



# THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE THE FIFTH VITAL SIGN

Source: National Institutes of Health

## Consider PMDD or PME

**When a patient is in distress or is describing symptoms, consider Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder and/or Premenstrual Exacerbation.**

Many with PMDD and/or PME have been misdiagnosed several times. Early intervention may improve outcomes.

## Listen

**Patients need a healthcare provider who listens and believes them.**

Barriers to communication include stigma and feeling dismissed, rushed, self-conscious and guilty.

## Ask Christina's Questions

**Christina was never asked about her menstrual cycle and gave us three questions she wish she had been asked when she was in distress:**

### “Christina’s Questions”

1. **When was your last period?**
2. **When are you expecting your next period?**
3. **What is PMS like for you?**

## Tracking

### Encourage Daily Tracking for Two Months

The average length of time for getting a correct diagnosis is 12 years. That can be shortened to just a couple of months if healthcare providers know about PMDD and encourage tracking.

## Treatment

### Evidence-based Treatment Options

SSRIs, hormonal contraceptives, GnRH analogues, Total Hysterectomy with Bilateral Salpingo-Oophorectomy, and CBT – Individualized treatment plans are needed.

## Lifestyle

### Healthy Lifestyle Choices

Diet, exercise, stress reduction, sleep (including naps), herbal remedies, vitamins and minerals, meditation, supportive relationships, asking for help, and spending time outdoors may help provide some relief.



**PMDD Awareness Could Save A Life  
Is It More than PMS? Learn About PMDD  
ChristinaBohnFoundation.org**