

# MHBP'S ALPHABETS OF HEALTH

## P is for PMS

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Source: *Today's Wisconsin Woman of Greater Milwaukee Magazine*

Many Women, from the onset of menstruation in their teens to the end of menopause, deal with premenstrual syndrome or PMS on a monthly basis.

According to the National Women's Health Information Center, common symptoms are breast swelling and tenderness; fatigue and trouble sleeping; upset stomach, bloating, constipation or diarrhea; headache; appetite changes or food cravings; joint or muscle pain; tension, irritability; mood swings or crying spells; anxiety or depression and trouble concentrating or remembering.

Sound like fun? For 40 percent of women it's more than not

fun, it interferes with their normal daily activities says Erin Trampe, M.D., a family medicine physician at Waukesha Healthcare in Brookfield. There are measures, she says, that she advises women to take that can alleviate PMS symptoms.

"I have everybody start with lifestyle modifications," Dr. Trampe says. That advice includes getting plenty of rest, maintaining a regular sleep pattern, regular exercise and limiting salt and caffeine. She also advises all women to take a multivitamin for women with extra calcium and iron. Additional vitamin supplementation such as vitamin B6, vitamin E and calcium supplements may help as well. "Most are inexpensive and don't

cause harm," she says, noting that some women feel relief with vitamin supplementation and others do not.

Ibuprofen and Naproxen medications can be used to help with the physical symptoms and are available without a prescription. In its most severe form, PMS is considered Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD).

In women with PMDD, the main symptoms are mood disorders such as depression, anxiety, tension and persistent anger or irritability. These severe symptoms lead to problems with relationships and carrying out normal activities. Women with PMDD usually have the physical symptoms associated



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## Q is for Questions

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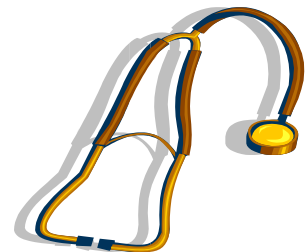
Next time you visit your health care provider, have your questions ready.

Making sure that you are fully informed about your health and the recommendations you receive is just one of your responsibilities as a patient. It may help to write

down your questions in advance, even talk with other family members about what questions they might have for your physician or other health care provider. If you need some help thinking of questions, query your favorite Internet search engine on the health topics that concern you.

For some procedures, there is information on association and medical web sites with suggested questions for your doctor. Don't be afraid to ask any question of

the professionals that provide your healthcare, after all it is your health.



## P is for PMS cont...

with PMS as well. If a woman has severe PMS symptoms that aren't alleviated by lifestyle modification, Dr. Trampe says that there are antidepressants that may help with the symptoms. A woman's menstrual cycle can be an indicator of other, more serious, health issues, so Dr. Trampe advises that if women have any changes in bleeding or symptom patterns, they should schedule an appointment with their physician as those indicators could be signs of infection or metabolic disorders.

