help a girl out®

Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder



What is Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)?

A much more severe form of premenstrual syndrome (*PMS*) and is considered a severe and chronic health condition that needs attention and treatment. Symptoms occur 1 to 2 weeks before your period starts (luteal phase) and cease within the first few days of your period.



What is Premenstrual Symdrome (PMS):

A collection of physical or mood-related symptoms that occur 1-2 weeks before your period each month. Symptoms go away within the first few days of menstruation.

Symptoms:

- Depressed mood, increased anxiety, mood swings, self-critical thoughts, increased irritability, feelings of overwhelm or being out of control
- Increased conflict
- Decreased interest in normal activities
- Concentration problems
- Fatigue, lethargy, or lack of energy
- Changes in appetite
- Changes in sleep pattern
- Physical symptoms, such as breast swelling or tenderness, headaches, joint or muscle aches, weight gain, and bloating

- PMDD can only be diagnosed through cycle tracking over at least *two* cycles





Quick Facts:



- Did you know? 90% of serotonin (the happy hormone) is made in the digestive tract
- Hunger can trigger PMDD symptoms due to the connection between the gut and the brain





Self-Care

- Prepare meals and other self-care items before your luteal phase
- Pre-communicate your boundaries
- Join a peer support group*
- Seek specialized medical support*

* (see our resource database for more information)

Key Nutrients for PMDDers

- Protein + zinc: shellfish, lean meats, poultry, seeds. legumes
- Healthy fats: fatty fish like salmon, avocados, nuts, seeds, eggs
- High Magnesium: spinach, black beans, whole grains, dark chocolate
- Consult a healthcare professional to see if a low-histamine diet is right for you

REMEMBER! → **One luteal phase at a time**

It's real. It's valid. It's part of your experience.
Understanding your symptoms can help you feel more in control, advocate for your needs, and care for your body with confidence.

Adapted from hopkinsmedicine.org, MyHealth.Alberta.ca, CPDA conference