

PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME (PMS):

PMS: PMS affects up to 85% of women who have regular periods, 10% of women have severe symptoms. PMS includes physical & emotional symptoms that start around ovulation (about day 14 of your cycle) and go away when your period starts or soon after. The cause of PMS is not known, however **underlying causes include:**

- imbalance of the neurotransmitter called serotonin
- hormone imbalance
- inflammation
- Diet: nutrient deficiencies, too much processed foods
- stress (physical and emotional)
- sedentary lifestyle
- Low thyroid function

COMMON SYMPTOMS:

Emotional: mood swings/irritability, depression, anxiety, internal tension, difficulty concentrating, brain fog, crying easily, easily angered

Physical: headache, acne, breast tenderness, fatigue, joint/muscle aches, food cravings, bloating, diarrhea, constipation, cramps, fluid retention

DIAGNOSIS:

- Diagnosis is based on symptoms, however, other health issues can look similar so sometimes lab tests are helpful
- PMS calendar: best way to diagnose AND to track timing and severity of symptoms, use for 2-3 months to diagnose then use to follow benefit of treatment (apps are helpful)
- Some women notice that the symptoms occur all month and worse right before their period, knowing this helps guide treatment as well
- Use your PMS calendar to predict when symptoms are coming, we all do better when we are prepared!

MANAGEMENT:

LIFESTYLE/DIETARY CHANGES: Use your PMS calendar to pinpoint when you feel your worst, then plan self-care changes during that time: focus on avoiding over scheduling, additional self care: eat better, rest, move more. Best results will occur if you make these changes all month.

- **EXERCISE** (helps emotional and physical symptoms): 30 min 5x/week (**frequency is more important than intensity**), best exercise: whatever you WILL do and enjoy without injury such as yoga, walking, strength training, best if you can get outside
- **STRESS REDUCTION:**
 - meditation/prayer: apps: Breathe, Headspace, Calm
 - Play/laugh/rest
 - Massage
 - Counseling/CBT
 - deep breathing: 4 deep breathes: inhale for count of 4, hold for 4, exhale for 4; do consistently 2x/d OR STOP and do this anytime your anxiety increases
 - set boundaries, don't over-schedule yourself during PMS, stress worsens PMS Sx
- **SLEEP!!!** best: go to bed before 10pm, goal 7-8 hrs

- **DIET** (helps emotional and physical symptoms):
 - Avoid foods that cause inflammation: simple carbs, processed foods, gluten, dairy, soy (elimination diet - avoid the food X 3-4 wks, if no benefit in 3-4 wks, those foods may not be a problem for you, if you feel better, slowly add back every 3-4 days to see how much you can eat)- see **elimination diet handout**
 - How you eat is important: skipping meals can cause blood sugar drops and make your symptoms worse so avoid skipping meals especially breakfast
 - **Reduce simple sugar/carbs:** heavy carb intake increases bloating, weight gain and negatively affect mood. Reduce simple carbs to avoid insulin spikes, look up glycemic index (GI): www.glycemicindex.com, eat foods with GI <55, if GI 55-65 add protein or healthy fat, look up your 30 favorite foods then find substitutes in same food group
 - **Sugar cravings** (hard to control): your body's way of telling you to bump up healthy carbs to improve mood.
 - Ways to satisfy the cravings in a healthy manner:
 - eat protein and healthy fat at every meal/snack
 - decrease caffeine and alcohol
 - consistent decrease in sugar intake often reduces cravings, unfortunately, not an immediate result.
 - Drink water and walk away, if you are hungry, your stomach will remind you.
 - Don't buy what you can't resist!
 - **When you have cravings:**
 - ◆ PGX packets (fiber): take 15-30 mins BEFORE the meal that you are most likely to overeat
 - ◆ glutamine 500-1000mg empty capsule on your tongue OR try Sweet Defeat lozenges on your tongue, *don't use if pregnant or diabetes or on diabetes medications such as metformin*
 - Reduce salt (avoid packaged foods, sodas)
 - Reduce caffeine (except dark chocolate)
 - **Foods TO Eat:**
 - **Mediterranean diet** incorporates Whole Foods, plant based, low inflammatory diet high in healthy fat, veggies and quality protein
 - Protein: chicken, lean beef, salmon, fatty fish, eggs
 - veggies (5-10 servings/d) especially green leafy and cruciferous (broccoli), eat a variety of colors
 - increase whole grains (brown rice, oatmeal)
 - fruit (low glycemic, GI <55): berries 1-2 servings/d
 - increase water intake (80 oz/d)
 - increase fiber (goal 30-35gm/d - don't increase too fast or you will have bloating), easy solution: 2T of ground flax daily
 - Healthy fat at each meal/snack stabilizes your insulin, be careful because these are high in calories: avocado, omega 3 fatty acids-wild salmon, lake trout, tuna, walnuts, nuts/seeds, flaxseed, full-fat coconut milk, coconut oil, olives, ghee

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

- Acupuncture: all PMS and menstrual cramps
- Light therapy (light box 10,000 lux) 20 min/d - emotional symptoms
- Massage

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VITAMINS/SUPPLEMENTS (try 2-3 based on symptoms, can take 2-3 months to see full benefit):

- ☐ **Magnesium citrate:** (mood, water retention, sleep, cramps) 400-800 mg at bedtime, cramps- start 3 days before your period, if causes diarrhea take Magnesium glycinate OR take with calcium
- ☐ **Calcium citrate** 600 mg 2x/d (reduces PMS symptoms by 50%, calcium causes constipation so take with magnesium if constipated)
- ☐ **B complex:**
 - ☐ B6 (mood/physical symptoms): 50-100 mg/d
 - ☐ Vitamin B2(prevent headaches) 400 mg daily
 - ☐ B1 100 mg/d
 - ☐ B12 (energy)
- ☐ **Curcumin** (headaches, cramps) Meriva 1000-2000 mg/d daily OR start 1-2 days before your period and take until end of your period
- ☐ **Ginger** (cramps, headaches, nausea) 500 3-4x/d, start 1-2 days before your symptoms typically start
- ☐ **Vitamin D3** (cramps) 1000-2000 IU/ d, goal 50-70
- ☐ **Omega 3 fatty acids** (cramps, mood) 2-3gm/d
- ☐ **NAC** 600 3x/d (combine with Advil or Aleve can help you take less of either)
- ☐ **Chaste berry (ALL PMS Sx especially mood, fluid retention, breast tenderness)** 175-225 mg/d
- ☐ **Motherwort extract** 1-4ml 1-3x/d, (irritability, anxiety, cramps)
- ☐ **Lavela** 80 mg before bed (anxiety, insomnia, cramps)
- ☐ **St John's Wort** (mood/physical symptoms) 300-600 3x/d, for some combining with Chaste berry may more beneficial (**don't** take if on antidepressant or anti-anxiety med)
- ☐ **Evening primrose oil** (breast tenderness) 2-3gm/d, may or may not help
- ☐ **XenoProtX** (Xymogen) 2 caps daily, estrogen dominance
- ☐ Migraines: Excedrin migraine
- ☐ Migraine Prevention: **riboflavin** 200mg/d, mag 600/night, feverfew 25 2x/d, avoid triggers -keep migraine diary
- ☐ Combo supplements:
 - ☐ **PROSOOTHE** (Pure Encapsulations)
 - ☐ **PMS Support** (Douglas)

MEDICATIONS:

- SSRIs (Prozac), Anti anxiety meds (most are habit forming)
- Diuretics for water retention
- Prescription progesterone pills (work best for sleep issues)
- Birth control pills (helps some women)
- Migraine meds such as triptans, Nurtec/Ubrelvy

BREAST TENDERNESS:

- Dietary interventions:
 - Remove: **caffeine**, alcohol, unhealthy fat, sugar, estrogen in food (increase organic, minimize red meat and dairy)
 - Add: fruits, veggies, especially greens, healthy fat - fish, nuts

● **Well fitting bra**

- Avoid/get rid of excess estrogen
 - ☐ Avoid too much estrogen - organic food, avoid environmental toxins and endocrine disruptors esp in cosmetics (look up your cosmetics on the environmental working group website ewg.org)
 - ☐ Get rid of extra estrogen: Poop daily
- Avoid tobacco
- Supplements:
 - ☐ **Vit E 400 mg/d**
 - ☐ **B6 100 mg/d**
 - ☐ DIM 100 mg/d
 - ☐ Flax seed ground, 2T (25-40mg/d) if constipated
 - ☐ Vitex 20-40 mg/d up to 240mg/d
 - ☐ Probiotics: Klaire Therbiotic Complete

CRAMPS:

- Diet:
 - ☐ Low fat, plant based diet such as Mediterranean diet
 - ☐ Elimination diet - figure out triggers
 - ☐ Increase fruit, veggies, eggs, fish, foods with linoleic acid - pumpkin, flax, sesame and sunflower seeds
 - ☐ Decrease alcohol
- Heat
- Acupuncture
- Massage
- Sleep - getting 7-8hr/night and going to bed around 10 pm is associated with decreased cramps
- Avoid/get rid of excess estrogen (See note on breast tenderness)
- Supplements (see above):
 - ☐ **Magnesium** 600mg nightly, increase to 1000mg 3 days before period, continue until day 2 of your period
 - ☐ **Ginger** 500 3-4x/d, start 2d before your period
 - ☐ **Curcumin** (headaches, cramps) Meriva 1000-2000 mg/d daily OR start 1-2 days before your period and take until end of your period
 - ☐ **NAC** 600 3x/d
 - ☐ **Fish oil** 2-3 gm/d
 - ☐ Lavender (lavela) 80 mg nightly
 - ☐ Peppermint oil 200mg start day of period and for next 3-4 days
 - ☐ Valerian 225mg/d, start 3d before your period, total of 6 days, can make you sleepy
 - ☐ Black cohosh 2-4 ml every 2-4 hrs, 40 mg 2x/d (chronic lower abdominal aching)
 - ☐ Peony+ Licorice formula (Kan Traditionals)
 - ☐ Cramp bark (Herb pharm)
 - ☐ Acute pain during menses: start 2 days before onset of menses. Combine equal parts of: Cramp bark, Wild yam, Motherwort, Black cohosh, Ginger. Total: 100 mL Dose: 2 to 4 mL tid. For severe cramping, take the above tincture every 2 hours

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YOUR PLAN: USE the HEART method:

MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE: (1: none, 5: very): _____

ACCOUNTABILITY: (consider coach, nutritionist, friend, spouse): _____

● **HEAR: what are your most bothersome symptoms:** _____

● **EVALUATE UNDERLYING CAUSES: (stress, diet, blood sugar, thyroid, exercise, inflammation, hormone imbalance)**

● **ADD: (diet, exercise, stress mngt, sleep, supplements)** _____

● **REMOVE: (diet, exercise, stress, sleep, supplements)** _____

● Support **TRANSFORMATION**: reassess and if not better, restart the process: _____

ADDITIONAL NOTES: _____

IT MAY TAKE 2-3 MONTHS TO SEE IMPROVEMENT WHEN YOU MAKE CHANGES! Keep a menstrual calendar to monitor benefit, writing it down keeps you accountable!

I hope this was helpful, for any questions, please call 423-899-9133 or send a message through the web portal.

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