

Preface

Primary ovarian insufficiency (POI), formerly called “premature ovarian failure,” occurs in about 1–2 % of adult women under the age of 40. Its prevalence shows some variation across populations of women, but overall represents a condition that is neither rare nor common. It is rare enough to make it challenging to study systematically, and its rarity is often cited as a reason to consider it a low priority for research. It is rare enough that women searching for doctors with extensive knowledge of the condition may be frustrated, depending upon their geographic location. Fortunately, it is common enough so that women who suffer from this condition can find each other, compare notes on their treatment, and help drive the conversation about best practices and treatments for women with POI.

This volume was created by those of us who care for women with POI and women who have been diagnosed with POI, who have braved the diagnostic hurdles and the process of finding optimal treatment. Beyond the immediate healthcare needs of women with POI lie a number of psychological and social issues that, if unattended, threaten to disrupt relationships and harm a woman’s sense of self and satisfaction with her life. We have intentionally included these aspects of POI in each and every chapter by providing a “patient vignette” to highlight the frustrations, dead ends, and shrugging of shoulders that are so often encountered by women with POI who are seeking answers to their many questions. We hope their voices are heard, loud and clear, in the pages that follow.

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