

Premenstrual Syndrome/ Tension

What is the Premenstrual Syndrome?

The premenstrual syndrome is a complex of symptoms, both physical and emotional, which occurs a few days before the onset of menstruation.

Signs and Symptoms

The most common ones are:

Physical symptoms: Headache, feeling bloated, swollen ankles, weight gain, and fatigue. **Emotional symptoms**: Irritability, insomnia, decreased sex drive, tearfulness, poor concentration, irrational food cravings, mood swings, depressed feelings.

PMS where symptoms are particularly severe is called Premenstrual Dysmorphic Disorder.

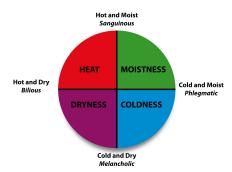
What Causes PMS?

The exact cause of premenstrual syndrome is unknown, but several factors may contribute to it. Internal disharmony brought about by changes in the balance of the woman's hormones lead to a number of the symptoms. There is a rise in the female hormone estrogen, and a fall in progesterone levels. The result is a build-up of salt and water in the body, which leads to several other symptoms.

Risk factors include an improper diet, over-rich in foods which are hot and moist or cold and moist foods, such as salty and sweet foods.

The Tibb View of PMS

As many symptoms such as water retention, tissue swelling, mood swings, and cravings may have several causes, the qualities associated with PMS should be assessed for each woman and can affect all temperaments.



Management of PMS

Management is aimed at **reducing the qualities associated with the person's dominant temperament**, with the appropriate Tibb Lifestyle Factors. Special attention should be given to foods with high nutritious value. This assists Physis in addressing both the symptoms and the causes of PMS.

Tibb Lifestyle Factors Food and Drink

- Phlegmatic temperament eat mostly Hot & Dry foods such as garlic, onion, fenugreek and mustard, followed by Hot & Moist foods like mutton, ginger, turmeric and black pepper, and Cold & Dry foods such as citrus fruit, basil, yogurt and mealie meal and the least amount of Cold & Moist foods like milk, rice, cucumber and watermelon.
- Sanguinous Temperament eat mostly Cold & Dry foods such as yogurt, citrus fruit, beef and basil followed by Cold & Moist foods like coriander, rice, beetroot and broccoli, and Hot & Dry foods such as garlic, onion, chicken and eggs, and the least amount of Hot & Moist foods like white flour products, sugar, cheese and bananas.

- Melancholic Temperament eat mostly Hot & Moist foods such as ginger, olive oil, turmeric and honey, followed by Hot & Dry foods like garlic, onion, chicken and eggs, and Cold & Moist Foods such as coriander, rice, beetroot and broccoli and the least amount of Cold & Dry foods like yogurt, citrus fruit, legumes and tomatoes.
- Bilious Temperament eat mostly Cold & Moist foods such as rice, coriander, cucumber and beetroot, followed by Cold & Dry foods like citrus fruit, basil, yogurt and mealie meal, and Hot & Moist foods such as ginger, olive oil, turmeric and honey, and the least amount of Hot & Dry foods like onion, eggs, alcohol and garlic.

Dietary advice to be followed by all temperamental types

- Consume more fresh vegetables, fruit, and yogurt. Consume foods that are rich in calcium such as sesame seeds, celery and oranges.
- Avoid red meats; eat fish and chicken instead.
- Cut down on white flour products (like bread and pasta) and sugar.
- Avoid adding salt to meals, and drinking caffeine and alcoholic beverages a week before a menstrual period is expected.

Other Lifestyle Advice

- Breathing exercises: Tibb deep breathing exercises lowers irritability and anxiety, and dampen mood swings.
- Physical exercise: Any form will do, lasting 30 minutes/day at least 3 days/week. This boosts mood and reduces emotional stress. It also helps control appetite and regulates blood sugar levels.
- Sleep: Increasing sleep time for a few days before expected premenstrual symptoms helps to reduce the intensity of symptoms.
- Relaxation: Taking a hot bath with salt added (1 cup each of baking soda and sea salt per bath) helps. Regular massage reduces stress and anxiety.
- **Meditation:** Tibb meditation exercises 15min early morning and at bedtime is recommended.

Herbal Remedies

- Rosemary tea: Before a period, steep dried leaves (1tsp) in a cup of boiling water. Drink warm.
- Evening primrose oil: Helps reduce cramping and dampen mood swings.
- Poppy seeds (2tsp), almonds (10), liquidised in milk (1 glass), sweetened with honey to taste, drink at breakfast.
- Fennel seed (1tsp), cumin (½tsp), cardamom (2 crushed) in skim milk or water (1cup), boil down to 100ml. Strain and drink 3-4 times daily.

Cold & Dry Foods

| Meats | Vegetables | Fruits | Nuts | Grains & Seeds | Dairy Products | Oils | Spices & Herbs | Drinks | Flavourants | Condiments & Spreads | Confectionary & Desserts | Cereals | Dishes |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|---------|------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| beef | brussel sprouts | (all sour fruits) | peanuts | barley | sour cream | coconut oil | basil | coffee | | balsamic | | cornflakes | sour dishes |
| biltong (beef) | cabbage | green apples | | beans(all types) | egg white | corn oil | tamarind | ice | | vinegar | | maltabella | |
| crabs | cauliflower | cherries, coconut | | corn | sour milk | sesame oil | | sour fruit juices | | peanut butter | | mielie meal | |
| fish | eggplant | china/dry fruit | | couscous | yoghurt | | | tea (black) | | pickles | | millet | |
| knuckles | green beans | granadilla | | lentils | | | | | | tomato sauce | | | |
| mussels | mushrooms | grape fruit | | maize | | | | | | worcestershire | | | |
| ostrich | peas | lemon, lime | | mielies | | | | | | sauce | | | |
| oysters | potatoes | naartjies, oranges | | popcorn | | | | | | vinegar | | | |
| pork | sauerkraut | pineapple,plums | | poppy seeds | | | | | | | | | |
| snails | tomatoes | prunes, pomegranate | | samp | | | | | | | | | |
| snoek | | raspberries | | sesame seeds | | | | | | | | | |
| tripe | | strawberries | | | | | | | | | | | |
| tuna | | sultanas | | | | | | | | | | | |

Cold & Moist Foods

| Meats | Vegetables | Fruits | Nuts | Grains & Seeds | Dairy Products | Oils | Spices & Herbs | Drinks | Flavourants | Condiments & Spreads | Confectionary & Desserts | Cereals | Dishes |
|--------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|------|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|--------|
| duck | beetroot | apricot | macadamia | cucumber seeds | coconut milk | | cardamom | milk shakes | fructose | | custard | pronutro | |
| rabbit | baby marrow | cranberries | | linseed | cow's milk | | coriander | rooibos | glucose | | ice cream | rice crispies | |
| | butternut | figs | | melon seeds | goats milk | | cumin | sugar cane | rose syrup | | sago | | |
| | broccoli, carrots | kiwi fruit | | pumpkin seeds | buttermilk | | vanilla | juice | | 1 | | | |
| | cucumber | litchis, melons | | rice cakes | butter | | | water | | | | | |
| | squash | mulberries | | rice | margarine | | | | | | | | |
| | lady fingers (okra) | pawpaw, pears | | semolina | rice milk | | | | | | | | |
| | lettuce | prickly pears | | | soya milk | | | | | | | | |
| | pumpkin | quince | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | radish, sprouts | spanspek | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | soya beans | sweet apples | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | tofu | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | zucchini | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Hot & Dry Foods

| Meats | Vegetables | Fruits | Nuts | Grains & Seeds | Dairy Products | Oils | Spices & Herbs | Drinks | Flavourants | Condiments & Spreads | Confectionary & Desserts | Cereals | Dishes |
|----------------|---------------|---------|------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|--------------|
| all small bird | bitter gourd | avocado | cashews | celery seeds | eggs | mustard oil | aniseed | alcohol | pungent and | chilli sauce | | | spicy dishes |
| meat | celery | grapes | hazel nuts | chickpeas | | | cinnamon | grape juice | bitter | mustard sauce | | | |
| chicken | green pepper | | pecan nuts | fenugreek seeds | | | cloves, garlic | herbal teas | flavourants | peri-peri | | | |
| lobsters | leek | | walnuts | gram flour | | | green/red chilli | (see herbs) | | sauce | | | |
| mackerel | onion | | | mustard seeds | | | fenugreek | | | | | | |
| oily fish | red pepper | | | papad | | | lavender | | | | | | |
| pilchards | yellow pepper | | | | | | nutmeg | | | | | | |
| prawns | | | | | | | oregano | | | | | | |
| sardines | | | | | | | paprika | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | parsley | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | rocket, rosemary | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | saffron | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | tarragon | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Hot & Moist Foods

| Meats | Vegetables | Fruits | Nuts | Grains & Seeds | Dairy Products | Oils | Spices & Herbs | Drinks | Flavourants | Condiments & Spreads | Confectionary & Desserts | Cereals | Dishes |
|--------|--------------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| buck | artichokes | bananas | almonds | bread | clarified butter | castor oil | bay leaves | green tea | honey | mayonnaise | biscuits | all bran flakes | sweet dishes |
| goat | asparagus | dates | brazil nuts | bulgar wheat | condensed milk | olive oil | black pepper | hot water | molasses | | cakes | bran | |
| goose | olives | guavas | pistachios | flour | cheese | sunflower oil | cayenne pepper | juices | salt | | chocolate | honey smaks | |
| lamb | spinach | mangoes | apricot kernels | pasta | cream cheese | | chives | (see fruits) | sugar | | liquorice | muesli | |
| liver | spring onion | peaches | | rye bread | mother's milk | | ginger, fennel | herbal teas | | | vermicelli | nutri-k | |
| mutton | sweet potato | papaya | | sunflower seeds | (for babies) | | green masala | (see herbs) | | | | nutrific | |
| turkey | turnips | | | wheat | fresh cream | | marjoram | | | | | oats | |
| | | | | macaroni | | | mint, sage | | | | | puffed wheat | |
| | | | | dill seeds | | | soya sauce | | | | | taystee wheat | |
| | | | | | | | thyme,turmeric | | | | | weetbix | |
| | | | | | | | watercress | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | white pepper | | | | | | |