

The NEWSLETTER for the WOMAN on a quest to find the TRUTH



VOLUME 2 - NUMBER 5 - MAY 2007

"As human beings, our
greatness lies not so
much in being able
to remake the
World... as in being
able to remake
ourselves."

Mahatma Gandhi

[Yale University](#)

[Research on PMS - Dr.](#)

[Yonker.](#)

Good day dear woman reader!

This month, I have the wonderful pleasure to introduce a holistic approach that is also practiced and taught by Dr. Deepak Chopra; the Ayurvedic medicine, also called the Maharishi Vedic Approach. I will therefore introduce Ms. ASSATA SHAKUR¹ with her explanation of how this very ancient and yet, up to date outlook can help you understand the feminine cycles and its pains and sufferings.

"The Menstrual Cycle as a Woman's Health Advantage

A woman experiences many physiological changes in her lifetime: puberty, menstruation, pregnancy and menopause. These are natural cycles for a woman yet they are often accompanied by physical discomfort and emotional turbulence. Knowledge of how to experience these cycles naturally and without pain is secret even to most women.

*Far from being the "curse", menstruation is actually a woman's health advantage. It is a time of purification for the physiology and, when occurring in a balanced way, contributes towards a woman's overall health and longevity. Typically in our western time pressured culture, menstruation is considered a nuisance and the tendency of most women is to ignore it, take painkillers and get on with it. **This mindset accounts for the prevalence of gynecological disorders in the western world.***

Understanding a woman's physiology as a whole is a key ingredient in the success of any approaches to woman's health. This involves both understanding the individual as whole, i.e. that their mind, body and emotions are all connected, and recognizing the wholeness of life's influences. Everything that we do, see, hear, feel, taste or touch influences our health. Watching a violent movie, having an argument, eating lifeless food, all have a detrimental effect on our health. Likewise cuddles from a loved one, a moonlit walk on the beach or a meal cooked with love have a positive, life supporting effect.

Maharishi Vedic Approach to Health (MVAH) is a holistic system that takes into account all the influences in a women's life. In investigating the cause of imbalance MVAH looks at the effects of diet and daily routines, lifestyle, seasonal cycles, time of life and the mental and emotional state of the individual. Both the exterior forces on us and interior cycles of our physiology are constantly changing; therefore it is necessary to adjust our lifestyle to maintain a balanced physiology.

¹ <http://www.assatashakur.org/forum/showthread.php?t=22825>

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Impurities, poor diet, stress and over work can create havoc with our biological rhythms. We experience that jet lag and staying up all night can mess up our sleep cycles. The menstrual cycle is also affected by changes and stress in our daily life. Having a period indicates that the body is in a fit state to have a baby. When our period is late or we go without having one, it is nature's way of saying you are not healthy and rested enough to carry a child.

Before you start thinking that it is preferable to go without menstruating because you don't want to conceive a child or it is an inconvenience, it is important to understand that the menstrual cycle has another function. It is a time when the physiology removes impurities and tries to regain the balance disturbed by our erratic and busy lifestyles.

For many healthy women, the menstrual cycle is a normal, easy process while for others it is a time of pain, emotional distress and debility. The degree of discomfort indicates the amount of purification and rebalancing that needs to take place. We may experience that our monthly cycles are much smoother and more comfortable if we are relaxed or have had a holiday while times of intense stress or an overload of toxins in the body results in cramps and moodiness accompanying our periods.

Our physiologies are highly intelligent, the experience of imbalance or discomfort it is just a cry for help. However many women just accept that taking something when they get their period is a normal part of life. By introducing chemicals to suppress or alter our natural mechanisms, the hormonal balance is further disturbed resulting in more severe problems later down the track. Instead of creating artificial cycles by going on the pill or suppressing the symptoms with painkillers, it is possible to remove the cause of the problem.

PMS (premenstrual syndrome) is an umbrella term for a wide range of symptoms, from headaches and tiredness to breast swelling and constipation. From the perspective of Maharishi Vedic Approach to Health, PMS and menstrual problems occur if:

- 1. Our biological rhythms are off.*
- 2. Doshas or controlling principles are out of balance.*
- 3. There is a build of impurities.*

Biological Rhythms

Throughout nature there are many cycles maintaining growth and renewal in life. The changing seasonal cycles support the development of plants and animal life. The 24-hour circadian rhythm allows for daily rest and activity. The menstrual cycle in women allows for monthly revitalization and renewal.

Changes in the physiology are orchestrated by hormones. In the menstrual cycle the rhythms of hormonal activity are highly significant. The time of the month chosen for breast cancer surgery dramatically influences the survival outcome. Researchers found that women treated on day 3 to day 12 of their cycle, when estrogen output is higher, had a 54% survival rate whereas those treated on the first two days or after day 13 had an 84% survival rate.

These cycles are part of the overall larger cycles in nature. Being in tune with nature allows us to experience our inner cycles more smoothly and thus get the maximum benefit from the renewal process. Getting up with the sun when the world is waking up enables the body to wake up feeling more lively in comparison to struggling out of bed at 10 am feeling groggy and lethargic.

If we are living out of sync with nature or constantly changing our daily routine, our physiology is forced to exert a lot of energy just to maintain our digestion, elimination and energy levels. Our body works more efficiently if we get up and go to bed at about the same time each day, eat regular meals and get enough rest.

During menstruation the body naturally wants to rest and we may feel more sensitive or inward. This is a subtle message to slow down and rest. Taking it easy on the first few days of your period, reducing exercise and eating easy to digest food will allow your physiology to maximize the revitalizing effects of the menstrual cycle. Having a more balanced lifestyle during the rest of the month will also assist with a smoother cycle and more comfortable period.

The Dosha Theory

While there are some influences from nature that create the same effect in everyone there are many aspects of life that produce variable results. The spectrum of possible influences and their effects can be simplified by the theory of doshas. Doshas are governing principles found all throughout nature. They are present in the food we eat, the weather, our emotions and in the people we meet.

Vata dosha is like the wind, it is light, dry, rough, changeable, quick and cold. It is responsible for all movement in the universe. It can be experienced in the breeze, in the circulation systems in the body, in our feelings of enthusiasm and in the light dry nature of a cracker biscuit.

Pitta is like the fire, exhibiting qualities of heat, intensity, sharpness, acidity and is red, orange and yellow in color. It is responsible for all metabolism and energy in the universe, from digestion of food in our bodies, to chemical reactions. Anything that involves transformation requires Pitta. Pitta is found in heating or sour foods like chilli, ginger, yogurt or oranges. Hot weather and intense activity also increases the qualities of Pitta.

Kapha dosha is slow, stable, sweet, sticky and heavy, kind of like chocolate mud cake or the feeling you get after you have eaten it. Kapha is expressed as earth and water and is responsible for all lubrication, cohesion and structure. Damp weather, a sedentary lifestyle and heavy food can increase this dosha.

By understanding the doshas and their influences, balance can be can be created and maintained by changes in diet, exercise and routine. Our unique constitutional type also plays a part in the effects of the doshas. We each have a different proportion of the doshas. We can also develop what is called Vikriti, which means imbalance of the doshas. We experience too much or too little of a particular dosha for our unique physiology. Pulse reading is used to assess our nature and our imbalances.

The theory of the doshas helps in understanding and treating the myriad of symptoms collectively termed premenstrual syndrome or PMS. Over 150 symptoms in nearly every organ system have been attributed to PMS, and as a result, treatments have had limited success. MVAH understands PMS in terms of imbalance and treats it by balancing a particular dosha. This tends to fix a number of problems at once rather than trying to attend to each one individually.

Vata out of balance gives rise to mood swings, anxiety, insomnia, constipation, abdominal bloating and irregular periods. During the period it can cause cramping, backache and irregular flow. Pitta can create premenstrual irritability, increased appetite, migraines, excessive heat and diarrhea. Excessive bleeding during menstruation indicates an imbalance of Pitta. Weight gain, fluid retention, breast enlargement and sluggish digestion premenstrually is due to too much Kapha. While during the period it can cause back stiffness and menstrual clots.

Sally had experienced menstrual cramping and lower back pain ever since she began her periods. About five days prior she would have trouble sleeping, intense anxiety and bloating. She rarely got through he periods with out pills to ease the cramping but they left her feeling "foggy and dull". At 32 she was eager to try a more natural approach to her long-term problems.

In her Maharishi Vedic Approach to Health consultation, her pulse assessment revealed a Vata imbalance. On the advice of her MVAH practitioner she adjusted her diet, favoring warm easily digestible food and reducing salads. She made sure that she ate regular meals and reduced her consumption of coffee. She began a daily oil massage and cut back on her vigorous exercise program. Her new routine also included taking it easy during the first few days of her period. In less than two months she experienced a marked improvement in her over all health. She was sleeping better and feeling emotionally more stable. The premenstrual bloating and cramps virtually disappeared and she felt more energetic and enthusiastic about life.

In a Maharishi Vedic Approach to Health consultation your pulse is assessed and diet and lifestyle recommendations given. There is an emphasis placed on education, so that you have the knowledge to create and maintain your own good health. Just

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knowing about the doshas can steer you away from a hot curry when you know that you are already feeling angry or inspire you to get out and exercise when you feeling depressed and weighed down by life.

Impurities

Weak digestion, poor diet, excessive alcohol and caffeine consumption and no exercise all contribute to a build up of toxins in the body. The physiology attempts to clean them out during the period. Its effectiveness and level of cramping or discomfort depends on the amount of impurities present. Taking more rest, sipping boiled warm water and avoiding heavy foods such as cheese, chocolate and meat will aid in the menstrual purification process.

The easiest way to ensure a healthy period is to not accumulate toxins, stress and fatigue during the month. This can be done by living a more regular lifestyle, following dosha balancing recommendations according to your nature, the seasons and time of life and limiting your intake of junk food, alcohol and caffeine.

Maharishi Vedic Approach to Health gives you the key to create a more balanced, happier, healthier life. However this knowledge should not be a secret, it is contained within you. It is about you understanding your body, your needs. By reducing foods that aggravate your doshas, clearing stresses and impurities and bringing your lifestyle more in tune with nature's cycles you begin to experience greater self awareness. As your awareness starts to grow you are better able to feel the effects of food, the seasons and any activities that you undertake. Your physiology knows what it needs; everyday it is sending impulses to rest, to eat certain foods, to do some exercise. The real secret to women's health is acknowledging the self and listening to your desires."

I hope this article has been enlightening for you and that you will pay a different attention to your symptoms.

I always feel we have much more power than we ever were taught we had. It is hopefully never too late to start afresh.

I wish you a wonderful month full of flowers, scents from nature and blessings from within.

Warmly:

Pauline Houle

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Suggested reading:

Dr. Deepak Chopra: The return of the Rishi – A Doctor's story of Spiritual transformation and Ayurvedic Healing.