

Period Drama

Feeling emotional, tired and moody? Craving chocolate? Turning into Ms Hyde? Yes, it is 'that time of the month' again. Follow these practical tips and your PMS troubles will be a thing of the past!

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Banish bloating and water retention

Mild, natural diuretics such as watermelon, cucumber, parsley and dandelion tea can help relieve bloating and fluid retention. Sip on cranberry juice and nibble on asparagus. Cross out salt and salty snacks off the list as sodium leads to water retention and bloating. Drink more water to flush out excess salt. Eat papaya and pineapple to benefit from their natural digestive enzymes. Drink fennel or dill tea to soothe your tummy.

Curb the cravings

Cravings are due to low blood sugar levels, magnesium and chromium deficiency. Eating smaller, more frequent meals will help balance the blood sugar, prevent cravings and binges. Include protein in every meal to keep you full for longer. Choose fish, chicken, lentils and beans. Munch on pumpkin seeds, almonds, carrots and hummus.

Ditch the mood swings

Cut back on caffeine, alcohol and sugar to avoid jangled nerves and anxiety. Magnesium is a natural tranquilliser and relaxant which can help relieve irritability, anxiety and muscle cramps. Include more magnesium-rich foods such as green leafy vegetables, almonds, salmon and sunflower seeds. Vitamin B6 5-HTP can help alleviate mood swings and PMS blues.

Beat fatigue

The tiredness that often comes with PMS can be easily remedied by eating six little meals during the day. This helps to keep both your blood sugar and energy levels even. Include more foods rich in B vitamins



such as wheat germ, brown rice, pulses and nuts. Increase your intake of iron-rich foods and beverages such as green leafy vegetables, dried fruits and nettle tea.

Support your liver

The liver breaks down and eliminates excess hormones. If the liver is not functioning properly, old hormones get recycled and female hormones become



imbalanced. This can lead to bloating, cramping and heavy periods. Have a cup of hot water with lemon and ginger every morning. Eat more liver-friendly foods such as green leafy vegetables, broccoli, asparagus, onions, dark grapes and blueberries to keep your liver happy.

Eat phytoestrogens

PMS is often associated with excess oestrogen levels. Foods such as flaxseeds, lentils, chickpeas and tofu are rich in phytoestrogens which help control the levels of oestrogen by binding up free oestrogen and escorting it out of the body. Flaxseeds are high in fibre and great at relieving constipation which often accompanies PMS.

Exercise regularly

I don't mean strenuous exercise here. Try some gentle stretching, yoga or swimming. Exercise provides relief by reducing stress, boosting circulation, regulating hormones and releasing endorphins, the happy chemicals.

Relax

PMS symptoms are usually made worse if you are stressed and tired. Soothe your mind and body with deep breathing, yoga and meditation to help you remain calm and composed throughout the month. Get plenty of rest and sleep around the time of your period. Use some lavender oil in your bath to help you unwind and relax.

Try acupuncture

PMS is seen by the Traditional Chinese Medicine as 'stagnant chi' which causes

the blood to stagnate leading to a myriad of symptoms. Acupuncture can get the chi flowing again and keep your PMS symptoms at bay.

Choose top supplements

Chasteberry Plus is a wonderful herbal formula which can help alleviate cramps, pain, breast tenderness and irregular cycles. EstroFactors is fantastic for hormonal balance and liver support. Glycaemic Complex is excellent for blood sugar balance and cravings. Eskimo Skin Care is great for spots and breakouts. Ultra Muscleze can provide fantastic relief from spasms, cramps, anxiety and insomnia. Hemagenics is a great and easy to absorb iron formula. 5-HTP is excellent for keeping PMS blues at bay. All supplements are available at www.nutri-online1.co.uk

Note: Always consult your doctor before changing your diet or taking any supplements and read the supplement instructions carefully.

■ With a flourishing private practice on prestigious Harley Street in London, Akcelina Cvijetic is Nutritionist and Life Coach to the royal family, celebrities and business people

