

Premenstrual syndrome. How to cope.

Premenstrual syndrome is a group of varied symptoms which occur around the time of your menstruation. These symptoms include:

Mood swings, irritability, inability to sleep and depression.

Headaches, bloating, breast tenderness fatigue, muscle cramps. Constipation ,diarrhoea ,nausea.

Although cramps, headache, bloating, irritability are common symptoms during a women's period it is only considered to be a disorder

if it affects your ability to perform normal day to day activities Also the timing is important. These symptoms if they are due to premenstrual syndrome they will typically appear 1 week before your periods and disappear within 4 days of start of periods.

Premenstrual syndrome is caused by cyclical changes and fluctuation in the hormone levels and chemical changes in the brain. However there are no abnormal levels of hormones in your blood. A person suffering from Premenstrual syndrome and those who have normal symptoms have similar levels of hormones

during the month. However the response or sensitivity to these hormones vary from person to person.

Premenstrual syndrome cannot be diagnosed by either blood tests for hormones or by ultrasound evaluation. It can only be diagnosed by charting on the calender when your symptoms appear and disappear in relation to the menstruation. This calender has to be kept for 2 menstrual cycles.

There are no magic drugs to treat this condition. The symptoms have to be carefully assessed by your

gynaecologist. However the first line treatment is making lifestyle changes, changing your diet and taking some supplements.

Lifestyle changes include, daily yoga, pranayam ie breathing exercises and general exercise for 30mins. Reduce stress , take plenty of sleep and warm showers and baths. Although you maybe uncomfortable it is better to start exercises and yoga. Initially you can start with moderate levels and gradually increase. This benefits pain, general well being and elevates mood.

Dietary change includes high fibre diet, adequate calcium intake and reduced salt. You must avoid coffee, too much tea, alcohol and smoking. Try herbal teas and plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Supplements and vitamins promote good reproductive health. Vitamin supplements such as calcium, magnesium, vitamin D3, vitamin E , vitamin B help. Also certain herbal medicines help. However many of these supplements have to be given in proper dosage. So a proper evaluation by your gynaecologist to rule out other health conditions and prescription of proper doses are

important.

If lifestyle changes and relaxation methods do not work please visit your doctor for further evaluation.