



## **PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME – DIETARY & TREATMENT GUIDELINES**

### General guidelines

Limit consumption of refined sugar, salt, red meat products, alcohol, coffee, tea, and chocolate.

Limit intake of fats, especially saturated, cooked processed fats, hydrogenated oils. Substitute with unprocessed vegetable oils.

Decrease or eliminate use of tobacco.

Increase intake of fish, poultry, whole grains, legumes, green leafy vegetables, and fresh fruit.

### Vegetables and Legumes

Fresh vegetables are preferred over frozen and frozen are preferred over canned. Try to get a combination of green leafy vegetables and legumes (peas and beans), and yellow vegetables. Legumes are a good source of protein and fiber. Consume one serving of legumes and two servings of vegetables daily.

### Fruits

Fresh fruits are preferred over frozen and frozen preferred over canned. Fruits are a good source of important nutrients and a good way to satisfy a hunger for sweets. Consume one to two servings of fruits daily. Avoid products containing coconut.

### Cereals and Whole Grains

Millet, buckwheat and barley are high in magnesium and fiber. Oatmeal is a good source of complex carbohydrates and fiber. Consume one serving daily each of cereals and whole grains. For example: oatmeal for breakfast and millet with peas or beans for dinner.

### Meats

Limit consumption of red meats (beef, pork, lamb) and eggs to one or two portions per week. Substitute fish, poultry, legumes or nuts. Rice and beans also combine to form a complete protein. Consume twice as much vegetable protein (1gm per kg body weight per day) as animal protein (0.5 per kg body weight per day).

### Dairy Products

Limit to one to two portions per day maximum. One portion can be either:

8 ounce low fat or skimmed milk

½ cup low fat cottage cheese

1 cup low fat yogurt

Substitute unprocessed soybean products for dairy products.

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### Fats

Limit intake of fats to 30% of calories consumed. Avoid the use of animal fats such as bacon, grease and butter. Avoid hydrogenated vegetable oils such as shortening and margarine. Substitute with cold pressed safflower, olive, and linseed oils. For example, use safflower mayonnaise for spread, olive oil for salads and all three oils for cooking.

### Liquids

Drink three to six large glasses of water daily, preferably purified or bottled water. You may add lime or lemon juice for taste.

### Coffee and Tea

Decaffeinated. If you are accustomed to drinking several cups of caffeinated drinks a day, you may need to cut down gradually to avoid headaches.

### Soft Drinks

Non-carbonated, sugar free, phosphate free, and decaffeinated beverages. Replace soft drinks with fruit juices diluted with water.

### Alcohol

Limit to one or two drinks per day on weekends only.

### Seasoning

Avoid adding salt to prepared foods and try cooking with garlic, onion, kelp powders, and other flavoring spices.

### Over the counter medications

Vitamin B6 100mg a day (do not take more than 100mg a day)

Vitamin E 400 IU a day, especially for breast tenderness

Evening Primrose Oil 1.5mg twice a day, especially for breast tenderness

Magnesium 1g every day, especially for breast tenderness

Calcium 1000-1200mg a day

Progesterone cream – applied twice a day for the last two weeks of the menstrual cycle

### Prescription medications

SSRIs – a group of drugs used for PMS, include Prozac, Zoloft and Paxil. These can be very effective. Side effects include headaches, nausea, insomnia or decrease sex drive

Water pill – Spironolactone can help with water retention and bloating

Birth control pills – especially useful if there are a lot of physical PMS symptoms

Lupron injections – cause temporary menopause with associated symptoms, but very effective