Vitex

Chasteberry with boswellia, chamomile, ginger, B1 and zinc · 120 vegetarian capsules

INDICATION

Women with premenstrual syndrome, cyclical breast pain, irregular or short cycles, mildly raised prolactin or painful periods, and women trying to conceive with a short luteal phase.

2.57×
as likely to have PMS remission as on placebo (1)

52%
had PMS symptoms halved, against 24% on placebo (2)

5.5 → 10.5
days: luteal phase with latent raised prolactin (5)

2 caps
twice daily (12-hourly), with food

01 COMPOSITION AND DOSE

Chasteberry (*Vitex agnus-castus*) fruit powder	**500 mg**
Boswellia extract (65% boswellic acids)	**150 mg**
Chamomile extract	**150 mg**
Ginger extract (5% gingerols)	**100 mg**
Thiamine (vitamin B1)	**25 mg**
Zinc carnosine (about 8.5 mg zinc)	**37.5 mg**

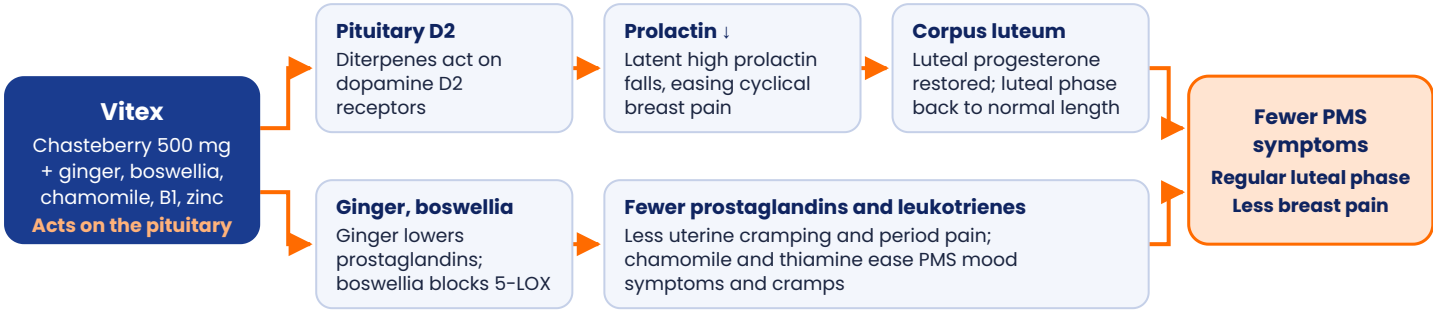
Amounts are per serving of 2 capsules; HPMC (vegetarian) capsule. **Dose:** 2 capsules twice daily (12-hourly) with food; 120 capsules last 30 days. Judge the response at three cycles. **Label use:** supports women's health and the menstrual cycle.

HOW IT WORKS

Chasteberry diterpenes act on dopamine D2 receptors in the pituitary and damp prolactin release (6, 11). Latent, mildly raised prolactin is linked with a short luteal phase and cyclical breast pain (5, 7).

With prolactin lower, the corpus luteum makes normal amounts of progesterone and the luteal phase returns to normal length (5).

Ginger lowers prostaglandins and boswellic acids block 5-lipoxygenase, the enzyme that makes leukotrienes (12, 13). Chamomile and thiamine eased PMS symptoms (14, 15); thiamine relieved period pain in 87% of 556 girls (16), and zinc eased it too (17).



02 EVIDENCE, WITH REFERENCES

Study	Design and women	Intervention	Main result
Csupor 2019 (1)	Meta-analysis, 3 double-blind RCTs, 520 women	Chasteberry extracts vs placebo	PMS remission 2.57× as likely as on placebo
Schellenberg 2001 (2)	Double-blind RCT, 170 women with PMS	Chasteberry extract 20 mg/day, 3 cycles	Symptoms halved in 52% vs 24% on placebo; irritability, mood change, anger, headache and breast fullness all better; mild side effects in 4 vs 3 women
He 2009 (3)	Double-blind RCT, 217 Chinese women with PMS	Extract from 40 mg fruit daily, 3 cycles	PMS score fell from 29.2 to 6.4 vs 28.1 to 12.6 on placebo; no serious adverse events
Verkaik 2017 (4)	Meta-analysis, 14 RCTs	Chasteberry preparations vs placebo	Large pooled reduction in PMS symptoms (Hedges g -1.21)
Milewicz 1993 (5)	Double-blind RCT, 37 women with latent raised prolactin and luteal phase defect	Chasteberry extract 20 mg/day, 3 months	Prolactin release fell; luteal phase lengthened from 5.5 to 10.5 days; low luteal progesterone restored; 2 women conceived (6)
Kilicdag 2004 (7)	RCT, 40 women with mildly raised prolactin and breast pain	Chasteberry 40 mg twice daily vs bromocriptine, 3 months	Prolactin 946 to 529 mIU/L, as effective as bromocriptine (885 to 473), with fewer side effects
Ooi 2020 (8)	Meta-analysis, 6 RCTs, 718 women with cyclical breast pain	Chasteberry 20 to 40 mg/day vs placebo, about 3 months	Breast pain clearly reduced (SMD 0.67); in 7 trials as good as dopamine agonists, NSAIDs, SSRIs or the pill
Halaska 1999 (9)	Double-blind RCT, 97 women with cyclical breast pain	Chasteberry solution twice daily, 3 cycles	Significantly greater fall in breast pain than on placebo

Guideline: the EU herbal monograph recognises chasteberry fruit extract for the treatment of premenstrual syndrome (10). **Evidence base:** trials used standardised extracts, not fruit powder, and many were small (4); the supporting herbs were trialled singly.

WHO BENEFITS MOST

PMS and mood
Irritability, mood swings, anger, headache or breast fullness before periods.

Expect: clear benefit by the third cycle

Cyclical breast pain
Breast pain or tenderness in the days before a period, with a lump excluded.

Expect: less pain over 3 cycles

Short luteal phase
Trying to conceive, with spotting before periods or mildly raised prolactin.

Start: 3 cycles before; stop once pregnant

Painful periods with PMS
Cramping period pain alongside premenstrual symptoms.

Expect: judge the response at 3 cycles

HOW TO USE IT IN PRACTICE

- **Starting:** 2 capsules morning and 2 in the evening, with food, every day through the cycle.
- **Monitoring:** symptom diary or PMS score, cycle dates; luteal-phase length if trying to conceive; prolactin if raised at the start.
- **Review:** at 3 cycles. Little change by then: review the diagnosis (PMDD, thyroid disease, depression) and refer. Re-check raised prolactin at 3 months.
- **With prescribed treatment:** can be used with paracetamol or NSAIDs for period pain; see 03 for dopamine medicines and fertility treatment.
- **With Draxer products:** GynoEssence for PCOS/PMOS or irregular cycles (zinc from both is about 27 mg a day, just over the 25 mg upper level: add no other zinc); Spearmint Tea daily.
- **Supporting nutrients:** zinc contributes to normal fertility and reproduction, and thiamine to normal psychological function (18).

SIDE EFFECTS AND SPECIAL GROUPS

Common	None expected; rates matched placebo (2).
Uncommon	Nausea, stomach upset, headache, dizziness, acne, rash or a change in bleeding pattern. Severe allergic reactions are rare (10).
Chamomile	Allergy if sensitive to daisy-family plants (20).
Overdose	None reported (10). Zinc 17 mg a day is within the 25 mg upper level (24).
Under 18	Not recommended; no data (10).
Kidney, liver	Not studied; use on the prescriber's advice.

03 INTERACTIONS AND CAUTIONS

- **Dopamine agonists and antagonists** (bromocriptine, cabergoline, metoclopramide, antipsychotics): acts on dopamine receptors; only with the prescriber (10).
- **Oestrogens, antioestrogens, hormonal contraception, HRT:** interaction not excluded; with the prescriber's agreement (10).
- **IVF and ovulation induction:** stop before the cycle; disordered follicle growth reported (19).
- **Warfarin:** one case of raised INR with chamomile (22); ginger did not alter INR (21). Check INR.
- **Tetracycline and quinolone antibiotics:** zinc reduces their absorption; give the antibiotic 2 hours before or 4 to 6 hours after (23).

04 PREGNANCY AND BREASTFEEDING

Pregnancy: do not use. Chasteberry acts on the pituitary; stop as soon as pregnancy is confirmed (10).

Breastfeeding: not recommended. Chasteberry can lower prolactin and milk supply (10).

05 WHEN NOT TO RECOMMEND

- Pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Pituitary disease or prolactinoma: investigate raised prolactin first (10)
- Hormone-sensitive cancers, past or present (10)
- Allergy to chamomile or other daisy-family plants (20)
- Girls under 18 years (10)
- Bleeding between periods or a breast lump: refer

PATIENT COUNSELLING CHECKLIST

- ☐ 2 capsules in the morning, 2 in the evening, with food
- ☐ Every day, all through the cycle
- ☐ Give it three full cycles
- ☐ Keep a diary of symptoms and period dates
- ☐ Planning IVF? Stop before the cycle starts
- ☐ Pregnant or breastfeeding? Do not take it
- ☐ Allergic to chamomile or daisies? Do not take it
- ☐ Mention any hormone or dopamine medicines

Product details. 120 vegetarian capsules (30 days). Store below 30°C in a dry place, away from direct light. Shelf life 24 months from manufacture; see pack for expiry. Food supplement made for Draxer Therapeutics by a partner manufacturer. Keep out of reach of children.

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