

Efficacy of saffron (*Crocus sativus*) in the Treatment of Premenstrual Syndrome: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

Nahid Maleki^{*1}, Elahe Akbari ², Hamid Heidarian Miri³, Sanam Borji⁴

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Midwifery, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Shahrood University of Medical Sciences, Shahrood, Iran. ORCID: 0000-0003-2612-5752

²Student Research Committee, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran. ORCID: 0009-0006-3722-6400.

³PhD of Epidemiology, School of Nursing and Midwifery, University College Cork, Cork, Ireland. ORCID: 0000-0002-1190-8300

⁴PhD student in reproductive health, Department of Reproductive Health, School of medicine, Shahrood University of Medical Sciences, Shahrood, Iran. ORCID: 0000-0002-1198-8881

ARTICLE INFO

Article type

A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis

Article history

Received: 18 Feb 2025

Revised: 27 Mar 2025

Accepted: 16 Apr 2025

Keywords

Saffron (*Crocus sativus*)

Premenstrual Syndrome

Systematic review

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Premenstrual disorder (PMS) is perhaps the most widely recognized issues among women of reproductive age. The utilization of natural therapies or complementary medicine has grown in recent years, especially among women. This study aimed to determine the efficacy of saffron on the treatment of PMS.

Methods: Electronic searching of Medline, PubMed, Scopus, Cochrane, Embase, Web of science, SID and Google Scholar was performed up to Jan 2024. Inclusion criteria consist of both English and Persian, published, clinical trials using saffron as medical for treatment of PMS. In the long run Five CTs met the inclusion criteria. The quality of these trials was evaluated by two researchers who carried out the data extraction, using Oxford Center for Evidence Based Medicine checklist. A total of three RCTs were ultimately included in a meta-analysis. Statistical analysis were performed by Comprehensive Meta-analysis (CMA) Version 2.

Results: Qualitative analysis revealed that 8-12 week of treatment with saffron could be effective in reducing the symptoms and severity of PMS and it might cause fewer side effects than chemical medicines. Three studies were included in the quantitative analysis, which resulted in a mean difference of 0.63 with 95% confidence interval (CI) (1.18-0.07), implying that the effects of saffron on PMS were statistically significant ($p=0.03$).

Conclusion: Although saffron has a positive effect on PMS but interpretation of results is limited because of methodological flaws of the included studies so further trials are still needed to confirm the current findings.

Please cite this paper as:

Maleki N, Akbari E, Heidarian Miri H, Borji S. Efficacy of saffron (*Crocus sativus*) in the Treatment of Premenstrual Syndrome: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis. Rev Clin Med. 2025;12(2): 72-81

Introduction

Premenstrual syndrome is one of the most well-known issues among women of reproductive age which encompasses a vast array of physical, psychological, and emotional symptoms associated with the menstrual cycle in women (1-3). With periodic recurrences, that appears after ovulation and resolves within a few days of the onset of menstruation (the

first weeks of the follicular phase) (4-6). Premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) is an extreme subtype of PMS that happens in 3–8% of ladies of reproductive age (Sepehrirad M 2016). The prevalence of PMS among women changes from 10% to 53%, contingent upon the population examined and diagnostic measures used. For instance, 10% of the participants in a Swiss Study experienced PMS. In a Japanese

***Corresponding author:** Nahid Maleki, Department of Midwifery, School of Nursing and Midwifery, Shahrood University of Medical Sciences, Shahrood, Iran

Address: Shahrood University of Medical Sciences and Health Services, Hafte Tir Square, Shahrood, Iran.

E-mail: malekimidwife@gmail.com, Tel: +982332395054

Doi: [10.22038/RCM.2025.86208.1528](https://doi.org/10.22038/RCM.2025.86208.1528)

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

report, prevalence rates of moderate to severe PMS was 53%. In Iran, the prevalence of PMS is 67-78.4% (7-10). Etiology of this syndrome is multifactorial which is not totally characterized. At first, PMS is principally connected with diminished levels of progesterone in the luteal stage. Various etiologies depicted for PMS include abnormal neurotransmitter reactions to ordinary ovarian functions, hormonal irregularities, sodium maintenance, and nutritional deficiencies (11-14). Suggested Pharmacological treatments for this syndrome consist of: antidepressants (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, SSRIs) and other psychotropic agents, diuretics, progesterone, GnRh agonists, hormonal therapy such as estrogen therapy, combined oral contraceptives, pyridoxine, ethinyl estradiol and drospirenone, and synthetic androgen and gonadotropin inhibitors (15-18). Nonetheless, most women were detected to favor pharmaceutical proceeds containing dietary changes, work out, cognitive behavioral therapy, and complementary and alternative medicine (19). Studies recognized that patients with PMS attempt a wide scope of CAM cures including diet, yoga, massage, exercise, faith healing, hypnosis, herbs, acupuncture, meditation, homeopathy and vitamins/supplements (20-23). As noted, some herbal medicines such as *Matricaria chamomile* (24), *Melissa officinalis* (25), wheat germ (26), Soy Bean (27), *Vitex agnus* (28), *Hypericum perforatum* (29), Curcumin (30) can also be effective in treating this syndrome. Saffron plant is a dried stigma (string like pieces) of the flower *Crocus sativus* L., which has utilized as a kind of traditional herbal medicine (27). Saffron stigmas have four bioactive compounds that include Crocins, Crocetin, Picrocrocin, and Safranal. The crocin and crocetin are related to the color of saffron, and picrocrocin is responsible for the taste and safranal to the aroma of saffron. Its health-related properties are the result of all four of these compounds (31). Aside from its traditional usage and value, saffron has a long history of therapeutic application traversing more than 2,500 years (32). Saffron has been utilized in traditional medication for treating various diseases including cramps, asthma, menstruation issues, liver sickness, and pain (33, 34). Therapeutic properties of saffron are likely because of various compounds contained inside this spice, consist of crocetin, crocins, and safranal, which have been found to have strong antioxidant agents and radical scavenger properties and hence would give expanded assurance against an assortment of reactive oxygen species and proinflammatory cytokines. According evidence saffron has potential anticarcinogenic (cancer-suppressing), anti-mutagenic (mutation-preventing), antioxidant, antidepressant, and memory-upgrading properties (27, 35-37). Since the symptoms of the syndrome disrupt everyday life, it is beneficial to

distinguish the ways of treatment. In this regard several studies have been published examining saffron's potential to reduce these symptoms and improve health conditions in human participants, specifically with an emphasis on PMS (38-42). To the best of our knowledge, no systematic review and meta-analysis has been conducted on the efficacy of saffron for preventing or treating PMS symptoms. Hence the purpose of present study was to carry out a systematic and meta-analytic to sum up and fundamentally assess the evidence from randomized clinical trials (RCTs) that have examined the efficacy or effectiveness of saffron supplementation concerning results related to PMS.

Materials and methods

This systemic review and meta-analysis, was designed and reported using a checklist of items in accordance with the "Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (Moher, Liberati et al.)" statement (Moher, Liberati et al. 2014). The systematic electronic search was done on the databases of the MEDLINE, PubMed, web of science, Embase, Scopus, the Cochrane Central Register Trials inception, Google Scholar as well as Persian databases such as SID, Iran Medex, and Magiran up to Jan 2024 to evaluate the efficacy of saffron in the treatment of PMS.

We searched the Cochrane Sexual and Reproductive Health Editorial Base, Cochrane Gynecology and Fertility Highlights, IRCT¹ and ICTRP² to seek any relevant review, RCT or RCTs in progress, as well as PROSPERO³ for SR protocols at <https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/Prosperto/>. We contacted the Protocol authors for a pre-publication version of RCTs. Additionally; we searched the reference lists of retrieved studies. No determined limitation was considered and the search keywords were premenstrual syndrome OR PMS OR Dysmenorrhea AND *Crocus sativus* OR saffron. To be included in the review, the chosen articles expected to meet the accompanying criteria: All of the in-Vivo studies, Reproductive age women diagnosed with PMS, Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs), Interventions consist of Saffron, Comparisons could consist of a placebo or any other interventions. Outcome measures include, Primary outcomes: Change of symptoms by Daily Symptom Record (DSR) and visual analogue scale (Fabiyyi, Rankin et al.) the following issues were considered for Secondary outcomes: Adverse events, Dysmenorrhea, Hamilton Depression Rating Scale. Five studies assessed the effect of saffron medicine on PMS and Dysmenorrhea. Figure 1 shows the process of selection of articles for this systematic review. The process of the search and selection of RCTs is shown in **Figure1**. The data extraction and the quality assessment of the included trials were carried out by two separate individuals according to a predefined

¹ Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

² International Clinical Trials Registry Platform

³ The International Prospective Register of Systematic Reviews

checklist, consist of; first author, year of publication, design, sample size, duration of treatment, dosage and outcome values for both the intervention and the control groups with the mean and standard deviation

of pre- and post-treatment or mean difference from the baseline (Table 1).

Table1. Characteristics of five randomized controlled trials included in systematic review.

No	Author, Year	Design	Duration (wk.)	Age (Y)	Intervention mg	Type of control	Participants Intervention	Participants control	Baseline comparability	Dropouts (56)	Tools	blinding method	Adverse effects	Outcome(s)
1	Nemat-Shahi et al. (58),	RCT	8	26-45	30 mg capsules of saffron	fluoxetine 20 mg capsules	N= 82	N=82	Yes	0%	Demographic questionnaire Visual Analogue Scales (57) Beck Anxiety Inventory	three-blind	There was no side effects	The use of medicinal herbs such as saffron could be effective in reducing the symptoms and they might cause fewer side effects than chemical drugs
2	Agha-Hosseini et al.(2008) (2007), Iran	RCT	8	20 to 45	Saffron capsule 30 mg	placebo capsule	N=24	N=23	Yes	6%	Daily Symptom Report for PMS Hamilton Depression Rating Scale	Double-blind	Appetite changes Headache Sedation Nausea Hypomania (None of adverse effects were severe)	saffron was found to be effective in relieving Symptoms of PMS. A significant difference was observed in efficacy of saffron in cycles 3 and 4 in the Total Premenstrual Daily Symptoms and Hamilton Depression Rating Scale
3	Pirdadeh et al. (2015), Iran Iran Beiranvand et al.	RCT	8	18 to 35	saffron capsules, 30-mg	Placebo capsules	N=39	N=39	Yes	11%	personal and medical information questionnaire the simultaneous determination of stress, anxiety and depression	triple-blind	increased appetite, loss of appetite, sedation, nausea, headache, and euphoria	saffron reduces the severity of PMS symptoms
4	Rajabi et al. (58),	RCT	8	20-45	fluoxetine 20 mg, saffron 15 mg	Placebo capsules	N=40 N=40	N=40	Yes	0%	Daily record of severity of problems (DRSP) Hamilton questionnaires	single -blinded	Gastrointestinal symptoms Insomnia Increased menorrhagia	saffron was an efficacious herbal agent for the treatment of PMDD with minimal adverse effects
5	Azimi and Abrishami (2016), Iran	RCT	for three consecutive menstrual cycles		Saffron capsules 30 mg, Mefenamic acid capsules 250 mg	Placebo capsules	N=60, N=60	N=60	Yes	4/5%	VAS	double-blind	mild pruritus and red skin	the effect of saffron in reducing pain is more than mefenamic acid and far more than placebo

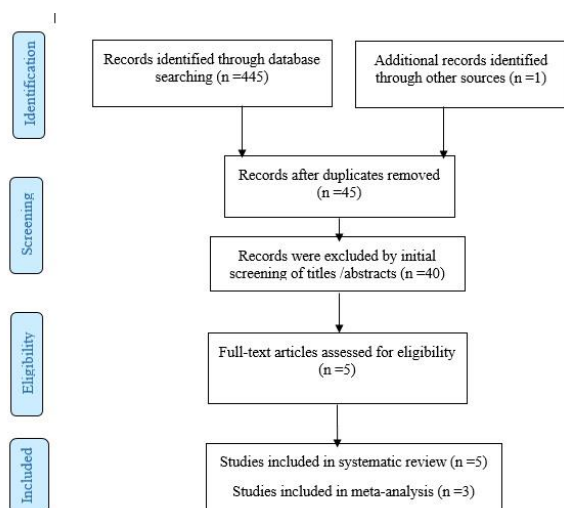


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram of study selection progress.

Two reviewers using Oxford Center for Evidence Based Medicine checklist (Table 2) independently rated the quality of RCTs (14). This tool assess Internal Validity: comprising of six general inquiries regarding the method of patients assignment, comparability and matching of groups, equality of allocated treatment, losses to follow-up and intention-to-treat analysis, blindness and effect size which was replied with three alternatives Yes , No and Unclear. This tool has been designed in two sections to evaluate internal and external validity. in this review, Internal validity was examined by six general questions containing the way of patient's assignment, similarity, and matching of groups, equality of allocated treatment, losses to follow-up and intention-to-treat analysis, blindness and effect size which was assessed with three answers of Yes, No and Unclear. Risks of bias assessment are shown in figure 2 and table2. All statistical analyses were done by Comprehensive Meta-analysis Version 2 (Biostat, Englewood, NJ, USA).

Table 2. Risk of bias summary: Systematic review. Author's judgments of risk of bias item for each included study

	Random sequence generation (Selection bias)	Allocation concealment (Selection bias)	Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias)	Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias)	Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias)	Selective reporting (reporting bias)	Did the analysis include an intention to treat analysis?
Nemat-Shahi et al. 2020	+	+	+	+	-	+	?
Rajabi et al.2020	-	+	?	?	+	+	?
Agha-Hosseini et al. 2008	+	+	+	-	-	+	+
PirdadehBeiranvand et al. 2015	+	+	+	+	-	+	?
Azimi and Abrishami	+	+	+	-	-	+	?

Random sequence generation (Selection bias)



Allocation concealment (Selection bias)



Blinding of participants and personnel (performance bias)



Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias)



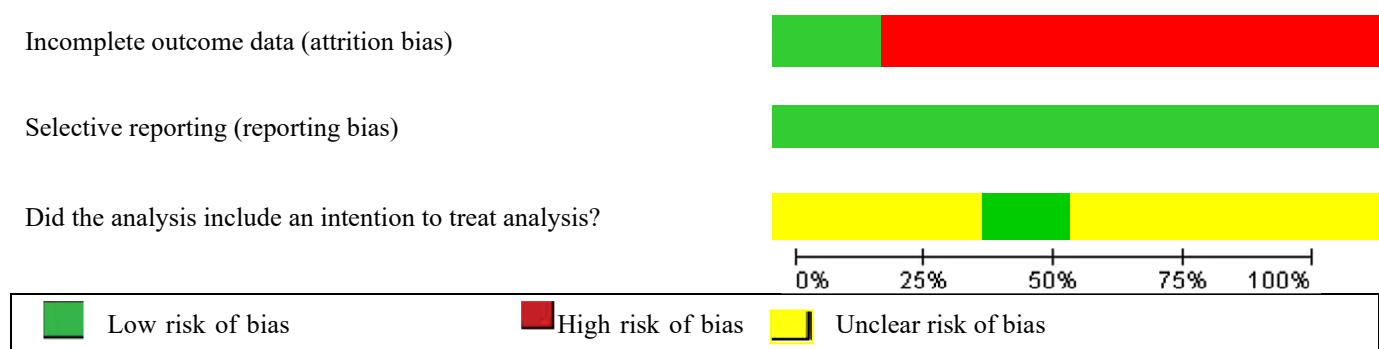


Figure 2. Risk of bias graph: Systematic review. Author's judgments of risk of bias presented as percentages across all included studies.

Results

Finally, out of 446 articles, five clinical trial studies were included in the study after review and during different stages of screening. These five clinical trial studies were conducted in Iran between 2008 and 2020. A total of 549 people participated in these studies as an intervention group and a control group. Saffron was administered orally in these studies. Nemat-Shahi et al. conducted a randomized, three-blinded clinical trial to the comparison of Saffron versus Fluoxetine in the Treatment of Women with Premenstrual Syndrome for two months (The end of the first month, the end of the second month). 164 Participants were randomly divided into two groups, the intervention group (n=82) received saffron, and the control group received fluoxetine (n=82). It was found that there was no significant difference in the improvement of abdominal pain in the two groups ($P>0.05$). There was a significant difference between the two groups at the end of the first month ($p = 0.01$) and the second month ($p=0.03$) associated with severe to moderate abdominal pain. It was declared that there was no significant difference in the reduction of anxiety levels between the two groups ($P>0.05$). It was indicated that there was not a significant difference between the two groups at the end of the first month ($p = 0.83$) and the second month ($p = 0.09$). It was indicated that there was a significant difference between the two groups at the end of the first month ($p = 0.0001$), related to breast pain but there was not a significant difference between the two groups at the end of the second month ($p = 0.014$) (41). It was shown that there was no significant difference between the two groups according to depression ($P>0.05$). In the study of mild, medium, and severe abdominal bloating, there was no significant difference between the two groups at the end of the first and second months ($P>0.05$) (41). Rajabi et al. in randomized, single-blinded, clinical trial, compared saffron with fluoxetine for PMS management. This study included 120 cases with PMS for 8 weeks. The intervention group (n=40) received saffron, 15 mg twice daily and the control group (n=40) received placebo capsules containing starch similar in shape, color, and size.

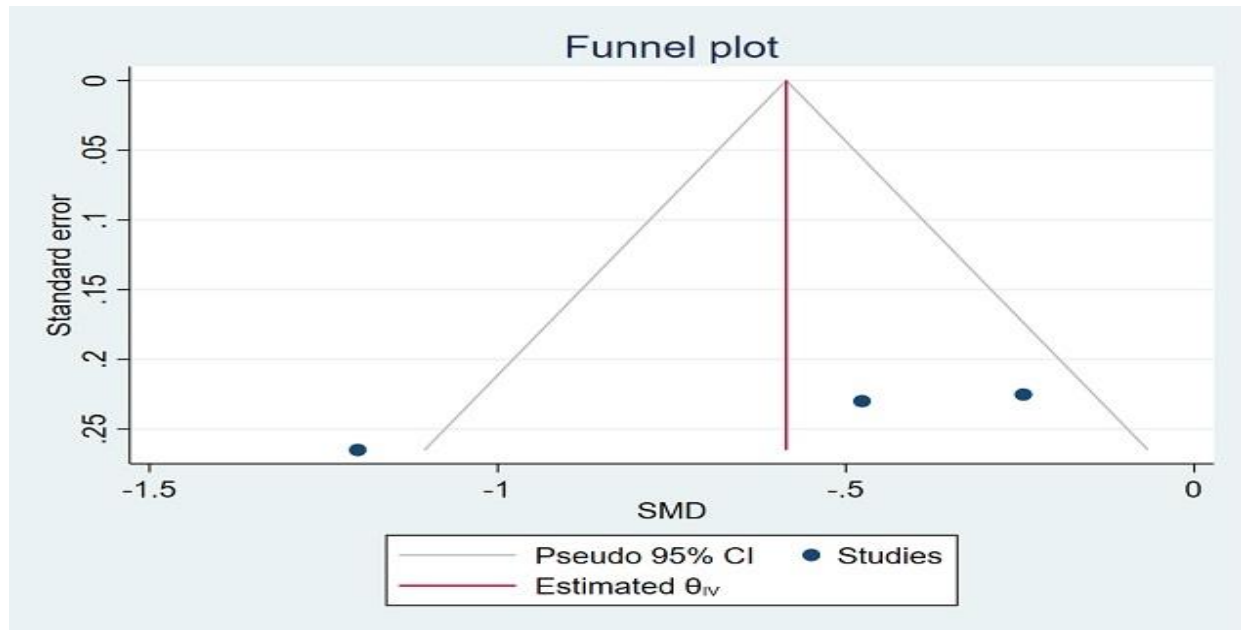
Results of study revealed significant improvement in all of the treatment approaches in terms of DRSP and Hamilton assessments ($P < 0.001$). Although DRSP assessments showed remarkable superiority of saffron to placebo ($P = 0.027$), Hamilton evaluations showed insignificant differences among the three interventions ($P > 0.05$). Fluoxetine posed a significantly higher rate of adverse effects as compared to the other agents ($P = 0.01$) (42).

In another report by Agha-Hosseini et al. in 2008, represented considerable symptoms improvement following the treatment either with placebo or saffron prescribed in 30 mg daily doses divided into two 15 mg capsules. The comparison of placebo with saffron showed remarkable superiority of saffron in both DRSP ($t = 5.92$, $df = 48$, $P < 0.001$) and Hamilton scoring systems ($t = 8.99$, $df = 48$, $P < 0.001$) (38). Beiranvand et al. conducted a randomized triple-blind controlled clinical trial on females resenting from PMS. They prescribed 30 mg of extracted saffron once daily for two menstrual cycles versus placebo, and eventually found significant improvement in the severity of PMS symptoms for both of the groups ($P = 0.04$), while the comparison of the cases and controls revealed the significant superiority of saffron to placebo ($P < 0.001$) (40). Azimi and Abrishami (2016) performed a randomized double-blind clinical trial on 180 female students, diagnosed with primary dysmenorrhea. The participants were assigned in to three groups, Group I received Mefenamic acid 250 mg capsules. Group II received Saffron 30 mg capsules and group III received Placebo capsules, in which received three capsules per day for three days during three consecutive menstrual cycles. In Saffron Group, 4 (2.2%) left the study due to the need for concomitant pain killers, and one patient (0.6%) left the study due to sensitivity to saffron (mild pruritus and red skin, which was resolved after saffron was discontinued without any treatment). Data were analyzed by repeated measure ANOVA test. In saffron group VAS was reduced from 6.8 to 3.6, 3.4, and 3 in 3 consecutive months. This effect was significantly greater than Mefenamic acid and placebo ($P=0.0001$) (39).

Meta-analysis

Publication bias was assessed statistically using Egger's and Begg's tests at the first. P-values of the Egger's and Begg's tests were 0.05 and 0.29, respectively, due to the small number of articles, publication bias could not be evaluated validate, so the trim-and-fill method was used and it was seen that after adjusting for potential publication bias, the study results were not affected by publication bias (Figure 3). The heterogeneity of the measure of effects among the studies was assessed based on I^2 , which was 5.8%

applied to all calculations because there were some of the differences between the studies. All three studies were included in the meta-analysis, which resulted in a mean difference of 0.63 with 95% confidence interval (CI) (1.18-0.07), implying that the effects of saffron on PMS were statistically significant ($p < 0.03$). The forest plot, the mean difference, its CI, the corresponding weight of each individual study, the pooled mean difference, and its CI, are shown in Figure 4, 5.



($p < 0.026$). However, a Random effects model was

Figure 3. Funnel plot, X-axis is the natural logarithm of the mean difference and the y-axis is the standard error of the natural logarithm of means.

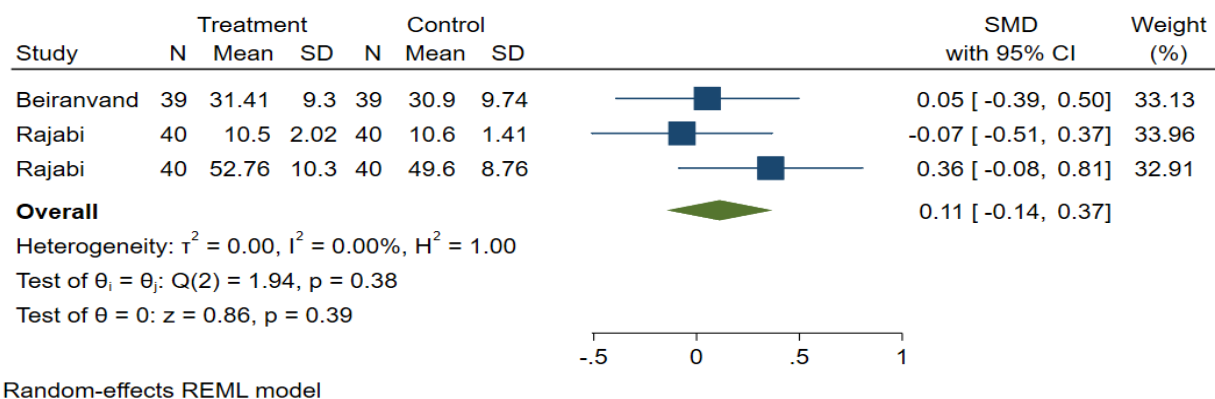


Figure 4. Effects of saffron on PMS (pretreatment). The horizontal lines denote the 95% CI, ■, point estimate (size of the square corresponds to its weight); ♦, combined overall effect of treatment.

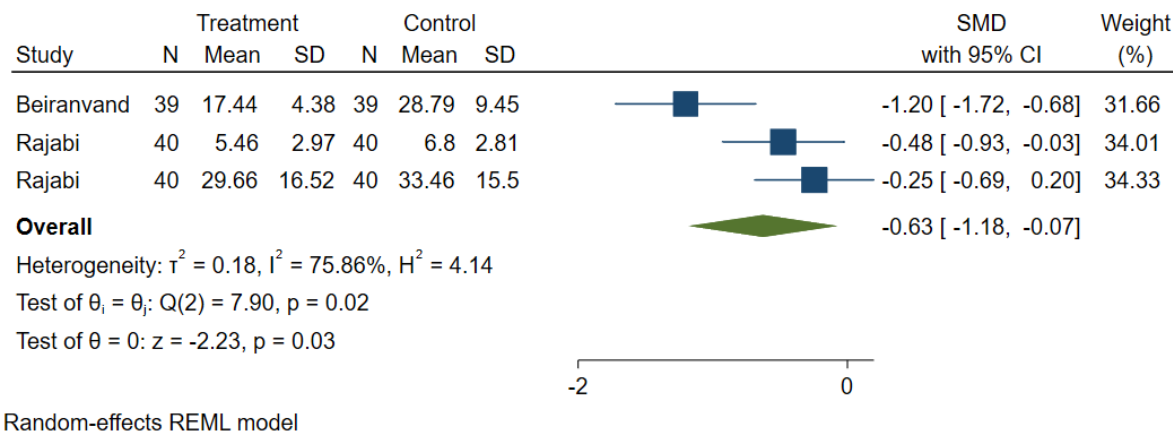


Figure 5. Effects of saffron on PMS (post treatment). The horizontal lines denote the 95% CI, ■ point estimate (size of the square corresponds to its weight); ♦, combined overall effect of treatment.

Discussion

Current systematic review and meta-analysis, assessed available literature regarding the effects of oral administration of saffron on symptoms of PMS in reproductive age women and to the best of our knowledge; this is the first study evaluating the impact of saffron on PMS symptoms.

Overall, the results revealed that 8-12 weeks of treatment with saffron could be effective in reducing the symptoms and severity of PMS and it might cause fewer side effects than chemical medicines.

The impact of saffron on abdominal pain (Visual Analogue Scales)

Overall, in different countries, including Iran, saffron is traditionally used for various purposes such as analgesia and anti-inflammatory (35). From all the present studies, one study has investigated the effect of saffron on abdominal pain. Some studies have examined the effect of saffron on abdominal pain. They reported a positive effect on abdominal pain in women with PMS (43) and on the severity of labor pain in primiparous women compared with placebo. Saffron reduced pain intensity compared with placebo (44). The proposed mechanism for the analgesic effect of saffron is to inhibit the release of prostaglandins and the presence of anthocyanin and flavonoid compounds (crocin and crocetin) (45).

The impact of saffron on Severity of dysmenorrhea

Two studies revealed the efficacy of saffron in reducing the severity of Primary Dysmenorrhea (39). In reviewing the clinical applications of saffron, it was reported that saffron alone or in combination with other plants can be effective in dysmenorrhea, although the type of compound used in these studies has been criticized (34). Primary dysmenorrhea is

associated with increased prostaglandin secretion in the body (46). Hemshekhar, M et al (2012) report that in animal studies, crocin could inhibit some inflammatory mediators, including prostaglandin E-2 (PGE-2) (47).

The impact of saffron on Severity of PMS (DRSP)

Four studies reported useful impacts of saffron on Severity of PMS in all five subtypes of the questionnaire namely anxiety, depression, emotional, retention, and physical symptoms (38, 40-42). The fundamental constituents of saffron are coloring carotenoids, crocin, a bitter picrocrocin and its aroma-inducing chemical, safranal. Moreover, crocetin is another carotenoid of saffron (48). Saffron and its constituents have been shown to alleviate a variety of neurological and inflammatory pains in different models. This effect may attribute to its positive effects on abdominal pain or other PMS symptoms (49).

The impact of saffron on Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS)

Two studies described useful impacts of saffron on Depression (38, 42). According to evidence, the serotonergic system has a significant role in the luteal phase. Besides, the effect of sex hormones on serotonin uptake, binding, turnover and transport has also been signified. So dysregulation of the serotonergic system has been suggested as a reason for the majority of PMS symptoms (50-52).

In association with Depression, it has been reported that saffron by means of a serotonergic mechanism demonstrates an antidepressant effect in the treatment of women with psychological signs such as depression (53-55).

Despite these basic outcomes, attention to alternative therapy of PMS, the mechanism of action and advantages of every treatment option like saffron must be completely investigated before its usage.

There are several limitations in the systematic review and meta-analysis, which should be addressed, including small sample size and relatively short-term treatment duration, using only a fixed dose of saffron insufficient explanation of randomization method and blinding, and lack of Intent-To-Treatment (ITT) analysis. Also, the quality of some included studies was not optimal which may decrease the reliability of our results. Considering the above-mentioned limitations, there is a need to conduct well-designed trials to address these subjects.

Conclusion

Quantitative analysis showed that Saffron has a positive effect in treatment women with PMS symptom. But the interpretation of results of the current study is restricted because of methodological flaws and some heterogeneity among the included studies, so further trials with larger sample size and longer treatment duration are needed to affirm the present findings.

Authors' contributions

N.M, designed and directed the project. N.M and A.S drafted the first version of the manuscript. H.HM analyzed the data and verified the numerical results. N.M and A.S revised the manuscript. N.M and A.S critically reviewed the manuscript for important intellectual content. All authors approved the final version.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the Shahroud University's Deputy of Research for their financial support and would also like to appreciate all the researchers who provided them with additional information on their studies.

Funding source

This study was a part of a research proposal in reproductive health which financially supported by Shahroud University of Medical Sciences with grant no. 14020051

References

- Abdi F, Ozgoli G, Rahnamaie FS. A systematic review of the role of vitamin D and calcium in premenstrual syndrome. *Obstetrics & gynecology science*. 2019 Mar; 62(2):73. <https://doi.org/10.5468/ogs.2019.62.2.73> PMID:30918875 PMCID:PMC6422848
- Abdullaev, F.I., 1993. Biological effects of saffron. *BioFactors* (Oxford, England), 4(2), pp.83-86.
- Agha-Hosseini, M., L. Kashani, A. Aleyaseen, A. Ghoreishi, H. Rahmanpour, A. Zarrinara and S. Akhondzadeh (2008). "Crocus sativus L.(saffron) in the treatment of premenstrual syndrome: a double-blind, randomised and placebo-controlled trial." *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics & Gynaecology* 115(4): 515-519. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-0528.2007.01652.x> PMID:18271889
- Akbarzadeh, M., Dehghani, M., Moshfeghy, Z., Emamghoreishi, M., Tavakoli, P. and Zare, N., 2015. Effect of Melissa officinalis capsule on the intensity of premenstrual syndrome symptoms

- in high school girl students. *Nursing and midwifery studies*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.17795/nmsjournal27001> PMID:26339667 PMCID:PMC4557408
- Alavizadeh SH, Hosseinzadeh H. Bioactivity assessment and toxicity of crocin: a comprehensive review. *Food and Chemical Toxicology*. 2014 Feb 1; 64:65-80. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fct.2013.11.016> PMID:24275090
- Amin, B. and Hosseinzadeh, H., 2012. Evaluation of aqueous and ethanolic extracts of saffron, *Crocus sativus* L., and its constituents, safranal and crocin in allodynia and hyperalgesia induced by chronic constriction injury model of neuropathic pain in rats. *Fitoterapia*, 83(5), pp.888-895. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fitote.2012.03.022> PMID:22484092
- Ataollahi, M., Akbari, S.A.A., Mojab, F. and Majd, H.A., 2015. The effect of wheat germ extract on premenstrual syndrome symptoms. *Iranian journal of pharmaceutical research: IJPR*, 14(1), p.159.
- Azhari, S., S. Ahmadi, H. Rakhshandeh, H. Jafarzadeh and S. R. Mazlom (2014). "Evaluation of the effect of oral saffron capsules on pain intensity during the active phase of labor." *The Iranian Journal of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Infertility* 17(115): 1-10.
- Azimi, P. and R. Abrishami (2016). "Comparison of the effects of crocus sativus and mefenamic acid on primary dysmenorrhea." *Journal of Pharmaceutical Care*: 75-78.
- Ayaz-Alkaya S, Yaman-Sözbir Ş, Terzi H. The effect of Health Belief Model-based health education programme on coping with premenstrual syndrome: a randomised controlled trial. *International journal of nursing practice*. 2020 Apr; 26(2):e12816. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijn.12816> PMID:31985138
- Beiranvand, S. P., N. S. Beiranvand, Z. B. Moghadam, M. Birjandi, S. Azhari, E. Rezaei, A. N. Salehnia and S. Beiranvand (2016). "The effect of *Crocus sativus* (saffron) on the severity of premenstrual syndrome." *European Journal of Integrative Medicine* 8(1): 55-61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eujim.2015.06.003>
- Cho, S.-H. and J. Kim (2010). "Efficacy of acupuncture in management of premenstrual syndrome: a systematic review." *Complementary therapies in medicine* 18(2): 104-111. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ctim.2009.12.001> PMID:20430293
- Christodoulou E, Kadoglou NP, Kostomitsopoulos N, Valsami G. Saffron: a natural product with potential pharmaceutical applications. *Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmacology*. 2015 Dec;67(12):1634-49. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jphp.12456> PMID:26272123
- Delaram M. Treatment of moderate to severe of premenstrual syndrome with *echinophora platyloba*. *Zahedan J Res Med Sci*. 2014;16:50-54
- Dante, G. and F. Facchinetti (2011). "Herbal treatments for alleviating premenstrual symptoms: a systematic review." *Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics & Gynecology* 32(1): 42-51. <https://doi.org/10.3109/0167482X.2010.538102> PMID:21171936
- Fabiyi, C., K. Rankin, K. Norr, J. C. Yoder, R. Vasa and R. White-Traut (2015). "The Association of Low Social Support with Breast Milk Expression in Low-Income Mother-Preterm Infant Dyads." *Journal of human lactation* 31(3): 490-497. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0890334415586199> PMID:25975943
- Farahmand M, Ramezani Tehrani F, Khalili D, Amin G, Negarandeh R. Factors associated with the severity of premenstrual syndrome among Iranian college students. *Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Research*. 2017 Nov; 43(11):1726-31. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jog.13439> PMID:28737241
- Freeman EW, Halberstadt SM, Rickels K, Legler JM, Lin H, Sammel MD. Core symptoms that discriminate premenstrual syndrome. *Journal of Women's Health*. 2011 Jan 1; 20(1):29-35. <https://doi.org/10.1089/jwh.2010.2161> PMID:21128818 PMCID:PMC3017419
- Geta TG, Woldeamanuel GG, Dassa TT. Prevalence and associated factors of premenstrual syndrome among women of the reproductive age group in Ethiopia: Systematic review and

- meta-analysis. *PloS one*. 2020 Nov 6;15(11):e0241702 <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0241702> PMID:33156860 PMCid:PMC7647055
20. Gohari, A. R., S. Saeidnia and M. K. Mahmoodabadi (2013). "An overview on saffron, phytochemicals, and medicinal properties." *Pharmacognosy reviews* 7(13): 61. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0973-7847.112850> PMID:23922458 PMCid:PMC3731881
21. Hamaideh SH, Al-Ashram SA, Al-Modallal H. Premenstrual syndrome and premenstrual dysphoric disorder among Jordanian women. *Journal of psychiatric and mental health nursing*. 2014 Feb;21(1):60-8 <https://doi.org/10.1111/jpm.12047> PMID:23445531
22. Hemshekhar, M., Santhosh, M.S., Sunitha, K., Thushara, R.M., Kemparaju, K., Rangappa, K.S. and Girish, K.S., 2012. A dietary colorant crocin mitigates arthritis and associated secondary complications by modulating cartilage deteriorating enzymes, inflammatory mediators and antioxidant status. *Biochimie*, 94(12), pp.2723-2733. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biochi.2012.08.013> PMID:22939988
23. Hosseinzadeh H, Nassiri-Asl M. Avicenna's (Ibn Sina) the canon of medicine and saffron (*Crocus sativus*): a review. *Phytotherapy Research*. 2013 Apr;27(4):475-83. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ptr.4784> PMID:22815242
24. Hosseinzadeh, H. Nassiri-Asl, M., 2013. Avicenna's (Ibn Sina) the canon of medicine and saffron (*Crocus sativus*): a review. *Phytotherapy Research*, 27(4), pp.475-483. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ptr.4784> PMID:22815242
25. Jang, S. H., D. I. Kim and M.-S. Choi (2014). "Effects and treatment methods of acupuncture and herbal medicine for premenstrual syndrome/premenstrual dysphoric disorder: systematic review." *BMC complementary and alternative medicine* 14(1): 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1472-6882-14-11> PMID:24410911 PMCid:PMC3898234
26. Jelodar G, Javid Z, Sahraian A, Jelodar S. Saffron improved depression and reduced homocysteine level in patients with major depression: A Randomized, double-blind study. *Avicenna journal of phytomedicine*. 2018 Jan; 8(1):43.
27. Kamalipour, M. and S. Akhondzadeh (2011). "Cardiovascular effects of saffron: An evidence-based review." *The journal of Tehran Heart Center* 6(2): 59.
28. Kamranpur B, Farzadrik L, Rahbar T, Alizade S. Valerian impact on the severity of the symptoms of premenstrual syndrome. *IJOGL*. 2015; 18:1-9. (in Persian)
29. Kashani, L., S. Eslatmanesh, N. Saedi, N. Niroomand, M. Ebrahimi, M. Hosseini, T. Foroughifar, S. Salimi and S. Akhondzadeh (2017). "Comparison of saffron versus fluoxetine in treatment of mild to moderate postpartum depression: a double-blind, randomized clinical trial." *Pharmacopsychiatry* 50(02): 64-68. <https://doi.org/10.1055/s-0042-115306> PMID:27595298
30. Khazdair, M. R., M. H. Boskabady, M. Hosseini, R. Rezaee and A. M. Tsatsakis (2015). "The effects of
31. *Crocus sativus* (saffron) and its constituents on nervous system: A review." *Avicenna journal of phytomedicine* 5(5): 376.
32. Kheirkhah, M., Abassinia, K., Jahdi, F., Hosseini, F. and Hassani, M., 2013. The effect of perforan on the mood symptoms of premenstrual syndrome. *Nursing And Midwifery Journal*, 11(3), pp.0-0.
33. Khayat, S., Fanaei, H., Kheirkhah, M., Moghadam, Z.B., Kasaiean, A. and Javadimehr, M., 2015. Curcumin attenuates severity of premenstrual syndrome symptoms: A randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial. *Complementary therapies in medicine*, 23(3), pp.318-324. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ctim.2015.04.001> PMID:26051565
34. Kianbakht, S. and A. Ghazavi (2011). "Immunomodulatory effects of saffron: a randomized double-blind placebo-controlled clinical trial." *Phytotherapy Research* 25(12): 1801-1805. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ptr.3484> PMID:21480412
35. Kiani Asiabar, A., M. Heidari, S. Mohammadi Tabar and S. Faghizadeh (2009). "Prevalence, signs, symptoms and predisposing factors of premenstrual syndromes in employed women." *Daneshvar Medicine: Basic and Clinical Research Journal* 16(2): 45-54.
36. Leone S, Recinella L, Chiavaroli A, Orlando G, Ferrante C, Leporini L, Brunetti L, Menghini L. Phytotherapeutic use of the *Crocus sativus* L. (Saffron) and its potential applications: A brief overview. *Phytotherapy Research*. 2018 Dec; 32(12):2364-75. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ptr.6181> PMID:30136324
37. Lopresti AL, Drummond PD, Inarejos-García AM, Prodanov M. Affron, a standardised extract from saffron (*Crocus sativus* L.) for the treatment of youth anxiety and depressive symptoms: a randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled study. *Journal of affective disorders*. 2018 May 1; 232:349-57. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.02.070> PMID:29510352
38. Lopresti AL, Drummond PD. Saffron (*Crocus sativus*) for depression: a systematic review of clinical studies and examination of underlying antidepressant mechanisms of action. *Human Psychopharmacology: Clinical and Experimental*. 2014 Nov; 29(6):517-27. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hup.2434> PMID:25384672
39. Maleki-Saghooni, N., K. Mirzaei, H. Hosseinzadeh, R. Sadeghi and M. Irani (2018). "A systematic review and meta-analysis of clinical trials on saffron (*Crocus sativus*) effectiveness and safety on erectile dysfunction and semen parameters." *Avicenna journal of phytomedicine* 8(3): 198.
40. Maleki-Saghooni, N., Karimi, F.Z., Moghadam, Z.B. and Najmabadi, K.M., 2018. The effectiveness and safety of Iranian herbal medicines for treatment of premenstrual syndrome: A systematic review. *Avicenna journal of phytomedicine*, 8(2), p.96.
41. Ma L, Lin S, Chen R, Zhang Y, Chen F, Wang X. Evaluating therapeutic effect in symptoms of moderate-to-severe premenstrual syndrome with *Vitex agnus castus* (BNO 1095) in Chinese women. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*. 2010 Apr; 50(2):189-93. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1479-828X.2010.01137.x> PMID:20522079
42. Melnyk, J.P., Wang, S. and Marcone, M.F., 2010. Chemical and biological properties of the world's most expensive spice: Saffron. *Food research international*, 43(8), pp.1981-1989. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foodres.2010.07.033>
43. Mirghafourvand, M., Charandabi, S.M.A., Javadzadeh, Y. and Ahmadpour, P., 2015. Comparing the effects of vitexagnus and flaxseed on premenstrual symptoms: A randomized controlled trial. *HAYAT*, 21(1), pp.68-78.
44. Moher, D., A. Liberati, J. Tetzlaff, D. G. Altman and G. PRISMA (2014). "Ítems de referencia para publicar revisiones sistemáticas y metaanálisis: la Declaración PRISMA." *Revista Española de Nutrición Humana y Dietética* 18(3): 172-181. <https://doi.org/10.14306/renhyd.18.3.114>
45. Moghadam BH, Bagheri R, Roozbeh B, Ashtary-Larky D, Gaeini AA, Dutheil F, Wong A. Impact of saffron (*Crocus Sativus* Linn) supplementation and resistance training on markers implicated in depression and happiness levels in untrained young males. *Physiology & Behavior*. 2021 May 1; 233:113352. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.physbeh.2021.113352> PMID:33556410
46. Moshiri M, Vahabzadeh M, Hosseinzadeh H. Clinical applications of saffron (*Crocus sativus*) and its constituents: a review. *Drug research*. 2015; 65(6):287-95. <https://doi.org/10.1055/s-0034-1375681> PMID:24848002
47. Nemat-Shahi, M., A. Asadi, M. Nemat-Shahi, D. Soroosh, S. Mozari, H. Bahrami-Taghanaki and M. Mehrpour (2020). "Comparison of Saffron versus Fluoxetine in Treatment of Women with Premenstrual Syndrome: A Randomized Clinical Trial Study." *Indian Journal of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology* 14(2).
48. Noorbala, A., S. Akhondzadeh, N. Tahmacebi-Pour and A. Jamshidi (2005). "Hydro-alcoholic extract of *Crocus sativus* L. versus fluoxetine in the treatment of mild to moderate depression: a double-blind, randomized pilot trial." *Journal of ethnopharmacology* 97(2): 281-284. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jep.2004.11.004> PMID:1570776

49. Pakgohar, M., Ahmadi, M., Mehran, A. and Akhondzadeh, S., 2005. Effect of Hypericum perforatum L. for treatment of premenstrual syndrome. *Journal of Medicinal Plants*, 4(15), pp.33-42.
50. Rad M, Sabzevary MT, Dehnavi ZM. Factors associated with premenstrual syndrome in female high school students. *Journal of education and health promotion*. 2018;7.https://doi.org/10.4103/jehp.jehp_126_17 PMID:29922693 PMCID:PMC5963206
51. Rajabi, F., M. Rahimi, M. R. Sharbafchizadeh and M. J. Tarrahi (2020). "Saffron for the management of premenstrual dysphoric disorder: A randomized controlled trial." *Advanced Biomedical Research* 9.https://doi.org/10.4103/abr.abr_49_20 PMID:33457343 PMCID:PMC7792881
52. Rapkin AJ, Winer SA. Premenstrual syndrome and premenstrual dysphoric disorder: quality of life and burden of illness. *Expert Review of Pharmacoeconomics & Outcomes Research*. 2009 Apr 1;9(2):157-70.<https://doi.org/10.1586/erp.09.14> PMID:19402804
53. Ruoff, G. and Lema, M., 2003. Strategies in pain management: new and potential indications for COX-2 specific inhibitors. *Journal of pain and symptom management*, 25(2), pp.21-31.[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0885-3924\(02\)00628-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0885-3924(02)00628-0) PMID:12604154
54. Saki, M., S. Akbari, M. Saki, M. J. Tarrahi, M. Gholami and S. Pirdadeh (2015). "The effect of primrose oil on the premenstrual syndrome among the female students in Lorestan University of Medical Sciences: A triple blind study." *Journal of Nursing and Midwifery Sciences* 2(1): 20-26.<https://doi.org/10.4103/2345-5756.231415>
55. Sepehrirad M, e. a. (2016). "The role of complementary medicine in control of premenstrual syndrome evidence based (Regular Review Study)." *IGOG* 19(24): 11-22.
56. Sharifi, F., Simbar, M., Mojab, F. and Alavi Majd, H., 2014. Comparison of the effects of Matricaria chamomila (Chamomile) extract and mefenamic acid on the intensity of mastalgia associated with premenstrual syndrome. *Women's Health Bulletin*, 1(2), pp.1-5.<https://doi.org/10.17795/whb-20042>
57. Srivastava, R., H. Ahmed and R. Dixit (2010). "Crocus sativus L.: a comprehensive review." *Pharmacognosy reviews* 4(8): 200.<https://doi.org/10.4103/0973-7847.70919> PMID:22228962 PMCID:PMC3249922
58. Taavoni, S., F. Barkhordari, A. Goushegir and H. Haghani (2014). "Effect of Royal Jelly on premenstrual syndrome among Iranian medical sciences students: A randomized, triple-blind, placebo-controlled study." *Complementary therapies in medicine* 22(4): 601-606.<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ctim.2014.05.004> PMID:25146061
59. Taghizadeh Z, Shirmohammadi M, Feizi A, Arbabi M. The effect of cognitive behavioural psycho-education on premenstrual syndrome and related symptoms. *Journal of psychiatric and mental health nursing*. 2013 Oct; 20(8):705-13.<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2850.2012.01965.x> PMID:22957993
60. Taylor, H. S., L. Pal and E. Seli (2020). Speroff's clinical gynecologic endocrinology and infertility.
61. Wolman, I. (2014). Berek and Novak's Gynecology 15th Edition: Lippincott Williams and Wilkins, 2012, 1560 pp, Hardcover, Rs. 2659 on www.flipkart.com, ISBN-139788184736106, ISBN-10818473610X, Springer.<https://doi.org/10.1007/s13224-014-0538-z> PMCID:PMC3984644
62. Verkaik S, Kamperman AM, van Westrhenen R, Schulte PF. The treatment of premenstrual syndrome with preparations of Vitex agnus castus: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *American journal of obstetrics and gynecology*. 2017 Aug 1; 217(2):150-66.<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2017.02.028> PMID:28237870
63. Whelan AM, Jurgens TM, Naylor H. Herbs, vitamins and minerals in the treatment of premenstrual syndrome: a systematic review. *Journal of Population Therapeutics and Clinical Pharmacology*. 2009; 16(3).