



# PMS FORMULA

Ease those monthly symptoms!

- PMS affects approximately 40% of menstruating women, some so severely that it interferes with their lives and relationships.
- The PMS Formula includes standardized extracts of the most valuable herbs to help women through hormonal ups and downs.
- Designed by naturopathic physicians, the PMS Formula is supported by clinical testing.
- The PMS Formula addresses the root of the problem—it is not just a herbal band-aid.
- Vitex has been used in Germany since the 1950's. Studies show a reduction in breast tenderness, bloating, fatigue and other symptoms, often after only one month.
- In Asia, dong quai is considered a superior herb for gynecological problems.
- Potassium-rich dandelion is one of the best natural diuretics available, helpful for uncomfortable bloating and water retention.
- Calming passionflower's actions are gently sedative and antispasmodic. It's also useful for premenstrual headaches and cramps.

For most women, mood swings, water retention, food cravings, breast tenderness and irritability spell PMS. It affects approximately 40% of menstruating women, so very few of us can sail through a month without experiencing at least one or more symptoms. For a few women, though, PMS can be so severe that it interferes with lives and relationships.

We don't have to feel helpless and wait for inevitable to come and go. There are things we can do to help ourselves including natural and safe herbal remedies that have been used for years with good results. The scientific research team has designed the PMS Formula for woman up to 30 to 35 years of age (for premenopausal women over that age, the Menopause Formula may be preferable). This unique botanical formula that includes standardized extracts of the most valuable herbs to help women through the hormonal ups and downs that

accompany menstruation. The formula is supported by clinical testing. Each herb has a long and illustrious history of use and when combined into this formula, the herbal synergy increases their effectiveness.

More than merely a herbal band-aid, the botanicals in the PMS Formula address and correct the root of the problem: hormonal imbalance. When plasma progesterone levels are reduced, estrogen levels are elevated and often even prolactin levels are raised. This hormonal imbalance causes a host of unwelcome symptoms. After several months on this formula, most women will notice a profoundly beneficial effect and may not need to use it further.

## VITEX AGNUS CASTUS—THE HORMONAL REGULATOR

Vitex is the most popular botanical for the treatment of PMS. The name comes from the Greek *Agnus castus* or chaste tree, thought to calm sexual passions. Actually, vitex does not reduce sexual desires, but instead, has a normalizing effect on the reproductive system. Vitex increases luteinizing hormone production while inhibiting the release of follicle stimulating hormone, leading to an indirect increase in progesterone and a normalization of prolactin levels. The combination of actions produced by vitex seems to restore the estrogen/progesterone balance.

Vitex has been used in Germany since the 1950's and numerous studies document its benefit. Clinical studies using Vitex extract show a reduction in headaches, breast tenderness, bloating, fatigue, cravings for sweets and also feelings of anxiety, irritability, depression and mood swings after only one month.<sup>1,2,3</sup> Vitex is safe to use, except during pregnancy.

While it's well known that B vitamins, especially vitamin B6, are very effective for PMS, a recent study compared vitex to vitamin B6 for treatment of PMS. Eighty-five women were given one capsule of vitex, that contained up to 4.2 mg of *Vitex agnus castus* dried fruit, daily for three consecutive menstrual cycles. At the same time, another 90 women were given a placebo on the first 15 days of their menstrual cycle and 2 capsules of vitamin B6 (100 mg per capsule) for the rest of the cycle. At the end of the study premenstrual tension syndrome (PMTS) scores were reduced nearly equally with vitex and vitamin B6. The investigators rated vitex as excellent for 24.6% of the patients compared to 12.1% for vitamin B6. Thirty-six percent of the women reported that they became virtually symptom-

free with vitex compared to only 21.1% of the vitamin B6 group.<sup>4</sup> Vitamin B6 is effective for PMS symptoms because it reduces estrogen while raising progesterone levels. Its aldosterone-suppressing effect also relieves bloating and water retention. Vitex does much the same but it works on a completely different biochemical pathway and it also has a positive effect on prolactin levels.

### **DONG QUAI (*ANGELICA SINENSIS*) A SUPERIOR FEMALE TONIC HERB**

Dong quai has been used for 2000 years in Chinese herbal medicine, where it ranks next to licorice and ginseng in frequency of use in herbal preparations. In Asia, dong quai is considered a superior tonic for gynecological problems. Aromatic compounds in dong quai root relieve smooth muscle spasms, especially in the uterus, making it helpful for cramps. Dong quai contains ferulic acid, a natural pain reliever, as well as coumarins, phytosterols, polysaccharides and flavonoids. Since coumarins are natural blood thinners, caution may be in order for those currently on blood thinning medication.

Dong quai has an interesting nutrient profile that might account for some of its health-enhancing properties. It is high in cobalt (a constituent of vitamin B12), iron, magnesium and vitamin E.

Dong quai is considered to be very safe in moderation, however the furocoumarins it contains may cause photosensitivity in some persons resulting in dermatitis. Although an outstanding herb for women, dong quai should not be used during pregnancy, unless under the supervision of a qualified herbalist or naturopathic physician.

### **TAKE CARE OF WATER RETENTION WITH DANDELION (*TARAXACUM OFFICINALE*)**

Potassium-rich dandelion leaves are one of the best natural diuretics available, very useful for the water retention and uncomfortable bloating so typical of PMS. Dandelion's diuretic activity compares well to Lasix, a popular pharmacological diuretic. Unlike Lasix, dandelion does not deplete potassium. As a safe and effective diuretic, dandelion helps the

kidneys to gently eliminate excess water and toxins. Dandelion leaves also provide additional nutritional support as they are an excellent source of vitamin A and are richer in calcium, iron, magnesium and fibre than either broccoli or spinach.

### **CALMING PASSIONFLOWER (*PASSIFLORA INCARNATA*)**

Passionflower was chosen, a calming and relaxing botanical nervine, to gently address the restlessness, irritability and insomnia that so often accompany PMS. Its key actions are sedative, antispasmodic and tranquilizing. As a mild, non-addictive herbal tranquilizer, it calms, reduces anxiety and contains valuable painkilling constituents that make it useful for premenstrual headaches and cramps. Although passionflower is frequently used for insomnia, it does not necessarily make a person sleepy, rather, it works by reducing the tension and anxiety that prevent sleep. It is safe and free of side-effects. Used successfully in clinical practice, passionflower has proven to be a valuable component of the PMS Formula.

### **DOSAGE**

To obtain optimal benefit from the PMS Formula, take one capsule twice daily with meals. Capsules can be taken every day, except during the menstrual flow. Allow time for results, which generally occur in the third cycle (3 months) of use.

### **WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO?**

In conjunction with this superior herbal blend, the following supplements are also recommended; the Estro Factors Formula, B complex, vitamin B6, magnesium or calcium/magnesium one-to one ratio and Ultra Prim Evening Primrose Oil. Including regular exercise into this nutritional program will also help alleviate symptoms. There are safe ways to manage hormone imbalances. With the PMS Formula at its core, this multifaceted approach to monthly distress can make a profound difference to many women and their families.

### **REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READING**

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