3) Endometriosis 2011: Dogma versus Data

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Endometriosis is a common and costly gynecologic disease, and researchers have been attempting to uncover the mysteries of the disease for decades. Today, we know much about endometriosis, but long-held beliefs, often unsupported by data, still permeate the medical community. This lecture will attempt to separate myth from fact by examining key issues in endometriosis pathogenesis, diagnosis, and treatment.

Regarding pathogenesis, I will examine the various theories of disease initiation, maintenance, and progression, with particular emphasis on the transplantation theory. I will also address why all women do not have endometriosis.

Diagnosis of disease can be difficult; the various methodologies will be evaluated as to accuracy, and their clinical value will be assessed.

Finally, treatment of endometriosis for both pain and infertility will be examined. Data will be provided outlining the optimal treatment strategy for each symptom, including the role of medical, surgical, and combination therapy. Surgical techniques will be assessed to determine which approaches are most effective. Medical therapies will be evaluated for efficacy, cost, and side effects. The options for dealing with side effects of medical therapy will be discussed and the optimal approaches reviewed. New and innovative methods of treatment will also be introduced, with available evidence regarding efficacy to be provided.