

PREVALENCE OF PMS/PMDD IN ASIA-PACIFIC

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This paper describes the types of premenstrual syndromes, the prevalence and severity of premenstrual symptoms experienced by women in different countries and the impact on activities of daily life. The paper is based on an international cross sectional survey funded by Bayer Schering Pharma. The same questionnaire was used throughout and included all symptoms measured by the three classificatory systems, ICD-10, ACOG, and DSM-IV. (23 symptoms). Women were asked their experience of each of these premenstrual symptoms, severity (mild, moderate, severe), and frequency of menstrual cycles affected.

The study was initially carried out in 400 women from each of Europe (France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, U.K. and Latin America (Brazil and Mexico). A representative sample of women aged 14-49 years who were not pregnant at the time of the interview, were randomly selected and participated in computer aided telephone interviews. The findings are compared with results of an Asia-Pacific comparison study. Interviews were conducted in a population based sample of 400 women from each of Thailand, Hong Kong, Pakistan. A further 1,089 Japanese women and 400 Australian women took part in an online survey.

Symptoms divided into mental and physical domains. There were marked differences in the prevalence of reporting of different symptoms by country and region. For example tension was reported by 29% of Australian women but only 12% of Hong Kong women. Hong Kong women reported more lack of energy and fatigue (58%) and anger (51%) than did women in other Asian countries or Australia. Abdominal bloating, cramps and breast tenderness were common in all countries studied except for Pakistan where only 7% of women reported breast tenderness or breast pain. Symptoms were much less likely to be rated as severe by women in Hong Kong, Thailand and Japan than women in other countries.

90% or more of women in all countries surveyed would have qualified for ICD-10 premenstrual syndrome (had at least one symptom). Using an approximation for ACOG defined premenstrual syndrome, prevalence was 37% of women in Europe and Latin America, 43% of Australian women, but less than 20% of women in Asian countries. Severe premenstrual syndrome (surrogate for PMDD) was experienced by 3% of women in Europe and Latin America, 9% of Australian women, 5% of Pakistani women and only 1% or fewer for Hong Kong and Thai women respectively.

Symptoms had a pronounced effect on activities of daily living in all countries, with some variation by country in type of activity most affected.

It was concluded that European/Latin American women differ from Asian women in type of bothersome symptoms experienced and perception of severity.