

Vitamins, minerals may make life easier for women

(NAPSA)- Most Belles know Black women carry a heavy load in life. To make our lives easier, we need vitamins and minerals. A new study published in the *American Journal of the College of Nutrition* means good news for the more than 80 percent of women between the ages of 18 and 49 who suffer with Premenstrual Syndrome.

Nearly 40 percent of women of childbearing age experience PMS symptoms that are severe enough to affect their daily routines. Many of these women have searched for years for relief from such PMS symptoms as cramps, water retention, mood swings and cravings.

According to a 1998 study in the *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, a dose of 1,200 mg of calcium per day resulted in a nearly 50 percent decrease in PMS symptoms.

Among the other minerals reviewed, magnesium had some positive effects on headaches and mood swings. Vitamin B6 also exhibits promise in alleviating mood-re-

lated premenstrual symptoms and vitamin E offers the potential to improve emotional and physical symptoms.

With regard to herbal supplements, borage seed showed no strong evidence of effectiveness; however, primrose oil did show some promise. Other herbs have not yet been tested in well-controlled trials. In addition, interaction between some herbs, such as wild yam root, and medications may cause adverse reactions.

Calcium, at this point, seems to be the best choice for women suffering from PMS. Since most women do not consume nearly enough calcium-rich foods in their daily diets, some physicians recommend that they consider supplementing their diets to safely obtain the recommended level of 1,200 mg/day.

Women may wish to consult their doctors about supplements, like calcium, that could help alleviate PMS symptoms. *This article contributed to by Monya Tomlinson.*

Beating hair blues

(NAPSA)- The President's Ball, Nubian Nuance, Black College Day at King's Dominion, and of course, summer are coming. How are Belles going to deal with their hair this season? Plan to beat the hair blues by taking inventory of your hair problems like split ends, breakage, and dull hair.

Hair damage comes from certain culprits, and the hair conditioning experts say three simple questions can expose them:

1. Where have you been spending your time lately?

If it's indoors: Dry indoor air can cause static and flyaways. You need moisturizers that counteract dryness and cuticle smoothers that replenish shine.

If it's outdoors: The sun's UV rays and environmental pollutants are your greatest enemies because they degrade the cuticle and the hair's inner core, encouraging breakage. Fight back with naturally formulated strengtheners and revitalizers that work from within and contain provitamins and UV filters that help protect color-treated hair from fading and natural hair from breaking.

2. What do you do to your hair most often?

If you color your hair: you've

broken some important inner bonds. In addition, you've raised the cuticle, allowing moisture to escape. Re-moisturize regularly and reach for serious strengtheners at least once a week.

If you use curling and pressing irons: you're sealing the cuticle after depleting moisture. Put the moisture back with a nourishing formula, then seal the cuticle and always direct air flow from your blow dryer straight down the hair shaft. Use thermal tools at the minimum heat-setting necessary. If the heat's gotten too hot, reach for a serious deep conditioner.

3. What is your hair type?

If it's fine: use products that add volume and inner strength without weighing hair down or coating the cuticle.

If it's curly: Moisture leeches out at the crux of every curl and your hair reflects less light, so it's a bit duller-looking than straight hair. Use a light hairdressing to add smoothness and shine.

If it's color-treated: it's a truly modern type. Rely on products that protect your color's vibrancy while strengthening your hair. *This article was contributed to by Monya Tomlinson.*

Dieting may be more do's than don'ts

(NAPSA)- Freshwomen, are you trying to lose that Freshman 15? Are you just trying to fit into last year's swimsuit? Do you just want to lose weight?

When trying to lose a few unwanted pounds, what you do eat may be far more important than what you don't.

Taking a positive, proactive approach and planning healthy, well-balanced meals may improve your odds of success, as will finding ways to incorporate exercise into your daily life.

By adding a few of the following healthy habits, you may be able to subtract a few pounds:

- Keep a journal and record what you eat daily. Weigh yourself every morning and record it in your journal.
- Exercise every day for at least 30 minutes. Everything active counts: walking, jogging, gardening, mopping the floor, taking the stairs

instead of the elevator. Don't overdo it. Choose activities which are fun, not exhausting. Frequency and duration are more important than intensity.

•When you do eat, eat slowly, chew well and enjoy the full flavor of your food. It will take at least 20 minutes for your brain to let your stomach know you are satisfied.

•Eat only at the table, not in front of the TV or at the kitchen counter.

•Watch out for boredom eating. Instead drink a large glass of water or cup of decaffeinated coffee or tea. Stretch, walk around the block or up and down a flight of stairs.

•Visualize yourself at your ideal weight (maybe in your favorite outfit, feeling self-confident and energized).

•Drink at least 8 to 10 glasses of water a day to make you feel satisfied and refreshed.

•Eat balanced meals and snacks—a combination of carbohydrates, protein and a little bit of fat.

•Eat a variety of vegetables, all provide different nutrients.

•Eat whole fruits over fruit juice.

•Choose poultry without skin, fish and lean meat. Remember that 3 oz. equals about the size of a deck of cards.

•Use 3 egg whites instead of 1 whole egg.

•When dining out, decide what you'll have before you go. Request low fat salad dressing on the side and avoid sides like french fries or onion rings.

•Consult your doctor before starting any weight loss or activity program. Eat at least one balanced meal per day and not less than 1,200 calories.

To get a free menu plan for weight loss and maintenance, check out www.jennygo.com.

Nutritious meal bars can be a convenient way to lose weight when you're on the go. *This article was contributed to by Monya Tomlinson.*

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