

# Premenstrual Syndrome (also known as PMS)



# Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)



Changes in the hormone levels in your body before your period can cause physical and emotional changes.

This is known as Premenstrual Syndrome or PMS.

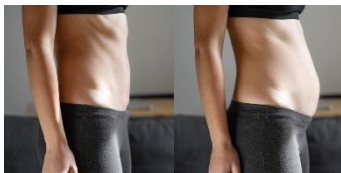
## What to expect



A **symptom** is a sign that you have an illness or health condition.

Symptoms of PMS include:

- mood swings – when your mood changes very quickly
- feeling sad or worried
- feeling grumpy
- headaches
- feeling bloated – your tummy sticks out more than normal
- your breasts feel different or are sore if you touch them
- not being interested in sex





- changes in skin like spots or dryness
- changes in how much and how often you want to eat
- feeling tired or finding it difficult to sleep

These symptoms usually get better when your period starts and go away a few days afterwards.



PMS does not affect all people who have periods.

Speak to your doctor if you need help to cope with your symptoms.

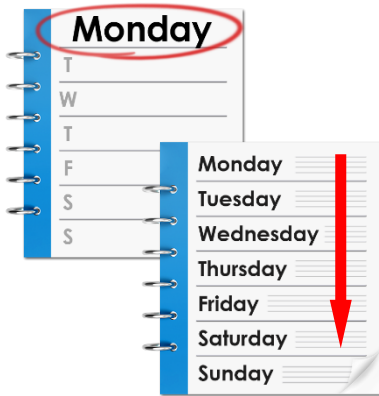
PMS can occur at any point in your adult life, but it can get worse during [menopause](#) – when your periods stop.



It can be helpful to keep a note of your symptoms and the dates your periods start and end.

You can do this using a calendar, a diary or an app.

You can then talk to your doctor and they will decide if you need any tests or treatment.



Keep a note of these things before you go to see your doctor:

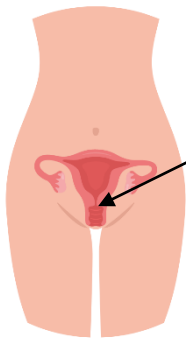
- the day your last period started
- how many days your period usually lasts
- what was the shortest time between your periods (from the first day of one period to the first day of the next)
- what was the longest time between your periods (from the first day of one period to the first day of the next)



- how often you need to change your period products on a heavy day



- if you are over 25, when you had your last **smear test**



A **smear test** checks the health of your **cervix**.

The **cervix** is the opening to your uterus from your vagina.

## How to help PMS



There are lots of different things you can do to help the symptoms of PMS:

- gentle exercise like going for a walk or cycle



- eating healthy food

- taking pain relief like paracetamol or ibuprofen



Always follow the instructions on the box or bottle.

- vitamin supplements like calcium and vitamin D

- try to get 7 to 8 hours of sleep a night



- yoga, breathing exercises and meditation to help reduce stress



- therapies like acupuncture or aromatherapy

## Talking to your doctor



Speak to your doctor if your PMS symptoms affect your life.

There are things that can help like:

- medicine that affects your hormones, like the contraceptive pill
- [Cognitive Behavioural Therapy](#)
- some types of antidepressant medicine



## Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)

PMDD is very bad PMS.

It can happen at any time of life but usually happens when you start your periods or during menopause.

Emotional symptoms can include:

- mood swings
- feeling angry or annoyed





- feeling worried or that you cannot relax
- feeling that everything is too much and that you cannot cope
- finding it difficult to concentrate and pay attention



- suicidal feelings - feeling that you want to kill yourself

If you have [suicidal feelings](#), it is important to get help

[More information about mental health](#)



Physical symptoms can include:

- your breasts feel sore to touch
- your breasts swell and get bigger
- headaches
- feeling bloated – when your tummy sticks out more than normal
- changes in your appetite- how much you want to eat and how often you want to eat
- pain in your muscles and joints





- feeling tired or that you cannot be bothered with things
- finding it difficult to sleep



Speak to your doctor if you have any of these symptoms.