

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRACKING YOUR CYCLE

Your menstrual cycle can tell you a lot about your overall health. There are many medical conditions that can affect how much and how often you bleed. Tracking your menstrual cycle, including daily symptoms, provides a quick assessment of your general health and can help identify undiagnosed illness. Tracking your menstrual cycle can also help to diagnose premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD).

HOW TO DIAGNOSE PMDD

Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder can not be detected or diagnosed via a blood or saliva test. However, a hormone test can rule out an underlying hormone disorder such as high estrogen, low progesterone or thyroid issue. These are treated differently than PMDD. The only way to definitively diagnose PMDD is to track the severity of your symptoms over three or more menstrual cycles. Use the attached tracking guide to identify a possible link between any symptoms you have been experiencing and your ovulation cycle.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Begin tracking your premenstrual symptoms with this chart today. Fill it out daily (preferably at the end of your day). A full menstrual cycle of charting will allow for a more accurate assessment.
2. When you have menstrual bleeding, mark with an "X" under the corresponding day of the month in the first row. When you have "spotting" (very light bleeding), mark this with an "S" in the first row. When you are not bleeding, leave the space blank for that day.
3. Every day, rate your symptoms in each row. Try to treat each day separately without considering your symptoms from the day before. Some find it helpful to cover the previous day with a piece of paper

TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR

It is okay to make an appointment to see your healthcare provider before completing your symptom tracker. However the more information you can bring to your initial appointment the better. Different kinds of doctors provide different kinds of treatment options. Reproductive Endocrinologists, Gynecologists, and Holistic Doctors may be more familiar with all treatments for PMDD.

You may need to consult with various healthcare providers until you find the one that is right for you. Visit iapmd.org/resources for a free guide on talking with your doctor about PMDD.

