

Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)



PMS is a natural part of the menstrual cycle (your period). PMS symptoms vary greatly from woman to woman, or even from cycle to cycle. PMS usually starts within seven days before your period and stops shortly after you begin your period.

Symptoms of PMS

- Acne
- Breast swelling and tenderness
- Bloating, water retention or weight gain
- Constipation
- Crying spells or depression
- Fast heartbeat
- Feeling hungry
- Feeling irritable, tense, or anxious
- Feeling tired or trouble sleeping
- Headache
- Joint pain
- Mood swings
- Not feeling as interested in sex
- Trouble concentrating
- Wanting to be alone

Tips to Lessen PMS

- Eat healthy foods including fruits, vegetables, protein, and whole grains. Cut back on sugar and fat.
- Cut back on caffeine to help with tension, irritability, and breast tenderness.
- Have good sleep hygiene - about eight hours a night.
- Keep to a regular schedule of meals, bedtime, and exercise.
- Limit alcohol before your period as it can make you feel more depressed.
- Practice mindfulness. Learn more about mindfulness meditation [here](#).
- Reduce salt and foods high in salt for the few days before your period.
- Take a multivitamin that has 400 micrograms of folic acid.

Over-the-counter pain relievers such as ibuprofen, aspirin, Aleve, or acetaminophen help ease cramps, headaches, backaches and breast tenderness. For severe PMS symptoms or if they last a long time and affect your daily life, see a healthcare provider.