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Kiera Austin, 28, Professional netballer championing women's health, PMS & period wellbeing & performance on & off court, MELBOURNE

GRAB A

How do PMS & period pain impact your netball performance?

PMS and period pain can definitely impact my netball performance. I am constantly thinking about where I am in my cycle, whether or not I'm going to feel a bit more fatigued, potentially a bit snappier at my teammates, and have a lower concentration. So you're always thinking ahead to make sure that you're on top of your cycle and when you might be experiencing those symptoms as well.

GRAB B

What difference would it make if women & girls had more support in managing these symptoms?

I think if young girls and women in general had more support with their PMS and period pain, they would reduce the stigma around the conversations they would feel more supported, ability to speak up, and seek resources if they need to as well.

GRAB C

How important is it for women & girls to have effective, accessible treatment options for PMS & period pain?

It is really important for women to have effective and accessible treatment options. Every woman is different, so what works for one, might not work for another, but also just to help them feel supported and know that there is care out there for them as well.

GRAB D

What are your views on natural, non-hormonal options to relieve symptoms of PMS & period pain?

My views on having natural non-hormonal options for managing PMS and period pain is a really positive one. I think it's great that there's options out there as every woman is different. But also for athletes, sometimes taking hormonal contraception can impact your performance and sometimes you just want a break from, having hormonal sort of medication. So I think it can be a really positive choice.

GRAB E

How important is it to see clinical trial results published for Khapregesic® – a natural non-hormonal option for PMS & period pain?

I think it's really encouraging to see the clinical trial for Khapregesic®. It is a non-hormonal, natural option for women having a science background myself, having that research is great for women to feel empowered and really confident in their choices.

Dr Talat Uppal, Gynaecologist, Founder & Director of Women's Health Road, SYDNEY

GRAB A

What is period pain, & what is its prevalence? Grab 2

Period pain is quite common. It can affect up to 85% of women, and for some women it can really significantly affect their quality of life. It is found pain that is found in the lower abdomen and pelvis. For some, it will radiate down the legs or into the back, and it is often relieved at the end of the period.

GRAB B

What barriers do Australian women living with period symptoms face?

There is some stigma and shame, unfortunately, still connected with menstruation. There can be issues around access or cost to services, and also women can normalise symptoms that are actually medical problems. And so, it's really important to support menstrual literacy, health awareness in this space so that menstruation related problems are addressed early and they don't lead to delayed care.

GRAB C

How is menstrual health more than just a 'women's issue'?

This is a public health issue. Two billion women menstruate every month, and there are significant losses of quality of life. For example, if you're not able to get to school, not get to swimming, not able to attend social events with your family, or work doubled up in pain and/or bleeding. These can all cause significant quality-of-life loss.

GRAB D

Why is there a growing interest in natural alternatives for PMS & period pain?

There is a growing interest in natural alternatives for period pain and PMS. The reason for this can be multiple. They may have tried traditional medication and had some, experienced some side-effects. They may be wanting what they perceive as gentler on the body. And also, there is a growing social media influence.

GRAB E

Why are clinical trials, like the recent Australian study involving Khapregesic® published in the International Journal of Women's Health, important for improving our understanding of menstrual health?

It's great to see a recent Australian study on Khapregesic® in the International Journal of Women's Health, which helps improve our menstrual understanding.

Clinical trials are important because this is typically an under-researched space.

GRAB F

What does the recent Australian study published in the International Journal of Women's Health reveal about Khapregesic®?

There has been a recent Australian study published in the International Journal of Women's Health looking at Khapregesic® use in a randomised, double-blinded, placebo-controlled trial. In the women that used Khapregesic®, they had a reduction in their daily reported menstrual pain rating, as well as a reduction in use for further analgesia. They also reported increased psychological scores, and this was well-tolerated. More research is, however, needed into plant-based products in menstrual care.

Caroline Diamantis, Leading community pharmacist & pharmacy owner specialising in women's health, SYDNEY

GRAB A

What is premenstrual syndrome or PMS?

So PMS, also known as premenstrual syndrome, is a combination of physical and emotional symptoms that afflict a woman sometime in the few days before her period. So they can include things that are like mental distress or anxiety, fatigue, sometimes physical pain as well. And they are quite concerning. These affect up to 50 per cent of the women that are experiencing periods.

GRAB B

Why do many women just “put up with” their period symptoms?

So many women, in fact 1 in 3, simply put up with their symptoms. A lot of the time they don't realise that help is available to them. And so they believe that it's their lot in life.

GRAB C

What aspects of everyday life & wellbeing can PMS & period pain impact?

Sadly, women miss work or women miss school. And this has serious impact on the psychological well-being of women. And a further overflow in our society, as they feel that they're not pulling their weight or contributing in the way they would like to.

GRAB D

What is Khaya senegalensis?

Khaya senegalensis is the active ingredient in the Hey Sister! Khapregesic® product range.

GRAB E

How is Khapregesic® traditionally used in Western herbal medicine?

Khapregesic is traditionally used in Western herbal medicine to reduce the common symptoms of PMS or period pain, including symptoms such as menstrual pain or cramps, stomach bloating, spasm, heavy bleeding, or mood swings associated with PMS.

GRAB F

What did the new Australian study reveal about Khapregesic®?

The new Australian study investigated Khapregesic®, Khaya senegalensis and found really promising results. Women found greater reduction in the daily menstrual pain ratings and overall menstrual distress compared to the people that were on the placebo.

It was well-tolerated, with no significant side- effects, improvements in emotional well-being, and reduced requirement for additional pain relief.

**Rick Ferdinands, Head of Research, CEO & Co-founder, Bioactive Natural Health,
PERTH**

GRAB A

When & what compelled you to pursue your idea to innovation?

Well, this innovation came about over 10 years ago. So I came across *Khaya senegalensis* as a tree variety. And with my pharmaceutical background, I researched the traditional medicine evidence and found that it had a very rich history, over 1,000 years of traditional medicine usage. And so, I went about developing a way to uncover the active compounds within this *Khaya senegalensis* tree.

GRAB B

Why was women's menstrual health so important to you?

So my mother, my sisters, my wife, my daughters, all the way through my life, I've been surrounded by women and chronic pain has been a natural part of that, but it's unnatural that it happened. So, this story is very personal for me.

GRAB C

Why is it important for natural medicines to be validated by scientific evidence?

So natural medicines need to be validated by scientific evidence. It gives practitioners and health professionals peace of mind. So, a randomised, double blind, placebo-controlled trial has given real evidence and validates Khapregesic® to the medical profession, and it gives peace of mind to consumers as well.

GRAB D

What are the major findings from the newly published Khapregesic® research?

The latest findings of the Khapregesic® research is that, compared to the placebo, there was greater reduction in daily menstrual pain rating. But not only that, improvements in emotional well-being were experienced. Plus, the study provided evidence supporting the safety and effectiveness of Khapregesic® on menstrual pain and PMS symptoms in women. It was also well-tolerated, with no significant side effects.

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