**Table S1. Study characteristics**

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| **Author; year** | **Study title** | **Journal** | **Objectives**  | **Country** | **Source** | **Number of participants (age)** | **Method of data collection and data analysis** |
| **Grace et al, 2007** | 'Women get this': gendered meanings of chronic pelvic pain. | Health: An international journal for the social study of health, illness and medicine | To explore the meanings of female gender and pain with regards to the experience of women with CPP | New Zealand  | Prevalence survey | 40(22-50) | Open-ended interviewsPhenomenology |
| **Grace et al, 2008** | "How to say it": women's descriptions of pelvic pain.  | Women & Health | To investigate women's descriptions of CPP and comparison with descriptors of pain used in a pain assessment tool  | New Zealand | Prevalence survey | 40(22-50) | Open-ended interviewsPhenomenology |
| **McGowan et al, 2007** | How do you explain a pain that can't be seen?: the narratives of women with chronic pelvic pain and their disengagement with the diagnostic cycle. | British Journal of Health Psychology  | To explore the processes which lead to disengagement of women from health services despite continuing to have symptoms and to understand the psychological processes that affect these women | United Kingdom | Newspaper article  | 32 (21-50) | Written storiesPhenomenology |
| **Moore J et al, 2002**  | 'People sometimes react funny if they're not told enough': Women's views about the risks of diagnostic laparoscopy. | Health Expectations  | To explore women's views of risks and how much information is appropriate to provide about three specific risks: death, major complication and no cause of CPP found at laparoscopy | United Kingdom  | Hospital waiting list for laparoscopy  | 20(not specified) | Semi-structured interviewsConstant comparison  |
| **Price J et al, 2006** | Attitudes of women with chronic pelvic pain to the gynaecological consultation: A qualitative study.  | British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology | To describe the attitudes of women with CPP attending the gynaecology clinic to their consultations and to determine the ways in which their health care can be improved  | United Kingdom | Four outpatient gynaecology clinics in district and teaching hospitals  | 26(18-70) | Semi-structured interviews Grounded theory  |
| **Savidge et al, 1998** | Women's perspectives on their experiences of chronic pelvic pain and medical care.  | Journal of Health Psychology  | To understand the experience of women with CPP and their perception of the care they receive after a negative laparoscopy | United Kingdom  | Negative diagnostic laparoscopy for chronic pelvic pain  | 21(21-60) | Semi-structured interviews Dey’s method |
| **Warwick et al, 2004** | Social support for women with chronic pelvic pain: What is helpful from whom?  | Psychology and Health  | To examine the impact of social support in women with CPP | United Kingdom | Consultants in two hospitals  | 8(21-61) | Semi-structured interviews Thematic analysis |
| **Zadinsky et al, 1996** | Experiences of women with chronic pelvic pain. | Health Care for Women International  | To describe self-care strategies that women with CPP use to function in their social and cultural roles  | United States of America | Regional medical centre  | 14(19-52) | Semi-structured interviews Constant comparison  |