

# The Prevalence of Mental Health Issues in Polycystic Ovary Syndrome

## Tik Tok Content

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### Introduction

- Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a complex endocrine disorder that affects both the metabolic and reproductive system
- An estimated 6-13% of reproductive-aged (15-49 years old) women have PCOS making it the most common endocrine disorder in women of reproductive age
- PCOS affects a significant number of adolescents but may be difficult to diagnose in adolescents due to PCOS symptoms overlapping with changes from puberty
- Currently, mental health issues in those diagnosed with PCOS is an area that has been researched far less than physical symptoms
- The purpose of this study is to examine the connection between PCOS and various mental health issues by analyzing TikTok content related to PCOS**

### Methods

**Design:**  
This study was a content analysis conducted on TikTok.

**Subjects:**  
In this study, subjects included the top 100 videos under "lifewithpcos" on the platform. To meet the inclusion criteria the videos had to mention PCOS and be in English.

**Data Collection**  
Content was viewed and analyzed by one researcher.

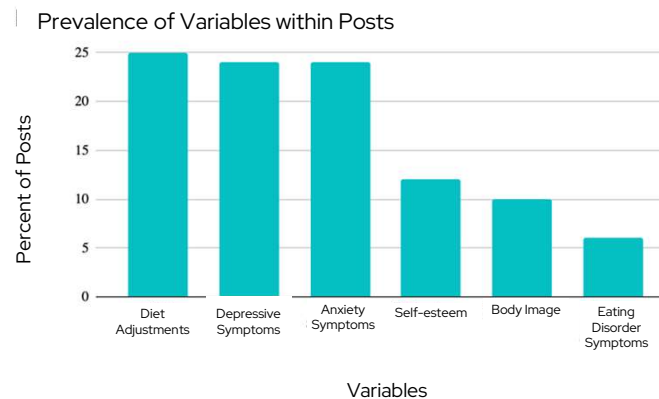
**Measures**  
For each video the amount of likes, views, and comments were assessed. All videos were assessed to see if the following variables were present:

Variable/Category	Coding Criteria Examples of Key Words/Phrases
Diet Adjustments	Diet, limit (food type or category), add in (food type or category)
Depressive Symptoms	Sad, empty, hopeless, tearful, irritable, worthless
Anxiety Symptoms	Worry, restlessness, afraid, on edge, tense
Self-esteem	Confidence, insecurity, self-worth, inferiority, shame
Body Image	Feel fat, need to lose weight, ugly, unattractive, "hate my body"
Restrictive Eating/Eating Disorder Symptoms	Skipping meals, overexercising, cutting calories, cutting out food groups, undereating

**Analysis**  
The mean number of likes, comments, and views was measured. The content was analyzed by calculating the percentage of videos that contained each variable.

### Results

Sample Size	Mean Likes	Mean Views	Mean Comments
100	59,549	970,903	456



The variable "diet adjustments" was the most prevalent variable found in 25% of posts.

Depressive symptoms and anxiety symptoms were found in 24% of posts. These variables often appeared within the same post.

Eating disorder symptoms were the least prevalent in the content analyzed making up 6% of posts.



### Conclusions

#### Key findings

- Diet adjustments were a common occurrence in videos analyzed and content creators often made recommendations to viewers to help manage PCOS which suggests that TikTok under "lifewithpcos" can provide a supportive community that gives advice to others, however, it is important to acknowledge that the accuracy of the advice given is not certain
- Depression and anxiety were the most common mental health issues found in PCOS content and related to feelings of loneliness and misunderstanding
- Eating disorder symptoms were the least common variable found in videos but some creators expressed struggling with specific eating disorders and others mentioned falling into restrictive mindsets due to the large amount of dietary exclusions recommended for PCOS

#### Limitations

- Because this content analysis was conducted using TikTok, certain content that fit under the studies criteria could have been censored due to the apps community guidelines, making it possible for variables to be misrepresented

#### Implications

- Providers of patients diagnosed with PCOS should be conscious of the patients current mental state and provide any needed mental health referrals
- Continued research on this topic should focus on the occurrence of eating disorders both before and after the diagnosis of PCOS as although the prevalence of eating disorder symptoms was low the presence of them is of concern

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