



Period pain protocol





PERIOD PAIN PROTOCOL

RETURN TO PAIN-FREE PERIODS

Introduction

Period pain or menstrual cramps are referred to as dysmerrhoea and affects up to 60% of women worldwide. To put this into perspective, this is more than half of the female population worldwide!

Some women have mild symptoms whereas others curl up in bed with labour like pains. Period pain is common, but should not be a normal part of being woman.

PROTOCOL FOR PRIMARY DYSMENORRHOEA

During menstruation when the uterine lining is being shed it is normal to have less energy and feel inward focused. Mild discomfort that does not prevent you from carrying on with your daily tasks is fine, however requiring multiple painkillers to function is not ideal. There are two main period pain categories; primary dysmerrhoea which is caused by inflammation; and secondary dysmerrhoea which is due to pelvic disorders, endometriosis or adenomyosis. During this protocol we will mainly focus on treating primary dysmerrhoea, but the upside is that when you implement these principals it will also assist in reducing the symptoms of secondary dysmerrhoea as well.

FOR SEVERE CASES OF EXCRUCIATING PAIN CONSULT WITH YOUR MEDICAL PRACTITIONER TO INVESTIGATE FOR:

- ✓ Endometriosis
- ✓ Adenomyosis
- ✓ Infections
- ✓ Ovarian cysts
- ✓ Fibriods

SUPPLEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS



Tissue salt 2 & 8 (Three of each, 3 times per day, for 14 days before your period starts. Available at Dischem or health shops for about R75 each



Magnesium spray (6 sprays in the morning and 6 at night daily). Order www.happyhormoneclub.co.za: R240



Zinplex Picolinate (Recommend taking 30mg per day). Dischem: R144



Primeve Plus. Take as per recommendation on product: Dischem: R320



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HOLISTIC APPROACH TO PAIN REDUCTION

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1. Nutrition recommendations
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2. Natural supplementation & removing toxins
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3. Address the emotional connection to pain
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4. Keep abdominal warm / Castor oil pack (optional)
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5. Acupuncture and Body Stress Release (BSR)
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6. Severe cases: See your health care practitioner

PROTOCOL TIPS & PREPARATIONS

- Start slow and implement one or two recommendations at a time. Start with nutrition recommendations such as simply removing dairy from your diet and including magnesium and zinc. But feel adventurous and make golden milk or add ginger to your morning smoothie.
- Next up remove products that contain toxins such as conventional sanitary products, skin and household products that contain fragrances. Then implement the next step.

YOU ARE THE EXPERT ON YOU

When you have implemented all the recommendation in this protocol and you still experience pain, seek medical help. Always feel free to ask questions about medical treatments or procedures, before you make your own informed decision. Research as much as possible to feel empowered. You have authority over your own body. See the 'How to speak to your doctor about severe pain' later in the protocol.

HORMONE FRIENDLY SWAPS

REPLACE THIS



Conventional pads & tampons

USE THIS INSTEAD



Anna Pure organic pads



Ava Secrets Menstrual underwear

Focus on Real-foods

The main inflammatory compounds responsible for period pain are called PgE2 prostaglandins. These are hormone-like chemicals that stimulate the uterine muscles to shed the lining during menstruation. Prostaglandin production is a normal part of the process, but an overproduction causes pain, vomiting, diarrhea or even headaches. Foods that increase PgE2 in the body are cow's dairy and saturated animal fat. Our body also produces other prostaglandins that act as muscle relaxants and natural pain killers; these are referred to as PGE1 and PgE3 found in foods like salmon, sardines, flaxseeds, pumpkin seed, sunflower seed and sesame seeds. This protocol is to reduce PgE2 prostaglandins found in inflammatory foods and increase PgE1 and PgE3.

WHOLE FOODS TO REDUCE INFLAMMATION



Return to Real-foods aka whole foods that are minimally processed. Foods that are made from refined white flours such as pasta, bread, doughnuts or cookies are normally stripped from their natural good fiber components. Most of these products also contain added sugar and preservatives which all contributes to increasing blood sugar and insulin levels increasing inflammation.



Golden milk
Healing drink

SERVINGS: 1 PREP TIME: 5 MIN COOKING TIME: 5 MIN

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup/250ml full-fat coconut milk
- 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
- ½ teaspoon freshly grated ginger or ginger powder
- 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon raw honey
- Pinch of freshly grated black pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Place all the ingredients into a small saucepan and slowly blend together with a stick blender, or mix in a blender to combine and then transfer to the saucepan.
2. Simmer of 5 minutes over medium heat.
3. Drink the latte hot or place in the fridge for later.
4. A thin film will form on the top when cooled. Mix well again before drinking.

NOTES

Golden milk has been used for many years in the traditional Chinese and Ayurvedic medicines due to the combination of the healing spice blend. Turmeric with the additional of black pepper is highly absorbable and offers anti-inflammatory properties. As an addition ginger also soothes the intestinal track and cinnamon is great for blood sugar regulation.



Balanced bowl
Your template

SERVINGS: 1 PREP TIME: 30 MIN COOKING TIME: 20 MIN

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup ancient grains
- ½ cup beans/ lentils / grass fed beef strips or chicken
- 1 cup steamed veggies
- 1 cups of leafy greens
- Toppings:**
- 1/2 avocado / avocado-jalapeno creme, cashew sauce,
- nuts and seeds, extra virgin olive oil, homemade vinaigrette salad dressing

DIRECTIONS

1. Get all your prepared grains, protein and veggies out of the fridge.
2. In your favourite serving bowl or takeaway glass bowl (for work lunch) scoop in your bottom layer of ancient grains (red sorghum, millet, quinoa, amaranth or rice).
3. Layer with protein (beans, lentils, chicken or beef strips).
4. Add your steamed veggies such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, pumpkin, collard or sweet potato.
5. Top with leafy greens & greens (lettuce, water cress, rocket, coriander, celery, spinach or cucumber).

NOTES

The balanced bowl in the picture contains red sorghum, butterbean, baby spinach, steamed broccoli, avodado & cashew sauce.

Nutrition recommendations

AVOID DAIRY &
RED MEAT (FOR
SOME)



Cow's dairy contains A1 casein, a protein that may trigger an inflammatory response in your gut, which results in inflammation for most people. Switch to alternative such as nut milks, goat or camels dairy. In some women, red meat might increase cramps due to the presence of arachidonic acid which increase cellular inflammation. Start by decreasing red meat and egg yolks to 2 serving's per week and reintroduce meat, if preferred and see if symptoms return.

INCREASE
MAGNESIUM



Magnesium is a AMAZING nutrient to reduce and prevent period pain. Magnesium reduces prostaglandins and relaxes the uterus. Good food sources are leafy greens such as spinach, kale, collard greens, mustard greens, dark chocolate, nuts, seeds, legumes & avocados. Recommended supplementation with topical magnesium spray such as PURE magnesium or 300 mg magnesium glycinate per day.

INCREASE ZINC



Studies shows that zinc prevents period pain because it decreases inflammation and prostaglandins. Plant sources of zinc are legumes, nuts and seeds. Grass-fed meat is a good source of zinc, but keep your red meat consumption limited (if you are sensitive). Recommended supplementation of 30 mg zinc citrated or zinc picolinate per day (Drink after a meal, to prevent nausea).

INCREASE
TURMERIC



Turmeric reduces prostaglandins and can be used throughout your cycle. Try making dairy-free golden milk (recipe provided) and add it to your daily meals.

& GINGER



Studies have shown that ginger reduces period pain. Use as much a $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon of organic ginger per day before and during your period. Include ginger in your smoothies or drink with warm water.

BOOST OMEGA-
3 FATTY ACIDS



Omega-3 fatty acids are great in reducing inflammation and prostaglandins. Good sources are salmon, sardines and seeds (flax, pumpkin, sunflower and sesame). Recommended supplementation of 2000 mg per day. Avoid Omega-6 fatty acids found in soy, corn, canola and sunflower oils, which promotes inflammatory prostaglandins. Also look out for products containing trans fat, and avoid deep fried foods. Rather use olive oil, coconut oil, or avocado oils (avoid heating oils as much as possible).

How to speak to your doctor about severe pain

Severe pain is not normal, and should never be normalised. You have the right to ask for the correct medical treatment from your health practitioner and make your own informed decision about your treatment option. The following supporting questions will take the confusion out of your conversation with your doctor. This will help both the doctor and yourself to ensure that you receive the best treatment you deserve. These questions are from the Period Repair Manual from Dr. Lara Briden.

PELVIC PAIN

- My pain is so bad I take _____ painkillers per month.
- My pain is so bad that I miss school or work.
- I experience pain between periods.
- I experience a deep, stabbing pain with sex.
- Could I have endometriosis or adenomyosis? Should I have a referral to a gynecologist to discuss this possibility?
- Do you think a pelvic ultrasound would be helpful?
- A normal ultrasound doesn't mean I don't have endometriosis, correct? Should I have a referral to a gynecologist to discuss this possibility?

YOUR NOTES
