

# Does inflammation contribute to premenstrual symptoms?

June 16 2016

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Women with premenstrual symptoms (PMS) including mood swings, weight gain/bloating, and abdominal cramps/back pain have elevated levels of C-reactive protein (CRP), a biomarker of inflammation associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease. Establishing a link between inflammation and PMS would have important implications for treatment and prevention using anti-inflammatory agents and for cardiovascular disease risk reduction, according to an article in *Journal of Women's Health*.

Ellen Gold, PhD and coauthors, University of California, Davis, analyzed data collected on a racially and ethnically diverse group of midlife women as part of the Study of Women's Health Across the Nation (SWAN). In the article "The Association of Inflammation with Premenstrual Symptoms" , the researchers report a significant association between a level of high sensitivity CRP (hs-CRP) >3 mg/L with four of the five mood and physical symptoms evaluated.

In the accompanying Editorial entitled "[Chronic Inflammation and Premenstrual Syndrome: A Missing Link Found?](#)", Elizabeth Bertone-Johnson, ScD, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, states:

"Establishing PMS as an inflammatory condition suggests that PMS may be a useful sentinel of future chronic disease risk...This intriguing possibility also suggests that treatment of premenstrual symptoms with therapies targeting inflammation could have positive impacts on long-term chronic disease risk."

"The majority of women experience at least some [premenstrual symptoms](#). Recognizing an underlying inflammatory basis for PMS would open the door to additional treatment and prevention options and create a new opportunity for long-term risk intervention," says Susan G. Kornstein, MD, Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Women's Health*, Executive Director of the Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health, Richmond, VA, and President of the Academy of

Women's Health.

**More information:** Ellen B. Gold et al, The Association of Inflammation with Premenstrual Symptoms, *Journal of Women's Health* (2016). [DOI: 10.1089/jwh.2015.5529](https://doi.org/10.1089/jwh.2015.5529)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

Citation: Does inflammation contribute to premenstrual symptoms? (2016, June 16) retrieved 24 December 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-06-inflammation-contribute-premenstrual-symptoms.html>

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