

Escaping the PMS Monster

You Can Be PMS Free With the Right Nutrition and Lifestyle Changes

Each month during most of a healthy woman's child-bearing years, she produces an egg, and if that egg is not fertilized, later that month, she will have a period. This is a normal part of being a woman. Unfortunately, during the time between ovulation and menstruation, many women experience dramatic changes in their health and mood. Collectively, these changes are called Pre-Menstrual Syndrome, or more commonly PMS.

For many women, having PMS feels like a monster has taken over their lives. Not only do they experience physical discomforts like painful cramps, water retention, weight gain, heavy bleeding and food cravings, they also experience emotional changes. Women can suddenly become angry, irritable, moody, depressed and/or anxious. And, while these changes are the brunt of many jokes, they're certainly not "fun" for the woman experiencing them.

Understanding the Menstrual Cycle and PMS

Before we can talk about ways to get the PMS Monster out of your life, it's important to understand the nature of PMS. PMS is a syndrome, which means that it's not a single health problem; it's a collection of health problems that vary from woman to woman. The causes of these problems also vary, which means that the strategy for eliminating PMS will be a little different for each woman.

To get started, let's talk about the normal menstrual cycle, which begins on the first day of a woman's period. A woman typically ovulates midway through her cycle. So, in the average 28-day cycle, a woman would release an egg about 14 days after the first day of her period.

During the first half of the menstrual cycle (days 3-14 in an average cycle) estrogen is the dominant hormone. Estrogen matures an egg and stimulates ovulation. After ovulation, progesterone becomes the dominant hormone (days 15-28 in an average cycle). At the end of this second half of the cycle, estrogen kicks in again to start the period (days 1-3).

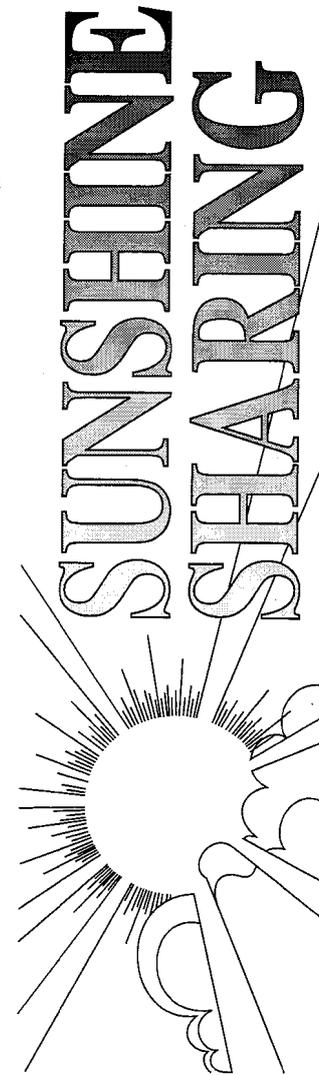
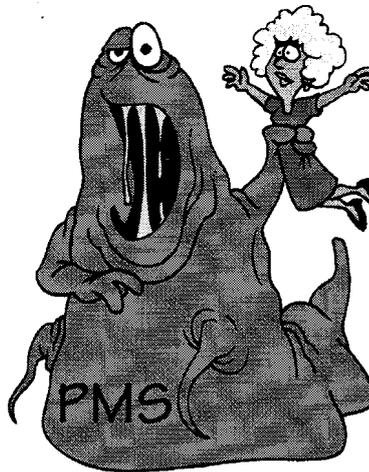
PMS occurs in the later half of the cycle during the progesterone dominant phase. This is important to know because PMS remedies are often the most helpful when taken during this phase. So you may need to chart your cycle to determine the best time to use certain remedies.

Finding the Right Remedies to Set Yourself Free

To escape the PMS monster, you'll need to start figuring out what's causing your PMS. Start by looking at the underlying health problems that may be contributing to it. The book *PMS: Solving the Puzzle* by Linaya Hahn lists sixteen possible causes of PMS and there may be more. So, in this newsletter, we can't cover every underlying cause. We do cover some of the major factors in *Blasting the Causes of PMS* on page 2.

It also helps to understand that there are different types of PMS. The four major types are called A (for anxiety), C (for cravings), D (for depression) and H (for hydration). You can have more than one type of PMS, although you can't have both PMS Type A and PMS Type D because they are opposite problems. *PMS by the Letters* on page 3 will help you figure out what type of PMS you're dealing with and what remedies to use for it.

Turn the page to learn more about freeing yourself from PMS



Your guide to better health the natural way.

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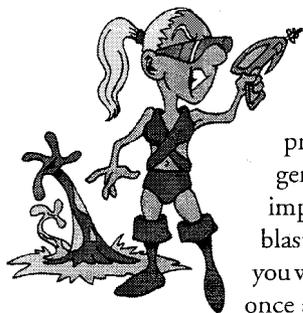
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Blasting the Causes of PMS

PMS is not a “stand-alone” health problem. It is really a sign of more general health problems. As such, it is important to improve overall health by blasting some of the underlying causes if you want to rid yourself of the PMS monster once and for all.

Nutrition and PMS

For starters, PMS is primarily caused by a poor diet and nutritional deficiencies. A diet high in sugar, corn syrup, white flour products and caffeine can probably cause, and will definitely aggravate, PMS. So, the first step to blasting PMS out of your life is to improve your overall nutrition.

Avoid processed vegetable oils, caffeine, simple sugars and refined carbohydrates. Also avoid heavily processed and refined foods. Instead, adopt a diet that is composed primarily of good sources of protein and lots of vegetables, especially green leafy vegetables. Also consume whole grains and fresh fruits, but not excessively.

Use organically-raised meat, dairy and eggs and avoid xenoestrogens, especially if you have PMS Type A (see page 3). Good fats are also important, such as olive oil, nuts, deep ocean fish and **Super Omega-3 EPA**. **Evening Primrose Oil**, in particular, has proven helpful for many women with PMS.

Two supplements that seem to help most PMS symptoms are magnesium and vitamin B6. These nutrients play major roles in balancing hormones and appear to be deficient in the diets of many women. If you have PMS, and especially if you experience severe menstrual cramps, consider supplementing your diet with 400-800 mg. of **Magnesium Complex** a day. Also consider taking about 100 mg. of **vitamin B6** daily.

General Toxicity

In his book, *Food is Your Best Medicine*, Dr. Henry Beiler claims PMS is a sign of toxicity in the body. He says having PMS means the digestive tract and liver have become irritated and weakened from a poor diet and that toxins are getting into the blood stream. The body uses the menses as a means of doing “housecleaning,” flushing toxins out of the blood via the menstrual flow. This is what causes the pain and congestion of PMS.

The irritability and depression that can accompany PMS are classic signs of liver problems, so this viewpoint makes a great deal of sense. If you tend to be irritable and angry during that “time of the month,” try **Chinese Liver Balance**. It helps detoxify the liver and also calms feelings of anger.

Chinese Liver Balance is part of the **Tiao He Cleanse**, an excellent general cleansing program that can also be used to detoxify the body and improve overall health. When doing the Tiao He Cleanse, it is a good idea to take extra fiber, such as **Psyllium Hulls Combination** or **Nature’s Three**, and drink plenty of water.

If you tend to have heavy bleeding and/or you are anemic and tired, consider **Chinese Blood Build**. This formula contains several

herbs used in traditional Chinese medicine to support women’s health. It also strengthens the liver, plus it helps nourish the blood to replace blood lost with heavy periods.

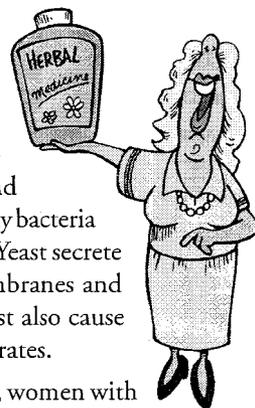
If your symptoms tend towards depression and sadness more than anger, consider **Chinese Mood Elevator**. This formula also strengthens the liver and the digestive tract while helping to overcome heavy, sad and “sagging” feelings.

Yeast Infections

Closely related to general toxicity is the problem of yeast infections. Antibiotics, birth control pills, steroidal drugs and other medications can knock down friendly bacteria in the colon allowing yeast overgrowth. Yeast secrete a toxin that weakens the intestinal membranes and contributes to toxicity in the body. Yeast also cause you to crave sugar and simple carbohydrates.

Progesterone affects yeast growth. So, women with yeast overgrowth often have more problems with yeast-related symptoms during the later half of their cycle. Symptoms of yeast overgrowth are similar to PMS symptoms, so yeast may be the underlying cause of PMS symptoms in many women.

If you have problems with vaginal yeast infections, have taken a lot of antibiotics or birth control pills, or have other symptoms of yeast overgrowth, you should probably try a Candida cleansing program like **Candida Clear**. When coupled with dietary changes, this program can really help get yeast under control.



Thyroid Problems

All the endocrine glands work together, so thyroid problems are another factor that can contribute to PMS. Indications that suggest thyroid problems may be a factor in PMS include starting puberty very early or very late, having irregular periods, bleeding between periods, low sex drive and fatigue.

Thyroid Support is a great formula for helping to balance the thyroid gland. Increasing iodine intake may also help the thyroid. **Liquid Dulse** is a great way to supplement iodine intake. For some women, thyroid medication may be necessary.

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Additional Help and Information

For more information about how to ease problems associated with PMS, contact the person who gave you this newsletter. Their contact information should be found at the top of page four. They have additional handouts and resource materials to help you. You can also consult some of the following sources:

Pulling the Plug on PMS DVD by Tree of Light Publishing

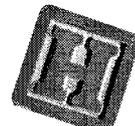
PMS: Solving the Puzzle by Linaya Hahn

Every Woman’s Herbal by John R. Christopher with Cathy Gilcadi

The Comprehensive Guide to Nature’s Sunshine Products by Tree of Light Publishing



PMS by the Letters



While PMS symptoms vary from woman to woman, there are four main categories of PMS. Each type A, C, D or H is characterized by different hormonal imbalances. So identifying which PMS type or types most closely match your symptoms is a good place to start in figuring out what will eliminate your PMS.

PMS Type A - Anxiety

PMS Type A is the most common type, involving about 80% of all cases. The main symptoms associated are anxiety, anger, irritability and severe mood swings.



In PMS Type A, estrogen levels are too high and progesterone levels are too low. As discussed on the first page, progesterone is supposed to be dominant in the second half of the menstrual cycle. If there is too much estrogen, levels of adrenaline and serotonin increase, while the levels of dopamine drop. This creates the irritability and anxiety associated with this type of PMS.

Environmental chemicals that mimic estrogen (known as xenoestrogens) play a major role in PMS Type A. One source of these xenoestrogens is the fat in commercial meat and dairy products. This may be why high consumption of animal fats seems to be a contributing factor in PMS Type A.

Certain pesticides and herbicides, some laundry detergents and cleaning products and soft plastics are other sources of xenoestrogens. Since these compounds not only contribute to PMS Type A, they also increase the risk of breast cancer, it is wise for women to avoid them.

Increasing progesterone by using **Pro-G-Yam Cream** will help balance PMS Type A. The cream should be applied during the progesterone phase (second half) of the cycle (starting about 10-14 days before the onset of menses.)

Supporting the liver in breaking down excess estrogens is also helpful. **Indole-3 Carbinol** is very helpful in breaking down estrogens. It can be taken as a supplement, but it is also found in cruciferous vegetables such as cabbage and broccoli.

Chinese Liver Balance is another helpful supplement for PMS Type A. It helps the liver detoxify and reduces feelings of irritability and anger. If blood loss is heavy and there are signs of fatigue or anemia, **Chinese Blood Build** will be a better choice. Other helpful supplements for PMS Type A include **vitamin B6** and **Magnesium Complex**.

PMS Type C - Cravings

The cravings for chocolate and sugar associated with PMS Type C are a sign of hypoglycemia. Blood sugar levels drop significantly in PMS Type C, but only between ovulation and the onset of menses. Unfortunately, during this



time the body's insulin balance is more sensitive than normal, so blood sugar drops more rapidly and the resulting fatigue prompts cravings for more sweets.

If you have issues with sugar cravings before your period, then a standard hypoglycemic diet will be helpful. This means eliminating simple carbohydrates like refined sugar, white flour, white rice and corn syrup from the diet. Eat small, regular meals containing both high quality proteins and fats.

Licorice root is a great herb for stabilizing blood sugar levels. Take two capsules for breakfast, two at lunch and two more whenever you experience sugar cravings. **Super Algae** is also beneficial for stabilizing blood sugar and can be taken at the same times (and in the same amounts) as licorice root. Other supplements that may help PMS Type C include **Evening Primrose Oil**, **Magnesium Complex**, **vitamin B6** and **Zinc**.

PMS Type D - Depression

This type of PMS is associated with depression, sadness and moodiness, coupled with confusion and forgetfulness. Women with PMS Type D can also be accident prone or even suicidal.



PMS Type D is the opposite problem to PMS Type A. It involves too much progesterone and not enough estrogen. In balance, progesterone has a calming effect, but in excess, it becomes a depressant.

An interesting aspect of PMS Type D is that hair analysis often shows high levels of lead. Extremely low levels of magnesium are also common. **Mega-Chel** is a good supplement for supporting the body's ability to get rid of lead, so **Mega-Chel** and high doses of **Magnesium Complex** are useful for women with this type of PMS.

The depression can also be eased by using **St. John's Wort** or **Chinese Mood Elevator**. **Black Cohosh** is an excellent remedy for PMS Type D because it not only acts as a hormone balancer, it is also an anti-depressant. Because estrogen levels are low, plants containing phytoestrogens, such as soy and dark green vegetables, may be helpful. Essential oils of **Clary Sage**, **Rose**, **Lavender**, and **Bergamot** can help to bring relief.

PMS Type H - Hyperhydration

PMS Type H involves fluid retention that can cause weight gain, swelling of the breasts and bloating. This is caused by too much aldosterone, an adrenal hormone. Diuretic supplements are helpful here, such as **Kidney Activator** or **Chinese Kidney Activator**.

Magnesium Complex and **vitamin B6** are helpful for PMS Type H, too. Essential oils of **Frankincense**, **Juniper** and **Lemon** may also be beneficial.



Don't Let PMS "Abduct" Your Life Every Month

In this issue of
Sunshine Sharing,
Learn how to prevent the
PMS "Monster" from taking
over your health and mood



Continued from Page Two

Adrenal Fatigue

The adrenals also affect reproductive hormones and since the adrenals are affected by stress, emotional stress can also be a factor in PMS. While stress is not a direct cause of PMS, it will make symptoms worse. Signs of adrenal fatigue include feeling tired during the day, having disturbed sleep and restless dreams and feeling emotionally sensitive and mentally confused.

Adrenal Support is an excellent remedy for tired adrenals. It can increase stamina and endurance and help a person cope better with stress. **Nervous Fatigue Formula** can also be helpful. It promotes more restful sleep, better energy during the day, improved concentration and emotional stability. Nervous Fatigue Formula also supports the liver, which, as we have already discussed, is a factor in many PMS problems.

Other Factors Causing PMS

As suggested on page one, this isn't a comprehensive list of the underlying health issues that may contribute to PMS. There are many other things to consider. For starters, lack of sleep or exercise may play a role in creating PMS symptoms. Another major factor that can cause PMS and menstrual issues is shame about periods and body functions. Emotional wounds from sexual or physical abuse may also cause PMS problems. These issues can be addressed by getting counseling or doing emotional healing work.

To help you design a program that can blast the causes of PMS out of your life and get rid of the PMS monster for good, talk to the person who gave you this newsletter. They have tools and resources that can help you determine which herbs, supplements and lifestyle changes will work best for you.