

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PMS

Susan E. D. Doughty RN, MSN
Women's Health Nurse Practitioner

1. Chart symptoms with menstrual flow for three months to confirm timing of symptoms.
2. Avoid caffeine, ephedrine, and ma-hung (this includes all chocolate, teas, coffee, soda, diet soda, and many over-the-counter drugs. Read labels)!
3. Diet should be 40% complex carbohydrate – 6 small meals daily. Complex carbohydrates include all whole grains, beans, vegetables, fruits. Never eat carbohydrates without a little protein.
4. A dietary consult with a Nutritionist, knowledgeable about PMS is helpful.
5. Avoid red meat and excessive dairy foods as well as high-fat, high-sodium items such as potato chips and pretzels.
6. Avoid white sugar and products containing it. Avoid aspartame (NutraSweet). Use honey or fruit sugar to sweeten.
7. Avoid white flour products. Use whole grain bread and pasta.
8. Calcium/magnesium supplements are often helpful: 800mg per day of each.
9. Vitamin B-6, 100-250mg total intake per day. Start at 100mg per day and gradually increase. Try to keep the dose as low as possible.
10. Aerobic exercise 30 minutes three times weekly is essential – it increases the body's progesterone and also endorphins-natural morphine-like substances that make you feel better naturally.
11. Work to decrease stress premenstrually (avoid taking on any extra duties, etc.). Use relaxation breathing to help decrease stress response. Meditate 15 minutes twice daily.
12. Natural progesterone cream, ¼ tsp. twice daily on days 14 to 28 of your menstrual cycle, may help even our hormone ratios. Rub over soft, white areas of body like inner thighs, abdomen, hips. Rotate sites for better absorption.