



## “My anxiety is really bad prior to my period; how can I reduce this?”

Psychological symptoms such as anxiety & depressed or low mood heighten around times when hormones fluctuate or spike. Times such as pre-menstrual or perimenopause. Of course, you may well be both premenstrual & perimenopausal.

Women have told me they get intense anxiety & low mood at these times and find it impacts on both their working & personal lives.

Your children may have left home, you maybe bereaved, have lack of support, stress at work or from family members, or neighbours and poor sleep. All these on their own or together can contribute to low mood & anxiety. That combined with fluctuating hormones can affect our mood & how we think.

Safety caution first: If you have had a history of anxiety or low mood then please check with your GP/ mental health support services, informing them there is a clear pattern that is worse for you x number of days prior to a period. Please do not stop taking your regular medication thinking something such as HRT will resolve your anxiety, if the anxiety is something you have suffered from for a long time, you will still need to take your medication. Keep safe & check with your GP.

If you are generally finding yourself worrying more and feeling anxious about things a few days before a period, and this is keeping you awake and taking up too much head space, then hormone replacement therapy may be able to help. It is the fluctuation of oestrogen that can contribute to anxiety and low mood, so during the perimenopause, it can help maintain a better level and therefore help to reduce low mood & anxiety.

Download my Symptom Tracker which is free. This helps build a picture and pattern of your symptoms and will help you to take action. For example, you have been tracking your symptoms for two months, and you now know when you will feel anxious. It may mean that you decide not to have a social event then as it will cause you anxiety, but you book it before or after knowing you will enjoy it. It is also useful to take your tracker to your GP or menopause specialist.

If you think this maybe you, then please book to see your GP/menopause specialist. Cognitive behavioural therapy can also help many women as can other complementary therapies such as hypnotherapy, massage, or acupuncture. Magnesium supplements can also support the nervous system and assist in reducing anxiety to a manageable level.

Other actions you can take to help you through this:

Exercise is a great mood booster & can help with mood.

Reduce caffeine as this can make your mind work overtime as can alcohol.

Drink water - aim for 2 litres a day.

Nutrition - reduce processed foods high in sugar as these contribute to low mood.

Be kind to yourself- tell your partner/friends how you are feeling. If you are open about your feelings, it helps them be in a better position to help support you.

It is all about being informed so you can make the right choice for you.