

Care  
comes first.

***Managing PMS... period***

**Presented by:  
Tova Benaderet, MD  
Family Practice**



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*

### **What exactly is PMS?**

- Almost all women experience premenstrual syndrome, or PMS
- When normal premenstrual symptoms, such as breast tenderness, bloating and muscle aches, affect your daily life, they are called PMS
- PMS symptoms can affect both your body and your mood in the days or week leading up to your period



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*

### **What causes PMS?**

- PMS is tied to hormone changes that happen during your menstrual cycle
- For many women, PMS runs in the family
- What can make your symptoms worse?
  - High stress
  - Lack of exercise
  - Too much caffeine
  - Not enough vitamin B6, calcium or magnesium



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*

### **Physical Signs**

- Bloating
- Breast tenderness
- Lack of energy
- Cramps
- Headaches
- Lower back pain
- Acne

### **Emotional Signs**

- Feeling sad, angry or anxious
- Decreased alertness
- Finding it hard to focus on tasks
- Wanting to withdraw from family and friends
- Acting in a forceful or hostile way

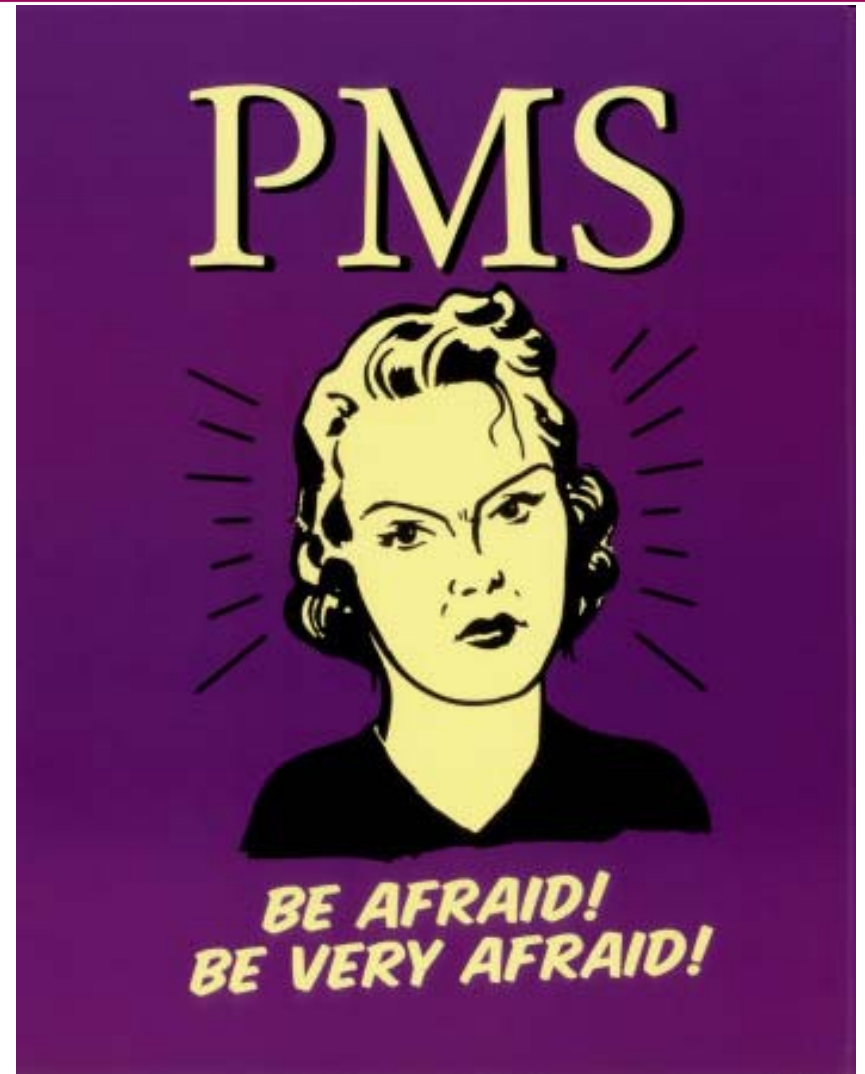


**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*





## *Managing PMS... period*

### **Diagnosing PMS**

- Your doctor will:
  - Rule out any other possibilities, as PMS shares many symptoms with common thyroid disorders and depression
  - Review your medical history
  - Review symptoms you encountered during your previous two or three menstrual cycles
  - Review your menstruation and ovulation dates, if available
- It may take more than one visit to diagnose your symptoms and rule out other possibilities



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*

### **Treating PMS and Managing Your Symptoms**

- Keep a menstrual diary – note any patterns or irregularities in your period and symptoms
- Increase your calcium intake to 1200 mg and vitamin B6 to 50-100 mg daily
- Reduce consumption of caffeine, refined sugar and sodium, as these additives are linked to both physical and emotional PMS symptoms
- Exercise regularly to relieve tension and boost your mood
- Reduce stress



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*

### **Nutrition and Exercise**

- Easily the two best ways to manage your PMS
- Healthy, balanced nutrition helps keep your body's systems in balance
- Exercise increases blood flow and endorphins, making your body feel better and work more efficiently



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*

### **What about medication?**

- Many women find relief using non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as aspirin, ibuprofen or naproxen
- NSAIDs are available over the counter or in prescription strengths
- NSAIDs work best when taken before or at the outset of symptoms, and taken at regular intervals to help manage throughout your cycle



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*

### **Are there other medication options?**

- For severe PMS symptoms that don't abate with NSAID usage – or if you are unable to take NSAIDs due to heart, liver or other conditions – your doctor may be able to provide you with an alternative by prescription
- The selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) class of antidepressants is often the first-choice medicine for moderate to severe premenstrual symptoms



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*

### **PMDD – When its *really* bad**

- Premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) is a severe form of PMS
- PMDD causes physical and mood-related symptoms that seriously disrupt a woman's life and relationships
- Women diagnosed with PMDD are typically encouraged to use a combination of healthy lifestyle choices and prescription medication to manage their symptoms



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... period*

### **Alternative treatments**

- There are new and alternative treatments for PMS
- Most alternative therapies may help relieve symptoms of PMS, but are not considered standard treatment for PMS



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... Period.*

### **Other treatment choices include:**

- Relaxation methods, including relaxation and breathing exercises, yoga and massage therapy
- Bright light therapy: exposure to cool-white fluorescent light in the mornings and evenings on days when PMS symptoms are present
- Alternative mineral and herbal therapies
- Some therapies may require more than one menstrual cycle to be helpful



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Managing PMS... Period.*

### **Seeking medical help**

- Call your doctor or health professional if:
  - Your PMS symptoms regularly disrupt your life and keep you from doing your regular activities
  - You feel out of control because of your PMS symptoms
  - Your PMS symptoms do not respond to home treatment, such as increased exercise, good nutrition and NSAIDs
  - Your PMS symptoms do not end after a couple of days of your menstrual period



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation



## *Resources*

- **Dominican Medical Foundation**  
1595 Soquel Drive, Suite 400-411, Santa Cruz  
831.475.1111



**Dominican Medical Foundation**

A service of CHW Medical Foundation