

# The adolescence period

Life



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The adolescence period is a transition from childhood to adulthood that does not come easy physically, biologically, than psychologically (Patrick Holdford). At puberty the body experiences many changes which is as a result to the influence of hormones related to rapid changes on sexual development.

Focus on optimal nutrition is require to avoid side effect (shrilakshmi). In fact the nutritional needs of a fourteen to sixteen years old child are essentially the same as these of adults, with a greater emphasis on some very essential nutrients (Patrick Holdford, 2008), The growth velocity is maximum for boys between 12-15 years and for girls 10-13 years (shrilaskmi). Both girls and boys need relatively more vitamins A, D and B6, biotin, zinc, calcium, magnesium and essential fatty acids during puberty with continuing demand for adequate protein because adolescents are still growing (shrilakshmi, 2014).

Eating habit of adolescents is influence by physical and psychological pressure. Teenagers have the reputation of having the worst eating habits. They may skip a meal. Or they may eat fast foods which are generally inadequate in calcium and vitamin A but high in calories, saturated fat and sodium (shrilakshmi).

While the boys large appetite and sheer volume of food lead them to consume adequate nutrients thus fares better than girls. But the adolescent girls are less fortunate due many reasons such as physiological sex difference associated with fat deposits in some specific part of their bodies and comparative lack of physical activity led to weight gain. food faddism is very

common among this phase, social pressures and personal tension concerning figure control will course them to follow unwise, self-imposed crash diets for weight loss, some rare cases of eating disorder like anorexia nervosa and bulimia become very paramount (shrilakshmi).

As the adolescents years are associated with increasing food freedom It is important they should learn to nourish themselves. If they are not given nutrition education from school or their parents they opt for food that tastes good, rather than food that does them good(Patrick H). diet in adolescents is very significant because its influences the future nutritional status.

A confounded effort should be made through nutrition education from school and as well as the parent and relation in order to encourage them to development or change their dieatary habit.

The key habits to encourage are:

- Adequate well balanced nutritious foods should be taken. No meal of the day should be missed.
- Home based diets are best for children's growth. Parent should encourage the adolescents to eat at home by cooking good nutritious tasty home meal.
- Food should be colorful and attractive making their eating habit independent of emotions(mindful eating).
- Eating seeds, perhaps a tablespoon of ground seeds on cereal -these are very rich in zinc , magnesium and essential fatty acids.

- Fruits and vegetables should be included in their diet to meet the essential nutrient like vitamins, minerals and fiber. Develop habit of eating fruit in preference to sweets and fatty, sugary snacks.
- Always having some vegetables with a meal ; most parent have no idea how to make vegetables enticing and teenagers often develop an aversion to them during their adolescents years.
- Adolescents girls most take enough iron and calcium rich foods in their diet to prevent onset of anemia and increase bone density which delays onset of osteoporosis.
- Calories and protein rich foods should be taken to support the growth spurt.
- Eating real meals rather than refueling on the move. One should not get addicted to eating out.
- To regulate appetite adolescents should be encouraged to be physically active particularly engaged in some outdoor games.

### **Beating PMS through diet**

Pre-menstrual problems, termed pre- menstrual syndrome [PMS], were until relatively recently accepted as a woman`s lot . Yet these symptom- which included depression, tension headaches , breast tenderness, water retention, bloating, low energy and irritability – are in most cases avoidable.

Classically, they occur in the week preceding menstruation, through a small percentage of women have the symptom from the middle of the cycle , coinciding with ovulation. Since pre- menstrual problems are a result of hormonal changes , hormone treatment has been used to correct them. But

the use of such drug treatment must be seriously questioned, as it disrupts the body's chemistry and has been associated with increased risk of cancer.

The effectiveness of vitamin B6 has been proved in some studies to help 70 percent of pre - menstrual sufferers . But researches soon found that B6 with zinc, which is needed to convert B6 into its active form, was more effective. A research in California , discovered that magnesium was especially effective at reducing the symptom of breast tenderness and swelling .

More recently, research has focused on the role of gamma linolenic acid (GLA), an essential fatty acids found in evening primrose and borage oils. GLA's 60 per cent success rate is almost certainly due to its role in making prostaglandins.

We now know that vitamin B6 , zinc and magnesium are also required to make prostaglandins and perhaps for this reason , have been shown to help pre- menstrual tension (PMT) sufferers. These nutrients alone can easily halve symptoms, as we found out in a trial at ION. In this trial of PMT suffers, in which both patients and their doctors rated their improvement for each pre- menstrual health problem, there was a substantial improvement of 55- 85 percent. On average, within three months a women on a supplement programme of this kind could expect a 66 percent improvement in each problem.

In some kinds of PMS, hormonal imbalance changes disturb blood sugar control and bring on sugar and stimulant changes, as well as symptoms of tiredness and irritation. Following a strict no- sugar, no - stimulant diet, while eating complex carbohydrates or fruit , little and often, can make all the

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difference . Diet, coupled with supplements, can often relieve symptoms of PMS all together.

In a small percentage of women, PMS indicates a more pronounced hormonal imbalance that cannot be corrected by diet and supplements alone. Such an imbalance is usually due to oestrogen dominance (see page219) and a relatives lack of progesterone. This condition can be brought on by a period of time on the pill and needs correcting by a qualified nutrition consultant or doctor.