
Ask a Fertility Educator

Jamey Hutchinson BSN CFCP
Women's Health Nurse
FertilityCare Practitioner

Question: I notice that before my period, I start to feel really horrible. Symptoms like irritability and depression just take over and last for about a week. Is there anything I can do for this?

Answer:

The condition now referred to as premenstrual syndrome (PMS) has a long and varied history among medical professionals. Some symptoms (both physical and emotional) prior to the onset of the menstrual period are common. These may occur in 50-75% of women. Moderate to severe PMS that disrupt a woman's lifestyle may occur in 20-30% of women and severe, debilitating symptoms are seen in 2-10% of women (Mezrow G, Shoupe D The Premenstrual Syndrome 1997).

Symptoms of PMS can include: anger or irritability, anxiety, bloating or weight gain, breast tenderness, depression, decreased concentration, decreased self esteem, decreased interest in activities, fatigue, food cravings, headaches, impulsivity, mood swings, insomnia and tension (APGO 1998). It seems like a lot, right?

Evaluating and successfully treating someone who has PMS is highly gratifying because the condition can have an adverse impact on the family, relationship of the spouses and the relationship of the mother with her children. Indeed, for many years, it has been thought that little could be accomplished for these patients. However, by teaching women how to chart their cycles and to observe the changes in their body that are associated with fertility, by targeting the luteal phase for appropriate progesterone and estrogen production, along with endorphin and thyroid function, and then by implementing treatment, incredible success in the treatment of this condition can be achieved. This can have an enormous impact on the whole family. (Hilders, Premenstrual Syndrome, 2004) soon can I get pregnant again?

