

Tired of the Monthly Bloating and Irritability?

Safe, Effective Relief from PMS Symptoms is Possible

If you suffer from symptoms of pre-menstrual syndrome (PMS) every month, you're not alone. More than 70 percent of American women of child-bearing age cope with the anxiety, fatigue, pain, irritability, bloating, and other symptoms typically associated with PMS.

Over the years, a number of PMS causes have been identified, and probably just as many solutions have been tried. If you have noticed that your symptoms are worsening, it's probably a sign that your body's nutrients—particularly iron and B vitamins—are depleted. (Which is not surprising since we have a source of blood loss each month.) That's enough to sap your energy and make you crabby.

Taking a good multivitamin with iron and the entire B-complex of vitamins will help. The B-complex also can help with mood stabilization and bloating. Pay close attention to the iron source, though. Stay away from ferrous sulfate, because your body can't absorb it. Instead, look for iron picolinate, ferrous picolinate, or ferrous gluconate. And remember that your body also needs vitamin C to help absorb the iron; so look for that combination. That's my pet peeve with doctors who put patients on iron supplements without anything else.

But what does "calming" have to do with pain, crabiness and bloating? A lot of the reason for bloating is eating. You eat because you have cravings. You have cravings because you are moody. It's a viscous cycle. These are real physical symptoms that originate in the brain. That's why L-theanine may also help with cramping. This is the whole mind-body connection.

In a study performed at the University of Shizuoka and The Family Planning Institute of Japan, women who took 200 mg of Suntheanine® daily reported reduced anxiety. They also experienced fewer of the physiological and social symptoms (such as self-dislike and desire to be alone) often associated with PMS. Marshall Blum, LLC, in Bangor, Maine, also recently completed a double-blind, placebo-controlled study that demonstrated similar positive results.

Suntheanine's effects are gener-



ally felt within 30 minutes and have been shown to last up to 8–12 hours. Numerous clinical studies also have shown Suntheanine to:

Reduce stress and support immune function

Since stress is so brutal on the immune system, it would be helpful to have a compound that helps to reduce stress and support immune function. Suntheanine may hit two birds with one stone. Recently, a laboratory study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* demonstrated that Suntheanine helps prepare the immune system to fight against foreign substances such as bacteria, viruses and fungi.

Promote relaxation without drowsiness

L-theanine crosses the blood brain barrier, which allows it to work on brain neurotransmitters. One of the reasons that Suntheanine helps to relax the body is that it has been shown to stimulate alpha brain waves. This causes deep relaxation, but with the ability to maintain mental alertness. Both animals and humans produce brain waves on the brain surface. Of the four types of brain waves that demonstrate individual mental conditions, alpha waves have been shown to be an expression for relaxation. Human studies have shown an increase in alpha waves in 30 to 40 minutes after consuming 50 to 200 mg

of Suntheanine in foods, beverages and supplements.

Improve quality of sleep

A recent clinical trial conducted at the National Institute of Mental Health in Japan has proven L-theanine's ability to promote quality sleep. When 200 mg of L-theanine was taken before bedtime, it enhanced the quality of actual sleep of all the test subjects. In fact, all the participants reported a significant absence of "feeling exhausted" and a reduced need for sleep when using Suntheanine. In addition, the study showed that L-theanine produced a notable improvement of what is known as sleep efficiency, an index of actual sleep time enjoyed between the time of falling asleep and the final morning awakening.

The study confirmed that Suntheanine does not promote sleep or increase the duration of sleep, but rather it improves the quality of sleep by allowing the mind, while in a sleep state, to fully relax and recuperate.

Improve learning performance and concentration

Suntheanine has been shown to influence the brain neurotransmitters, possibly normalizing levels of dopamine and serotonin. These compounds affect learning and memory. Dopamine effects the emotions, and serotonin effects the central nervous system. This is a great combination of effects since they will promote a good mood while keeping one alert and focused. Animal studies have shown that Suntheanine improves the ability to learn and strengthen memory.

The good news is that it takes away the edginess without making you drowsy, the way some other common herbs like valerian do. I tell people it will give you "calm energy."

It can be used for that boost you might need later in the day without having to resort to caffeine. Besides, you'd have to drink approximately 20 cups of green tea to equal one dosage of Suntheanine. Just who wants to consume THAT much liquid? ■