

**THE
PMDD
PROJECT**

SLEEP & PMDD

Sleep disturbances are common for those with Pre Menstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD), especially during the luteal phase.

This guide provides practical tips for better sleep and a suggested bedtime routine to support restful sleep during your luteal phase.

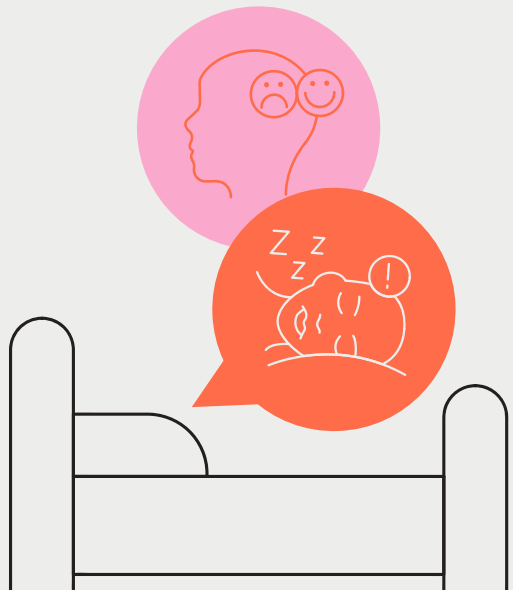
Whether it's insomnia, excessive fatigue, night terrors, or night sweats, these disruptions can make PMDD symptoms harder to manage. Good sleep hygiene and a consistent bedtime routine can significantly improve sleep quality and help alleviate some of the emotional and physical challenges of PMDD.



WHY IS SLEEP IMPORTANT FOR PMDD?

Poor sleep can amplify PMDD symptoms including mood swings, anxiety, irritability, and fatigue. It can also weaken your immune system, making it harder for your body to recover.

Prioritising sleep is essential for managing the ups and downs of PMDD, improving mental clarity, emotional balance, and overall health.



TIPS FOR IMPROVING SLEEP WITH PMDD

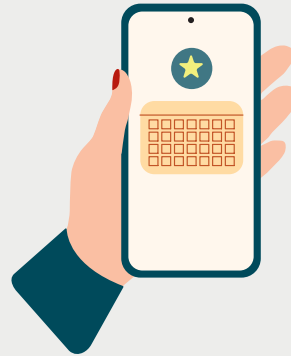
Create a relaxing sleep environment:

Your bedroom should be a calm, comfortable space. Ensure the room is cool, dark, and quiet. Invest in blackout curtains, earplugs, or a white noise machine to block out distractions. Choose comfortable bedding and pillows to make your sleep space as inviting as possible.

If you work from home, try to avoid working from your bedroom. Keeping the bedroom reserved for sleep can help your brain associate it with relaxation, not work or stress. If possible, set up a designated workspace elsewhere in your home to maintain this separation.

Maintain a consistent sleep schedule:

Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. This helps regulate your body's internal clock, making it easier to fall asleep and wake up naturally.



Practice relaxation techniques:

Breathing exercises, gentle yoga, or meditation can help calm your nervous system before bed, reducing anxiety and preparing your body for sleep. Apps like Headspace or Calm offer guided meditations specifically designed for sleep.

Limit caffeine and sugar in the afternoon:

Stimulants like caffeine and sugar can keep you awake and disrupt your sleep cycle. Try to avoid these after 2pm, and opt for herbal teas like chamomile or lavender to relax in the evening.



Avoid heavy meals before bed:

Large meals close to bedtime can cause indigestion and disrupt your sleep. Aim to finish eating at least two hours before bed and choose light, sleep-promoting snacks if you're hungry.

Avoid screens before bed:

Blue light from phones, computers, and TVs can interfere with melatonin production, the hormone that helps regulate sleep. Try to power down all screens at least one hour before bed and replace them with relaxing activities like reading, journaling, or meditation.

Get moving during the day

Regular exercise during the day can help improve your sleep at night. However, try to avoid high-intensity workouts too close to bedtime, as they may leave you feeling too energised to wind down.

Morning or afternoon workouts can help regulate your sleep-wake cycle and reduce PMDD-related anxiety. If you prefer evening exercise, opt for something gentle, like yoga or light stretching, to help relax your body without overstimulating it.

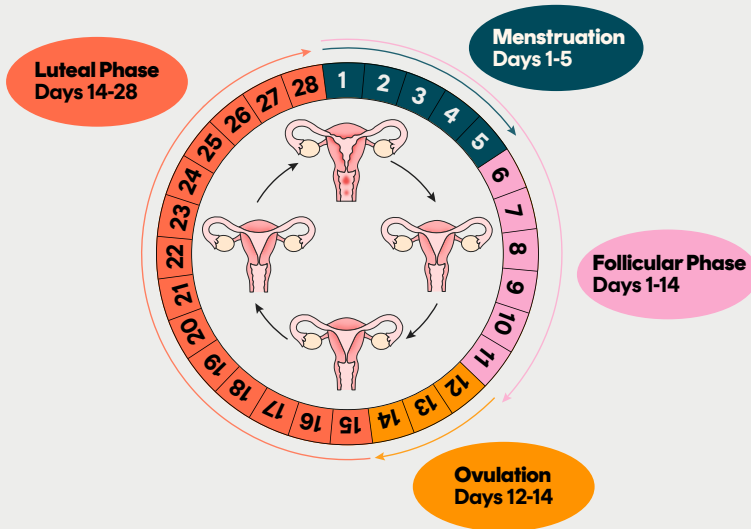
Seek Professional Help When Needed

If sleep issues persist and severely impact your quality of life, don't hesitate to seek help. A healthcare provider can help you explore treatments, therapies, or medications that can improve your sleep quality, especially in the context of PMDD.

Sync Your Sleep with Your Cycle

Just as exercise can be aligned with your cycle, so can your sleep habits.

Understanding how each phase affects your body's need for rest can help you adapt your sleep routine:



Menstrual Phase (Days 1-5*):

During menstruation, fatigue is common. Prioritise longer sleep if possible, and give yourself permission to nap if needed. Opt for early nights, and don't be afraid to rest as much as your body needs.

Follicular Phase (Days 6-14*):

After menstruation, energy levels often start to rise. This can be a time when you might need slightly less sleep, but it's still important to maintain a regular bedtime to prevent overexertion.

Ovulation Phase (Days 14-17*):

During ovulation, you may feel more alert and energised, making it easier to stay up late. Try to stick to your regular bedtime routine and avoid the temptation to cut back on sleep, even if you're feeling more awake.

Luteal Phase (Days 18-28*):

This is when PMDD symptoms often intensify. You may find it harder to fall asleep or stay asleep. Prioritise sleep during this phase by sticking to a calming bedtime routine and creating a sleep-friendly environment. Consider adding a 20-30 minute nap during the day if night time sleep is disrupted.

**Remember:**

Sleep is a critical part of managing PMDD symptoms. Creating a consistent, calming bedtime routine and making adjustments based on your menstrual cycle can make a significant difference. Your body needs rest to recover and recharge - so prioritise sleep as an essential part of your self-care.

***Disclaimer: Everyone's menstrual cycle is unique, and not all cycles last exactly 28 days.**

The information provided in this resources is meant to offer general guidance, but it's important to remember that your cycle length and phases may vary. Some cycles may be shorter or longer, and the intensity of symptoms and energy levels can differ from person to person. Always listen to your body and consult with a healthcare professional to tailor any advice to your individual needs.

THE PMDD PROJECT

Reg Charity No. 1208032