

CAN PMS BE A CATALYST FOR POSITIVE CHANGE?

Often described as hormonal hell, pms is also blamed for irrational and erratic behaviour, and generally seen as a 'negative', disruptive influence. New research by Femal¹ the pollen remedy for the condition, however, suggests that these high emotions could be channelled into a positive force for change in women's lives.

Tough decisions? Take them *under-the-Influence*...

Despite 60% of the survey respondents lacking the confidence to make decisions when feeling premenstrual, many consider taking extreme decisions that seem to address unresolved problem areas in their lives or unfulfilled dreams. Leaving their jobs (29%), leaving the workplace altogether (22%) or the country (12%) were just some of the changes that women reported having considered whilst 'under the influence' of PMS.

"These thoughts and feelings may be irrational. It would be a good idea, however, for the woman to revisit and re-evaluate them at a time when she feels more 'herself'", comments Dr Carrie Sadler, GP, research specialist and NAPS Trustee (National Association of Pre-menstrual syndrome). "Instead of ignoring these feelings and putting them down to feeling hormonal, women should take the time to review what is at the bottom of the urge to run away."

Time to de-clutter your relationship? Just make sure you do it for the right reasons...

Relationships are known to suffer at the hands of pms, and the survey confirmed this with a one third of respondents (33%) considering leaving their partners. Many more however found that self-loathing was rather more prevalent, with 70% of the women interviewed feeling like 'a *different person*' when experiencing PMS, someone they did not like very much.

"Emotions are magnified at this time, and may overflow and get out of control if the usual self-control mechanisms fail to kick into place. They may build on existing frustration and feelings that have not been addressed", concludes Dr Sadler.

Drowning our sorrows, not seizing the moment

What the survey shows, however, is that rather than seizing the moment, respondents resorted to 'comfort surrogates', missing the opportunity for permanent change. Excessive behaviour was the standard answer to discomfort, with nearly half of respondents (47%) bingeing on chocolate,

the favourite palliative, closely followed by excessive drinking or eating (43%), or excessive shopping by nearly a quarter (23%).

Mr Nick Panay, Consultant Gynaecologist and chairman of NAPS concludes: *“The survey confirms the profound effect that PMS can have on confidence, relationships, professional and social life. Having treated many thousands of women sufferers, I have found that PMS often gives women a lower breaking point, or a lower emotional threshold to certain aspects of their life, and, if managed, they may encourage them to address problem areas.”*

Although this survey reveals some positive aspects to PMS, the majority (73%) are still at the mercy of often debilitating physical and psychological symptoms. For them Femal, the unique pollen remedy, has been shown to have a sustained, significant benefits on physical and mood related PMS symptoms in the long term^{2,3}.

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Notes to editors:

- FEMAL is a standardized plant pollen extract, shown to be highly effective in the management of PMS and menopausal symptoms. It does not contain phyto-estrogens and is therefore non hormonal.
- FEMAL is available from Boots, Lloydspharmacy, and other quality pharmacies and health food stores nationwide. Femal retails at £9.99 for a 30-pack, or 60 tablets for £16.99. Find out more at www.femal.co.uk.
- Research shows that Femal is efficacious in reducing both physical and psychological symptoms of PMS. A double-blind, placebo controlled study published in 2002 confirms that Femal improves: Weight gain (50% improvement), Low mood (45% improvement), Bloating (36% improvement), Irritability (33% improvement), Mental tension (29% improvement). This same study was extended, and the results presented at the 6th Congress of the European Society of Gynaecology in Helsinki, Finland (June 2005). This showed Femal to have a sustained, significant benefit on physical and mood related PMS symptoms in the long term. Patients for whom irritability, short fuse or anger were the most predominant symptoms reported a 45% improvement with Femal compared to placebo. In this group, Femal resulted in a 45% reduction in PMTS-S symptoms (PMS self-rating scale), and a 48% reduction in PMTS-O symptoms (PMS observer rating score).
- The process for creating Femal differs from other techniques for producing pollen remedies, which tend to be based on crushing whose end products can mix fragments of the shells with pollen content. This could explain Femal's good safety record, since allergic reactions to shell fragments cannot occur.
- Femal has been shown to have a non-hormonal effect, which can be an advantage when oestrogen sensitivity is an issue for women. Femal's high flavonoid content gives a powerful anti-oxidant effect and appears to improve blood flow, oxygen perfusion, and provide a mild diuretic effect. This action is consistent with a reduction in bloating, puffiness and hot flushing, and a marked improvement in brain function and mood.
- For further information about NAPS go to www.pms.org.uk

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1. The Femal "Hormone Nation?" survey was carried out by Opinion Health in May 2007. 1049 women between 18-55 were surveyed.
2. Assessment of the Effects of the Herbal Remedy Femal on the Symptoms of Premenstrual Syndrome: A Randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled Study. *Current Therapeutic Research* , Volume 63 number 5, May 2002 .
3. Gerhardsen et al. 6th Congress of the European Society of Gynecology, Helsinki, Finland, 2005