendix A. They have extensive knowledge about the study but are not involved in it.

If you have a complaint, discuss it with the researcher or the doctor treating you. If you prefer not to do this, you can contact the complaints officer at your hospital. Their contact details are in Appendix A.

15. **How do you give consent for the study?**

    You can take your time to think about this study. Then, tell the researcher whether you understand the information and whether or not you wish to participate. If you decide to participate, please fill out the consent form in writing that accompanies this information letter. Both you and the researcher will keep a signed copy of the consent form.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards,

Gynecologist Dr. J.W. van der Steeg

On behalf of the entire research team,
Gynecologist Dr. S. Coppus

Projectleader Dr. J. Leemans

Investigator Drs. F. Harmsen van der Vliet

Gynecologist Dr. P. Geomini

Gynecologist Dr. J. Maas

16. **Appendices to this Information:**
    A. Contact details
    B. Information about insurance
    C. Research schedule
    D. Consent form

Appendix A: Contact details for Jeroen Bosch hospital.

Principal Investigator:

Dr. J.W. van der Steeg, gynecologist.

Email adres: J.v.d.steeg@jbz.nl

Phone:073-5536250.

Research Coordinator:

Marieke Linders.

Email adres: researchgyn@jbz.nl

Phone: 073-5535246.

Independent Expert:

Dr. S. van Leijsen,
Phone: (040) 8888380

Complaints:

If you have any concerns about any aspect of this research, please contact someone from the research team. If your concerns are not resolved or if you prefer not to discuss them with the research team, you can submit your complaint to one of the complaint officers of the Jeroen Bosch Hospital by calling 073 5532639. You can also send an email to klachtenfunctionarissen@jbz.nl or use the online complaint form available at https://www.jeroenboschziekenhuis.nl/Publicaties/109713/Patienten-Klachten.

Data Protection Officer:

Data Protection Officer of the institution: privacy@jbz.nl

For more information about your rights: www.autoriteitpersoonsgegevens.nl

Appendix B: information about the insurance

The Jeroen Bosch hospital has taken out insurance for everyone who takes part in the study. The insurance pays for the damage you have suffered because you participated in the study. This concerns damage you suffer during the study or within 4 years after you participated in the study. You must report damage to the insurer within 4 years.

Have you suffered damage as a result of the study? Please report this to this insurer:

You can do this by email, phone or post.

The insurer of the study is:
Name insurer: Centramed
Address: Maria montessorilaan 9, 2719 DB Zoetermeer.
Telephone number: 070-3017070
Email: info@centramed.nl
(Policy number:) 624.100.045

The insurance pays a maximum of € 650.000 per person €5.000.000 for the entire study.

Please note that the insurance does **not** cover the following damage:

- Damage due to a risk about which we have given you information in this sheet. But this does not apply if the risk turned out to be greater than we previously thought. Or if the risk was very unlikely.
- Damage to your health that would also have happened if you had not taken part in the study.
- Damage that happens because you did not follow directions or instructions or did not follow them properly.
- Damage to the health of your children or grandchildren.
- Damage caused by a treatment method that already exists. Or by research into a treatment method that already exists.

These provisions can be found in the 'Besluit verplichte verzekering bij medisch-wetenschappelijk onderzoek met mensen 2015' ('Medical Research (Human Subjects) Compulsory Insurance Decree 2015'). This decision can be found in the Government Law Gazette (https://wetten.overheid.nl).

Appendix C: Research schedule

Time in Months	Max 4	0	6	12	18
Pain Program + Standard Care	Therapy	Questionnaires, Hair sample collection	Questionnaires	Questionnaires Hair sample collection	Questionnaires
Standard Care		Questionnaires, Hair sample collection	Questionnaires	Questionnaires Hair sample collection	Questionnaires

	Pelvic floor therapy	Pain neuroscience education	Occupational therapy	Graded activity	Mindfulness 9optional)
Week 1	Intake				Module mindfulness therapieland
Week 2		Pain education 1	Intake		
Week 3	Physical examination	Start therapieland		Intake	
Week 4		Pain education 2			
Week 5	Session 1	Follow-up therapieland	Treatment (varies per person)	Treatment 1-2 times a week	
Week 6	Session 2				
Week 7	Session 3				
Week 8	Session 4				
Week 9	Mid evaluation				
Week 10	Session 5				
Week 11					
Week 12	Session 6				
Week 13					
Week 14					
Week 15					
Week 16	End evaluation				

Appendix D: Consent Form for Participants

Related to:

Research on a special program for pain after endometriosis surgery: The REHEP Study.

- I have read the information letter. I was also able to ask questions. My questions have been sufficiently answered. I had enough time to decide whether I want to participate.
- I understand that participation is voluntary. I also understand that I can decide at any time not to participate or to stop participating. I do not have to provide a reason for discontinuing.
- I give the researcher permission to inform my GP that I am participating in this study.
- I give the researchers permission to collect and use my data, including information about my ethnic background. The researchers will only use this data to answer the research question of this study.
- I understand that, for monitoring purposes, some people may access my data. These individuals are listed in this information letter. I give permission for them to view my data for this purpose.
- I give permission for my email address to be used to receive pain education.

Please check Yes or No below:

1. I give permission for my data to be stored for use in other research, as stated in the information letter.
   Yes ☐ No ☐
2. I give permission to be contacted after this study to ask if I want to participate in follow-up research.
   Yes ☐ No ☐
3. I give permission for my cut hair sample to be tested for the stress hormone cortisol.
   Yes ☐ No ☐
4. Only if question 3 is answered "Yes": I would like to receive the result of the cortisol stress hormone test.
   Yes ☐ No ☐

- I want to participate in this study.

My name (participant): _____

Signature: _____ Date: __ / __ / __

Declaration of the Researcher:

I declare that I have fully informed the participant about the research described above.
If during the study any information arises that may affect the participant's consent, I will inform the participant in a timely manner.

Researcher's name (or representative): _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** __ / __ / __

If applicable

Additional information was provided by:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** __ / __ / __

The participant will receive a full information letter, along with a signed version of the consent form.