

# P.O.W.E.R. Surges

P.O.W.E.R. is an acronym for post ovulatory women's exhaustion response, better known as PMS. Most women have symptoms associated with this syndrome at some point in their lives. The degree of impact can range from mild to severe to life threatening. This can affect a woman's relationships with her family, her job, and her health.

Are Your Symptoms related to P.O.W.E.R. SURGES?

Many of the symptoms of P.S. are common problems associated with other conditions. You can tell if they are associated with P.S. by their regular occurrence at a particular time in your menstrual cycle. Counting the first day of bleeding as day 1, P.S. symptoms will occur around day 15. This is around the time of ovulation. By keeping a menstrual calendar, you can start to tell how your body and emotions respond to hormonal changes of the menstrual cycle.

What Causes P.S.?

Women have bodies that have been blessed with the miraculous capacity to receive, nurture and deliver new life. This process requires the coordination of multiple hormonal systems. Every month a fertile woman's body selects one of millions of egg containing follicles to go through the pregnancy lottery. During the first 15 days this egg containing follicle, along with the uterus, is stimulated to grow by increased production of the hormone estradiol. **Estradiol** is a powerful form of estrogen that can have a dramatic impact on cells. **Estradiol** enters cells and programs the DNA to make that cell multiply. Cells that are estrogen sensitive will therefore grow and multiply during this time. Cells of the breast, uterus, and fat cells are estrogen sensitive, so weight gain, breast tenderness and abdominal fullness may be symptoms during times of increased **estradiol** production. Estrogens cause the body to retain salt and calcium, so swelling and fluid retention are common symptoms. When estrogens affect blood vessels in the brain, migraine headaches can occur. Estrogens can stimulate immune system cells that produce chemicals called prostaglandins and other inflammatory chemicals. These can cause headaches also, along with uterine cramping and worsening of conditions such as asthma, arthritis, M.S., lupus and allergies. Estrogens can also enhance the growth of yeast in the body, so all the yeast syndrome symptoms (see [www.drfit.com](http://www.drfit.com) under "Symptom Profiles") can be aggravated. Estrogens increase brain activity, so women may develop heightened sensory awareness and are more sensitive to sensory input from touch, sight, sound, etc. This can manifest as irritability, moodiness, and angry outburst. Estrogens can compromise thyroid function, so symptoms of hypothyroidism such as weight gain, cold hands/feet, fatigue, anxiety and depression may predominate.

These symptoms will usually occur at the height of estrogen production if estradiol is not balanced by its partner hormone progesterone. **Progesterone** is normally produced in higher amounts after ovulation and it balances the effects of estrogens. **Progesterone** stops cell division, quiets the brain and immune system, promotes thyroid function, and increases absorption of magnesium and potassium, the opposite functions of **estradiol**. **Progesterone** replacement is critical for breast cancer prevention.

Some women will go into puberty not producing enough **progesterone**. They will start to have

P.S symptoms with their first menstrual cycle. Other women may start to experience symptoms after the first or second pregnancy. Still others may not have symptoms until they start to run low on progesterone in their late 30's or sometime after, presaging menopause.

Thyroid hormone is critical to the process of ovulation. A spike in thyroid hormone production is necessary for ovulation to occur. This spike is responsible for the temperature elevation that signals ovulation. If the thyroid gland is incompetent and does not produce this spike, then there is no ovulation. Without ovulation, no extra progesterone is produced. This will result in infertility as well as exaggerated PMS symptoms.

P.S. symptoms are made worse by other imbalances. Nutritional deficiencies, life stresses, hypothyroidism, adrenal imbalance, yeast overgrowth and even dehydration can magnify the symptoms.

Dr. Fitt's P.O.W.E.R. plan.

**P**-Replacing progesterone and /or thyroid hormone during the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the menstrual cycle can have dramatic effects on P.S. symptoms. This puts your body back in hormonal balance.

**O**-Observation is key in knowing when to add progesterone and/or thyroid hormone to your regimen. Every woman who is menstruating should keep a menstrual diary that includes temperature monitoring around ovulation. This will help you get in touch with your body's hormonal rhythms. Women should learn which of their symptoms are related to hormonal imbalances. It will also be valuable information for your doctor.

**W**-Water is key in helping prevent fatigue, water retention, headaches, food/sugar cravings and abnormal body function. Drink enough so that your urine is light colored or clear.

**E** -Exercise helps balance hormones, improves sleep, fights depression, controls weight gain, and relieves stress. Use exercise instead of alcohol or food.

or

**E**-Exorcise. Get the demons out of your life. Make space in your life for you each day. Don't let resentments build up. Live from the inside out and make your actions consistent with your beliefs. Remember, you will become like the people you associate with.

**R** -Replace lost nutrients. Every month a woman loses blood that was nutrient enriched in anticipation of a pregnancy. If no pregnancy occurs, all those nutrients are lost. Key nutrients to replace are; calcium/magnesium (use Calmag citrate powder), Essential fats (¼ cup Dakota Gold flaxseed/day or 1 tblspn. fish oil/day), iron (use multi vitamin with iron like VRP's Extend Prenatal), B complex (one B-100 each day). Follow the BALi eating plan.

**P.S. symptoms are a wake-up call from your body telling you that you need to take better care of yourself!**