

MANAGEMENT OF PMS

1. **EAT FREQUENTLY AND PROPERLY.** Good nutrition, with reduced fats and increased complex carbohydrates, are important throughout your cycle but even more important after ovulation, when it is especially important to keep blood sugar stable. Never go more than 4-5 hours without food; a snack at bedtime may help also.
2. **GET A GOOD NIGHT SLEEP.** Avoid staying up all night.
3. **EXERCISE REGULARLY.** Half-hour aerobic workouts, in which you increase your pulse and work up a sweat, are good mood elevators. You should exercise three times a week all month.
4. **CUT DOWN ON SALT.** Since salt holds water, reducing salt intake should reduce bloating. In addition to not adding salt to your food, cook with less and avoid high sodium foods.
5. **ADD BRAN TO YOUR DIET.** Some women become constipated during premenstrual time and for the first few days of their period. Bran will bind with water and aid in elimination.
6. **BE CAREFUL WITH ALCOHOL.** Reduce your alcohol intake by half during premenstrual time.
7. **CUT DOWN ON CAFFEINE.** This includes not only coffee, but tea, cola, diet sodas, and chocolate as well. A group of substances (xanthenes) in these products encourage breast cysts. Women who reduce intake of xanthenes may find breast are less tender during the premenstrual stage.
8. **REDUCE STRESS IF POSSIBLE.** Take things easy just before your period. If you are working, try not to schedule important meetings or deadlines during this time.
9. **TAKE A MULTIVITAMIN.** The B vitamins are known to reduce bloating and have antidepressant effects. They also seem to help control carbohydrate cravings.
10. **TAKE A CALCIUM SUPPLEMENT.** Studies since 1998 have shown that 1000-1200mg of supplemental calcium daily reduce PMS symptoms in at least half of the women tested. Ideally, the supplement will also contain Vitamin D and magnesium.
11. **DISCUSS YOUR SYMPTOMS WITH YOUR PHYSICIAN.** Severe cases of PMS will require prescription medication.