**WHAT IS PMDD?**

**Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder** is a cyclical, hormone-based mood disorder with mental, emotional, and physical symptoms arising during the premenstrual phase of the menstrual cycle each month.

PMDD affects about 1 in 20 women and AFAB individuals between puberty and menopause.

While symptoms are triggered by changing hormones, PMDD is not a hormone imbalance, rather it is an extreme sensitivity to fluctuating hormone levels across the menstrual cycle.

Diagnosis is made through daily symptom tracking for two menstrual cycles.

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**SYMPTOMS**

Do you notice some of these symptoms in the 1-2 weeks before your period?

- Mood swings, feeling suddenly sad or tearful, sensitivity to rejection
- Irritability, anger, rage, or relationship issues
- Depression, feelings of hopelessness, feeling worthless or guilty; suicidal thoughts
- Anxiety, tension, or feelings of being keyed up or on edge
- Decreased interest in your life
- Difficulty concentrating, focusing, or thinking; brain fog
- Tiredness or low-energy
- Changes in appetite, food cravings, or overeating
- Hypersomnia or insomnia
- Feeling overwhelmed or out of control
- Physical symptoms such as breast tenderness or swelling, joint or muscle pain, bloating or weight gain

Do your symptoms go away around the time you start your period?

It could be PMDD.
WHAT IS PME?

Do you notice changes in your mental health throughout your menstrual cycle?

Premenstrual Exacerbation (PME) refers to the premenstrual exacerbation/worsening of the symptoms of another disorder, such as major depressive disorder or generalized anxiety disorder. Both mental health-related and physical conditions can be exacerbated in the premenstrual phase. PME symptoms are present throughout the entire cycle but become more severe in the premenstrual phase.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you experience severe symptoms before your period each month, you are not alone! Track your symptoms and cycles and reach out to a trusted health provider to explore treatment and management strategies.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

RAISE AWARENESS. Talk to your friends about PMDD and PME. Talk about cycles in general. Tell your doctor. Celebrate Premenstrual Disorders Awareness Month every April.

TRACK YOUR CYCLE. Tracking your menstrual cycle helps you better understand your body and recognize patterns in your moods and symptoms. It’s also key when exploring a premenstrual disorder diagnosis.

SMASH STIGMA. Premenstrual disorders sit at the intersection of mental and menstrual health - it’s a doubly stigmatized spot. But we also have the opportunity to break through stigma every time we talk about our cycles and symptoms. Talk about it!

This postcard was made with love by the team at the International Association for Premenstrual Disorders. We’re a patient-led nonprofit advocating for better treatments, better care, and more research on premenstrual disorders.

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