

Kathy Sharpe-Timms

For more than 30 years, internationally acclaimed researcher Dr. Kathy Sharpe-Timms has worked to improve outcomes for women with endometriosis.

Endometriosis causes the tissue that normally lines the womb to grow in the abdomen or other areas, causing fertility issues and severe pain. The condition is both diagnosed and treated with invasive surgery — but despite such treatment, endometriosis often recurs and worsens over time.

As a step toward developing new, more effective treatments, Sharpe-Timms has worked to better understand how endometriosis decreases fertility. Working in her laboratory with research specialists, fellows and students, Sharpe-Timms has discovered unique proteins associated with endometriotic growths that could allow for diagnosis via blood test. She also has sought to provide the first evidence for why the condition runs in families. Scientists have long known that daughters of mothers with endometriosis experience reduced fertility; Sharpe-Timms made the unprecedented discovery that male offspring may also have subfertility.

Sharpe-Timms has been supported by the National Institutes of Health and other respected agencies and has been an invited member of the *Fertility Research and Practice Journal's* editorial board. She established the Missouri Reproductive Medicine and Fertility Embryology Laboratories, and she also has served as director of the medical school's reproductive and perinatal research division.

Dr. Kathy Sharpe-Timms is a professor emerita of obstetrics and gynecology in the School of Medicine.

