

IS PMS COMMON?

A recent study documents that **54% of the women surveyed had PMS**. So **PMS is a reality** for a large number of women.

It is important to know that:

- PMS is a physical condition that can be treated
- Not all women have PMS.

Believe in yourself. Don't lose sight of all your good qualities and how you feel when you don't have PMS.

Believe that you can **overcome** PMS.



CU Healthy

HCS

wants to CU Healthy! The Health Promotion Team at HCS tries to achieve this through our:

- Resource Centre
- Student Peer Interns
- Health Promotion Advisory Committee
- Website (carleton.ca/health)
- Facebook page
- Newsletters, class presentations, workshops and more . . .

The Health Promotion Team promotes healthy lifestyles and wellness and can provide you with information about stress, colds, nutrition, sexuality, alcohol, etc. Contact the Resource Centre for more information at 613-520-2600 ext. 6544 or email us at carletonwellness@gmail.com



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PMS



 **Health and Counselling**
SERVICES
Carleton University

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carleton.ca/health
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PRE MENSTRUAL SYNDROME (PMS)

WHAT IS PMS?

Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) refers to a variety of symptoms that women can experience 1 to 10 days before their menstrual period begins.

The most common symptoms fall into 4 groups:

Nervous tension
Irritability
Mood Swings
Anxiety

Weight gain
Swelling of extremities
Breast tenderness
Abdominal bloating

Headache
Craving for sweets
Increased appetite
Heart pounding
Dizziness/
Fainting

Crying
Confusion
Insomnia
Depression
Forgetfulness

Menstrual cramps are not part of PMS. Cramps usually occur after a woman's period has already started. PMS occurs before a woman's period begins.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE PMS?

- Generally, you have PMS if symptoms increase during the week before your period and improve once your period has started.
- Keep a daily log/chart during your menstrual cycle and note if symptoms are mild, moderate or severe.
- Work with a healthcare provider familiar with PMS. Ask them to follow your progress and advise you of any laboratory tests needed.

WHAT CAUSES PMS?

- Studies have not identified the cause of PMS.
- Hormone levels in a woman's body can vary greatly each month. These hormonal changes may contribute to PMS.
- Poor diet, high stress and lack of exercise most likely play a role as well.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I HAVE PMS?

- Remember that PMS has both physical and emotional symptoms.
- Try to minimize stressful situations in your life during times you have PMS.
- Ask your family, friends and partners for support in eliminating PMS from your life.
- Eliminate or cut down refined sugar and other processed food in your diet. These foods can decrease your body's capacity to store B vitamins and magnesium.
- Limit salt and refined sugar if you experience bloating or weight gain.
- Limit caffeine intake—it's found in coffee, tea, cola drinks and chocolate
- Eat more foods high in B vitamins and magnesium. Examples: tuna, beef, bananas, and black beans, broccoli, spinach and peanuts for foods rich in magnesium.

If you continue to experience moderate to severe symptoms, try a combination of the following:

- Get regular outdoor exercise every day. This helps relieve anxiety & tensions and provides natural vitamin D.
- Daily supplements of 20-50 mg of B-6 and up to 250 mg of magnesium.
- Severe PMS can be treated with progesterone therapy—natural and synthetic options are also available. Speak to your doctor.