

HEALTH NATIONAL NEWS

Faster, easier endometriosis diagnosis on the horizon

by [Caitlin Wright](#)
June 14, 2025



Getting a diagnosis of endometriosis could soon be much simpler with news a blood test is close to being launched in Australia.

The diagnostics innovator Proteomics International Laboratories has announced that it is on track to launch its endometriosis blood test PromarkerEndo in Australia within the next few months.

PromarkerEndo uses a simple ‘traffic light’ system (low, moderate, or high risk) to indicate the likelihood of the disease.

Endometriosis is a chronic, inflammatory condition where tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside the uterus. It can cause period pain, affect fertility and reduce participation in daily activities like school, work and social life. Associate Professor Anusch Yazdani, a representative of Endometriosis Australia, said diagnosing endometriosis currently often involves a combination of methods.

“Taking a patient’s medical history and performing a physical examination are initial steps. Imaging techniques like transvaginal ultrasound are recommended as a first-line investigation, or pelvic MRI if ultrasound is not available or deep endometriosis is suspected. However, ultrasound and MRI are not always able to identify all types of endometriosis, particularly superficial forms,” he said.

Historically, the gold standard for diagnosis is laparoscopy, a keyhole surgery that allows surgeons to see endometriosis lesions and take biopsies for confirmation.

Diagnosis is often lengthy, taking seven years or more. However, a blood test could detect endometriosis quicker, in a less invasive and expensive way, particularly helpful for women living in rural and remote areas like New England.

“Instead of needing to travel long distances and face potentially long waiting times for a surgical procedure or specialised imaging, a blood test could theoretically be performed at a local health centre or pathology collection point,” Yazdani said.

Results so far are promising. In a study of 704 participants with the Royal Women’s Hospital and the University of Melbourne, the test delivered nearly 90 per cent accuracy in identifying early-stage endometriosis (Stages I and II).

“A reliable blood test that detects early-stage endometriosis could transform how we manage this condition. PromarkerEndo has the potential to support earlier diagnosis and timely intervention, particularly in fertility settings,” said Professor Peter Rogers, Research Director at the Royal Women’s Hospital.

Associate Professor Yazdani said it’s important to remember that the tests are still in the validation phase. He also said there is a chance of false negatives or positives.

He advised patients interested in a blood test for endometriosis should ask their doctor these questions:

- Is this test currently available and approved for patients in Australia for this purpose?
- What will it cost? (Initially PromarkerEndo test will be a privately paid test (out-of-pocket).
- How do I get the results?

- How accurate is the test? What is its likelihood of correctly identifying endometriosis when it's present (sensitivity) and correctly ruling it out when it's not (specificity)?
- Does the test's accuracy vary depending on how severe my endometriosis might be?
- What happens if it is positive?
- What happens if it is negative, but I still have symptoms?

Yazdani said the test won't replace doctors' decision-making.

“Any test is a potential new tool that can help clinicians make more informed decisions. Therefore, these tests complement, not replace, the complex process of diagnosis,” he said.

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