

PMDD (Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder)

PMDD is a condition that is associated with severe emotional and physical symptoms that are linked to the menstrual cycle. PMDD is considered to be a severe form of PMS that affects about 5 – 10% of menstruating women.

PMDD is distinguished from PMS by the intensity and severity of its symptoms. The symptoms of PMDD are often so severe that they are considered disabling, meaning they get in the way of daily activities or relationships. The symptoms of PMDD start during the last week of your menstrual cycle and usually cease during the week following your cycle.

Different types of PMDD:

- Symptoms start at mid-cycle (ovulation) and become worse as the cycle approaches and end shortly after the cycle begins.
- Symptoms start during the week before the menstrual cycle starts and end shortly after the cycle begins.
- Symptoms occur at ovulation and resolve after a few days but reoccur as the cycle approaches.
- Symptoms start at ovulation, become progressively worse, and continue until the menstrual cycle concludes.

These symptoms occur every month or almost every month.

Symptoms of PMDD

The symptoms PMDD sufferers experience may change from month to month, but at least five of the following symptoms need to be present to make the diagnosis of PMDD:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty concentrating and staying confused | <input type="checkbox"/> Marked appetite change, overeating, or food cravings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue, tiredness, or loss of energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Persistent, marked irritability; anger; increased conflicts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling out of control or overwhelmed | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical symptoms such as weight gain, bloating, breast tenderness or swelling, headaches, and muscle/joint pain. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insomnia or sleeping too much | <input type="checkbox"/> Sudden mood swings (crying easily or extreme sensitivity) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of interest in usual activities (work, school, or social activities) | <input type="checkbox"/> Very depressed mood, feeling hopeless |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marked anxiety, tension, or edginess | |

PMS (Premenstrual Syndrome)

PMS is a hormone disorder that is characterized by the monthly recurrence of physical or psychological symptoms. The only thing all the symptoms have in common is that they all affect you only in the days before your monthly period. They usually subside when your menstrual cycle begins.

The problems are more common in women who are between their late twenties and early forties. Generally, the problems and symptoms reoccur in predictable patterns, but some months may be more severe than others.

PMS Symptoms

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Abnormal bloating | <input type="checkbox"/> Diarrhea or constipation | <input type="checkbox"/> Nausea |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aches and pains | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty concentrating | <input type="checkbox"/> Palpitations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acne flare-ups | <input type="checkbox"/> Dizziness | <input type="checkbox"/> Panic attacks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol sensitivity | <input type="checkbox"/> Drowsiness | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor coordination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angry outbursts | <input type="checkbox"/> Eye Pain | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor judgment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety | <input type="checkbox"/> Facial swelling | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor memory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asthmatic attacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor vision |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoidance of social activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of going out alone | <input type="checkbox"/> Restlessness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backache | <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of losing control | <input type="checkbox"/> Ringing in ears |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bladder irritation | <input type="checkbox"/> Food sensitivity | <input type="checkbox"/> Runny nose |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bleeding gums | <input type="checkbox"/> Forgetfulness | <input type="checkbox"/> Seizures |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breast tenderness | <input type="checkbox"/> Headaches | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity to light and noise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bruising | <input type="checkbox"/> Herpes (cold sores) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sinusitis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Changes in appetite | <input type="checkbox"/> Hives or rashes | <input type="checkbox"/> Social withdrawal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clumsiness | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot flashes | <input type="checkbox"/> Sore throat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confusion | <input type="checkbox"/> Indecision | <input type="checkbox"/> Spots in front of eyes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conjunctivitis | <input type="checkbox"/> Inefficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> Suspiciousness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Constipation | <input type="checkbox"/> Insomnia | <input type="checkbox"/> Swollen fingers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cramps | <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability | <input type="checkbox"/> Tearfulness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Craving salty foods or sweets | <input type="checkbox"/> Joint pain | <input type="checkbox"/> Tension |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crying spells | <input type="checkbox"/> Leg cramps | <input type="checkbox"/> Tingling in hands and feet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decreased hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Leg swelling | <input type="checkbox"/> Tremors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decreased productivity | <input type="checkbox"/> Mood swings | <input type="checkbox"/> Visual changes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decreased sex drive | <input type="checkbox"/> Muscle aches | <input type="checkbox"/> Vomiting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Depression | | <input type="checkbox"/> Weight gain |

Causes of PMS

- Caffeine consumption.
- Low blood-sugar levels
- Low estrogen levels. Your estrogen levels decrease at ovulation. They also decrease just before or during your cycle. When estrogen levels decline, your neurotransmitters change. Serotonin and Dopamine levels decline, which can lead to depression. Also, when estrogen levels decrease, your norepinephrine levels may increase, which can make you feel more anxious and irritable.
- Low progesterone levels on days 12-14 of the menstrual cycle.
- Oral contraceptives. Taking oral contraceptives may contribute to PMS, due to the progestin (synthetic progesterone) they contain.
- Partial hysterectomies. A partial hysterectomy may be a precipitating factor for PMS due to the decreased supply of blood to the ovaries post hysterectomy.
- Pregnancies, miscarriages, abortions, and tubal ligations are also considered contributing factors to PMS. Studies have shown that after a tubal ligation, women have higher estrogen levels and lower progesterone levels in the second half of her cycle each month.

Some women who experience severe PMS symptoms have undiagnosed depression, but depression by itself does not cause all the PMS symptoms. While stress can aggravate some symptoms, it does not cause them on its own.

Deficiencies in certain vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin B₆, calcium, and magnesium, can make the symptoms of PMS worse. Eating a lot of salty foods can cause fluid retentions, which can worsen symptoms. Drinking alcohol can cause mood and energy disturbances, which can also aggravate symptoms.