



# INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

( Peer-reviewed, Refereed, Indexed & Open Access Journal )

DOI : 03.2021-11278686

ISSN : 2582-8568

IMPACT FACTOR : 7.560 (SJIF 2024)

## Premenstrual syndrome and Ayurveda management; a review

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DOI No. **03.2021-11278686** DOI Link :: <https://doi-ds.org/doilink/09.2024-23556599/IRJHS2409005>

### **Abstract:**

*Life style changes and work culture for women has a significant shift. It has major impact on their physical as well as mental health. Lack of physical exercise and unhealthy food habits had resulted in various health ailments. Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) is one such group of symptoms felt prior to menstruation for 7-10 days causing a hindrance to the health and ultimately day to day life of women. Ayurveda has holistic approach to such disorders. It implies to rectify the daily routine in accordance to Dinacharya, food as per ones Prakruti and use of some medications to keep the balance of Dosha causing PMS. A brief account of these management steps are been discussed in present context.*

**Keywords:** Premenstrual syndrome, Dinacharya, Prakruti

### **Introduction:**

Female body is by nature designed in a peculiar way for the purpose of reproduction. It beholds the new offspring and has prime role in its birth. The anatomical structure and the hormonal physiology in synergism are responsible for fertility in a women. In this order, female body has reproductive cycles called as menstrual cycles. This marks its start from menarche to menopause denoting fertile age range for a female. Female body hormones are responsible for smooth menstrual cycles. Imbalance in it results in various issues related to menstruation. Adoption of unhealthy lifestyle, working in shifts causing sleep deprivation, faulty food habits like excessive use of packed foods, overeating, disturbed times of meals, consumption of soft drinks and starving to lose weight proves to be one of the major factor responsible for hormonal imbalance. These all counts on her menstruation health. Owing to this scenario, majority of females in reproductive age experience PMS – premenstrual syndrome.

PMS – premenstrual syndrome

It is the group of symptoms felt prior to menstruation for 7 to 10 days. This syndrome is the combination of both physical as well as mental symptoms. The severity of symptoms vary person to person. The symptoms can be listed as follows;

Physical symptoms –

- Breast tenderness
- Lower backache
- Colic pain in abdomen
- Bloating, constipation
- Headache
- Cramps in legs
- Weakness

Mental symptoms –

- Mood swings
- Felling of low, depression
- Anxiety
- Loss of libido
- Increased irritability
- Low focus and concentration

According to Ayurveda **Vata Dosha** imbalance causes the imbalance state of other **Doshas** causing premenstrual syndrome. **Vata** in association with **Pitta** and **Kapha** simultaneously is responsible for vitiation of **Manodosha** and **Rasadhatu**. **Mithyahravihar** is the **Samanyanidana** for this syndrome. Here the symptoms mainly points towards the **VataDosha** vitiation due to unhealthy lifestyle and food habits. To balance the **Dosha** and ease the symptoms following are the factors or management steps which can be undertaken for smooth menstruation.

*Dinacharya* – day to day routine

These are the set of activities one follows. It includes both *Ahara* and *Vihara* concept. As when to have food and what sort of exercise one must incorporate in daily routine is been stated. Though one cannot follow each and every step mentioned under *Dinacharya* in present day, we can adopt them to suit our nature of work and climate. Some simple changes can be listed as follows,

- Early wakeup
- *Souch* – defecation
- *Dantadhawana*– toothbrush
- *Snana*– Bathing

- *Vyayama* – Exercise
- *Ahara*– freshly prepared food as per ones physic
- *Abhyanga* – oil massage to parts of body like palms, soles and head
- *Ratricharya* – timely sleep

Along with above mentioned activities to be followed, one can consider some Yoga and Pranayama practices to be done under *Vihara*.

- Following *Yama* and *Niyama* mentioned in *Asthanga Yoga*
- Implementation of *AcharaRasayana*
- *Yoga* postured to be practiced –
  - *Suryanamaskara* – sun salutation
  - *Setubandhasana* – bridge pose
  - *AdhomukhShwanasana* – downward dog pose
  - *Marjaryasana* – cat pose
  - *Bhujangasana*– cobra pose
  - *ViparitKarni*
- *Pranayama* –
  - *Anulomviloma*
  - *Kapalbhati*
  - *Bhastrika*
  - *Bhramari*
  - *Omkara*

#### ***Aushadhi Yojana* –**

Medication which are termed under *Rasayanacategory* can be used on daily basis to ease these symptoms.

1. *Shatavari*– a renowned drug used to balance the hormones in female body. One can take its various forms like *Churna, Vati, Kalpa* etc. daily to help balance *Dosha* and *Dhatulike Rasa Dhatu*.
2. *Ashwagandha*– daily use of this herb can be beneficial for maintaining strengthen body and also helps to calm the mind. It is also useful for sound bone health.
3. Flaxseed and *Shatapushpa* – these both herbs are said to provide vital micronutrients and also pacifies *VataDosha*.
4. *Rason* – primly indicated in vitiation of *VataDosha*.
5. *Manukka* – Black resins – water soaked resins are indicated to be taken empty stomach daily. It balances the *Vata* and *Pitta Dosha*. It is also useful in restoring optimum health of *Rasa – RaktaDhatu* there by easing the PMS symptoms.

6. *ChandraprabhaVati* –anall-round*Rasayana*for female. It pacifies *VataDosha*and proves to be useful in PMS.
7. *Drakshasava*–a restorative tonic which balances the *Dosha*.
8. *Saraswatarishta* – acts on *Rasa – RaktaDhatu* as well as calms the mind.
9. *Dashamularishta*–acts on *Dhatvagni* and thereby improves the vitiation of *Doshaby Ampachana*. Also is used in pain conditions.
10. *ErandaSneha* – castor oil – if taken in PMS condition in every cycle it pacifies the *VataDosha* and eases the symptoms of PMS.

#### **Inference:**

If we go through the causative factors of PMS, we come to the point of unhealthy lifestyle and faulty food habits. This tends to have an impact on one's hormonal system and thus develops group of symptoms which corresponds physically as well as mentally. Here management in accordance to Ayurveda proves to be beneficial in prevention as well as curative in nature. Including and imbibing the small changes in accordance to *Dinacharya*, the *Yoga* and *Pranayama* practices and use of optimum medication can be advised in present growing issue of PMS.

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