

Acupuncture and PMS



Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) is often viewed as a problem or an illness. It is not. Instead, PMS is a variety of responses to an ordinary event in women's lives: menstruation. PMS usually occurs monthly, accompanied with specific symptoms that can appear 7 to 10 days before menstruation and then disappear after the onset of the menstrual flow. To better understand PMS, it is important to look at the whole picture.

Although PMS is due to unbalanced hormonal fluctuations, other factors such as stress, poor diet, lack of sleep, and a hectic or sedentary lifestyle can worsen the symptoms. Because most women exhibit as many as 4 to 10 symptoms one to two weeks before menstruation, their lives—from relationships with family and friend to work productivity and the ability to appreciate and take pleasure in their own bodies—may become diminished.



What to do about PMS. In treating PMS, Western Medicine recommends diet and lifestyle changes coupled with medications that manipulate the levels of progesterone and estrogen (birth control pills) and tranquilizers and antidepressants for nervousness, anxiety, and depression. Although prescription medications can sometimes bring immediate relief, they unfortunately do not address the underlying causes of PMS, and they can cause unwanted side effects that may mimic PMS symptoms.



A natural approach. In 1997, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) issued a consensus report that stated acupuncture is effective in the treatment of menstrual cramps and other symptoms associated with PMS. Acupuncture can address PMS symptoms naturally, without medication.

According to Chinese Medicine theory and philosophy, the root cause of PMS is usually an imbalance or blockage of Qi (chee), the body's vital energy, and blood within specific organ systems. When Qi and blood become imbalanced or blocked, symptoms associated with PMS will appear.

By inserting fine, sterile needles into specific points on the body, an acupuncturist is able to stimulate and activate the movement of Qi and blood. When Qi and blood begin to travel freely throughout the body, balance and normal function is restored and PMS symptoms are alleviated. Acupuncture restores hormonal balance and provides deep relaxation to help reduce stress, ultimately encouraging and supporting greater health and well-being of both mind and body.

Whether you suffer from PMS symptoms on an occasional or monthly basis, acupuncture and Chinese medicine can offer a safe, natural, and effective approach to alleviating these symptoms. Acupuncture may hold the key to a healthier, balanced, PMS-free life.

