

ABSTRACT

Title: Online cognitive-behavioural programs for women living with endometriosis: Protocol for a scoping review

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Background: Women living with endometriosis (endo) suffer from a wide range of physical, social, and emotional health-related symptoms. Little is known about online management programs designed to manage endo-associated symptoms.

Objective: To review characteristics of online cognitive-behavioural programs created to manage endo-associated symptoms.

Methods: The Arksey and O'Malley and Joanna Briggs Institute frameworks guided the study design. EndNote and Covidence were used for screening. We piloted the behaviour change techniques (BCTs) coding with four target studies in November 2024. Six relevant databases and six trial registries were searched in October 2025 to identify online cognitive-behavioural programs to improve endo-associated symptoms published since 2014. Included studies will be coded for BCTs in Spring 2026.

Results: Four studies were included in our pilot of the coding protocol: Two pilot studies and two protocols for randomized controlled trials published between 2022-2024. All studies aimed to test the impact of the online programs on health-related quality of life and pain, with no referral needed into the programs and with costs not specified. Online programs ranged from 2 weeks to 6 months and delivered a maximum of 2.5 hours of programming per week. Programs broadly involved self-management, exercise, cognitive-behavioural therapy, and mindfulness-based stress reduction. All studies used social support (emotional), instructions on how to perform the behaviour, behavioural practice and rehearsal, and credible source, BCTs.

Conclusion: Investigating program characteristics and BCTs will inform future online program development by drawing on gaps in current endo management programs.

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