Health Tips for Pre-Menopausal Women

In the years leading up to menopause, many women experience variances in their menstrual cycles and a variety of discomforts as their bodies react to the hormonal changes that are occurring. Water retention, mood swings, sore breasts and indigestion are problems experienced by many women. Here are some suggestions for alleviating these issues, provided by Herbalist and Wise Woman Susun Weed.

To relieve water retention

Ten to twenty drops of dandelion root tincture in a cup of water with meals and before bed, gently removes excess fluid from belly and breasts while strengthening the liver.

A strong infusion (one ounce of dried herb in a quart of boiling water, brewed overnight) of the common weed stinging nettle not only relieves but also helps prevent further episodes of water retention. Weed says she drinks a cup or more of this infusion daily whenever she wants to nourish her kidneys and adrenals.

To moderate mood swings

Tincture of the flowering tops of fresh motherwort is a favorite calmative of Weed’s. She uses five to 10 drops in a small amount of water, which she repeats as needed, sometimes as frequently as three or four times an hour, until the desired effect is achieved. “I never feel drugged or groggy or out-of-it when I use motherwort to help me calm down,” she says.

For women who consistently feel premenstrual rage, Weed uses 20 to 30 drops of motherwort tincture twice a day for a month to help stabilize moods and urging the woman to take a “moon day” right before or at the start of the menstrual flow.

One or more cups of an infusion of the herb oatstraw (the grass of the plant that gives us oatmeal) helps the nerves calm down and provides a rich source of minerals known to soothe frazzled emotions.

To relieve tenderness in the breasts

Twenty to 30 drops of the tincture of cleavers, another common weed, works wonders. This plant, also called “goose grass,” was used as a black tea substitute by the colonists. The dose may be repeated every hour or up to six times a day.

Women who get a lot of calcium and magnesium from their diet (leafy greens, yogurt and many herbs are rich in these minerals) have less breast tenderness. Increase the minerals in your diet with a cup or more of red clover/mint infusion daily. But be cautious about calcium supplements; they can increase water retention. Also avoid nutritional yeast which disrupts calcium/magnesium stores in the body. In a strict vegetarian diet, soy milk and tofu can also leach calcium, zinc and B-12 from the tissues, leading to a variety of pre-menstrual problems.

To relieve digestive distress

To relieve digestive distress, a daily dose of one teaspoonful (five ml) yellow dock root vinegar can aid digestion and increase available iron.

A cup of yogurt in the morning (buy it plain and add fruit at home, or make your own) replaces gut flora and insures easy digestion all day long.