

PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME AMONG THAI NURSES: PREVALENCE, IMPACT AND SELF-MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Benjamaporn Bussripoom¹, Somchit Hanucharurnkul², Manee Arpanantikul³, Wicharn Choktanasiri⁴, Thavatchai Vorapongsathorn⁵, Nittaya Sinsuksai⁶

1Candidate, Department of Nursing, Ramathibodi Hospital, Faculty of Medicine, Mahidol University

2Professor Emeritus, Department of Nursing, Ramathibodi Hospital, Faculty of Medicine, Mahidol University

3Associate Professor, Department of Nursing, Ramathibodi Hospital, Faculty of Medicine, Mahidol University

4 Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University

5 Associate Professor, Faculty of Public Health, Mahidol University

6 Assistant Professor, Faculty of Nursing, Mahidol University

Keywords: premenstrual syndrome, self-management, self-care

Abstract: Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) is a common health problem among reproductive women, and may adversely affect female nurses experiencing stress from their occupation, due to its interference with one's endocrine function. The purposes of this descriptive prospective study were to: (a) explore the occurrence, intensity and impact of PMS, and (b) describe the type and effectiveness of PMS self-management strategies used by participants. One hundred and sixty-one, 20-45 year old, Thai nurses were recruited from four hospitals in Bangkok. Data related to the occurrence, intensity and impact of PMS were obtained, for two consecutive menstrual cycles, through the use of the Women's Daily Health Diary (DHD), the General Data Record (GDR) and the Negative Impact section of the Daily Record of Severity of Problems (DRSP). The type and effectiveness of PMS self-management strategies used by the participants were obtained, by way of a telephone interview, using the researcher created Self-Management Measures Questionnaire (SMMQ).

Results revealed the prevalence of PMS to be 16.8%, with the most common symptoms being irritability, fatigue, painful or tender breasts, anger, bloating or swelling of abdomen, tension and rapid mood change. The highest intensity of PMS symptoms included: increased appetite, craving for specific food or tastes, painful or tender breasts, irritability and feeling out of control. Although, interference with relationships was a commonly reported impact symptom of PMS, the most disturbing symptom reported was irritability. The most common self-management technique used to alleviate irritability was to decrease time spent with others.

The findings suggest symptom prevalence, intensity and impact were dependent on the individual's perceptions at the time. In addition, no one particular strategy or self-management was found to be most effective in managing any given disturbing symptom, as symptoms were managed with a variety of strategies and self-management techniques.