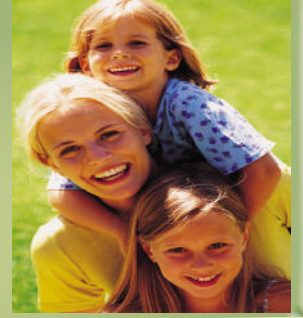


Change of Life Concerns



What is a Woman to Do?

Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)

While it is true that doctors and researchers have not discovered a specific lab test that can identify *PMS*, this disorder is definitely not “imaginary” nor is it “invented,” as scoffers claim. Serious medical research has been going on for years to identify the definitions, diagnosis, causes, and cures for this disorder. Here are two of the resulting definitions:

1. Dr. Ellen Freeman of University of Pennsylvania Health System describes *PMS* as, “a cluster of emotional, behavioral, and physical symptoms that have a cyclic pattern related to the menstrual cycle, becoming severe in the week or two preceding menses and abating with menstruation.”
2. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists defines *PMS* as “the cyclic occurrence of symptoms that are sufficiently severe to interfere with some aspects of life, and that appear with consistent and predictable relationship to the menses.”

Hormone Replacement Therapy

Up until recently, the decision for most woman was relatively easy --- at the first sign of perimenopause (pre-menopause), the doctor would prescribe *Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)*. This “magical” solution supposedly alleviated symptoms like hot flashes, night sweats, mood swings, bone density deterioration and vaginal dryness. It also supposedly offered heart protection.

Startling Discoveries

You can imagine the shock that rippled across communities recently when the traditional medical community suddenly reversed their *HRT* endorsement and admitted that *HRT* actually makes women more susceptible to heart disease, strokes, blood clots and breast cancer. Talk about alarming!

Medical Studies

The results of the studies done by the Women’s Health Initiative, which evaluated the long-term pros and cons of *HRT*, were so alarming that the study was halted! And this unexpected announcement came on the heels of a July 03, 2002 *Journal of American Medical Association* report which confirms that women on *HRT* have no better statistics on heart attacks than those on placebo. The good news is that the risk of breast cancer is apparently minimized if *HRT* is only used briefly.

So, What *Is* a Woman to Do?

Well, it now seems sensible to take the obvious, the affordable, and the safe approach:

1. Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, dairy, high-fiber, whole grains, nuts, and olive oil
2. Reduce caffeine, alcohol, salt, fats, and simple sugars
3. Get adequate, weight-bearing exercise at least 3 times weekly
4. Learn to relax with deep breathing techniques and get plenty of sleep regularly
5. Control blood pressure and take prudent, cardio-protection precautions

Addressing Perimenopausal Issues

There are several products, which are specifically designed to address perimenopausal issues in a no-risk sort of way. *2AEP* (\$42.95) is a very important bone-density protector, which also provides cellular nutrition for a healthy heart, and alleviation from night sleep interruption. *Cardio1st* (\$36.95) is a product specifically designed to strengthen the cardiovascular system and has proven beneficial protection for those suffering from elevated blood pressure and other cardiovascular concerns.

Additional Help

First Essentials Women's Formula (\$ 34.95) is a comprehensive nutrient-dense, nutritional supplement that not only provides all the recommended vitamins and minerals that women need, but also contains a specific complex designed to address the hormonally-related symptoms that women generally experience at perimenopause and menopause.

Caution

You should know that doctors have identified two serious forms of *PMS* that have effects far beyond those of normal *PMS* symptoms:

1. "*Postpartum Depression*" is a severe depression that some women experience after giving birth. Women with this disorder suffer a severe let-down from the high hormone levels from pregnancy, and, because of the disruption to their nervous systems, may actually harm themselves or their babies.

2. "*Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder*" (*PMDD*) causes serious and disabling depression, anxiety, tension, angry irritability, and intense mood changes in the week or two before the onset of menses. In addition, women suffering from this disorder exhibit at least five of *PMS*'s physical symptoms. As with regular *PMS* symptoms, women's *PMDD* symptoms disappear with menses.