MENOPAUSE

- Menopause means the end of monthly periods.
- You may experience a range of symptoms.
- A healthy lifestyle can help to manage menopause symptoms.
- Continue to have regular sexual checks and cervical screening tests.

What is menopause?

Menopause, also known as 'the change of life', is the end of menstruation (having periods) in a woman's life. It is a natural occurrence at the end of the reproductive years, just as the first period during puberty was the start.

You will know that menopause has taken place if you have not had any menstrual bleeding for 12 months. Most women reach menopause between the ages of 45 and 55, the average being around 51. Menopause before the age of 40 is called 'premature menopause' and before the age of 45 it is called 'early menopause'.

Hormone levels fluctuate leading to menopause

As you approach menopause, the production of 'female' hormones (oestrogen and progesterone) by the ovaries starts to slow down. Hormone levels tend to fluctuate, and you may notice changes in your menstrual cycle such as:

- period cycles may become longer, shorter or totally irregular
- bleeding may become lighter
- bleeding may become unpredictable and heavy (get advice from your doctor).

Eventually, your hormone levels will fall to a point where your ovaries stop releasing eggs, your periods stop and menopause is reached.

Although fertility after the age of 45 is low, you still need to use contraception to prevent pregnancy. We recommended to continue contraception until you have had one year without a natural period if you're over 50 years old, or two years without a natural period if you're under 50.

Phases of Menopause

PERI MENOPAUSE
Can last
6 YEARS
or more

MENO PAUSE
12
STRAIGHT
MONTHS

POST MENOPAUSE
SYMPTOMS
CONTINUE

MENOPAUSE

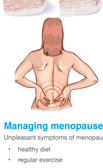
Some of the symptoms women may have include:

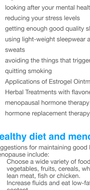
- hot flushes
- night sweats
- aches and pains
- crawling or itching sensations under the skin
- forgetfulness
- headaches
- irritability
- lack of self-esteem
- reduced sex drive (libido)
- tiredness
- difficulty sleeping – wakefulness or waking hot and sweaty
- urinary frequency
- vaginal dryness
- discomfort with sexual intercourse.

Long-term health risks with menopause

A decrease in female hormones after menopause may lead to:

- thinning of the bones (osteoporosis) and an increased risk of fractures
- an increase in the risk of heart attack and heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke.





Managing menopause symptoms

Unpleasant symptoms of menopause can often be reduced by:

- healthy diet
- regular exercise
- looking after your mental health
- reducing your stress levels
- getting enough good quality sleep
- using light-weight sleepwear and bedding to help with night sweats
- avoiding the things that trigger your hot flushes
- quitting smoking
- Applications of Estrogel Ointment for Local Effects
- Herbal Treatments with flavones
- menopausal hormone therapy (MHT), previously known as hormone replacement therapy (HRT).

Healthy diet and menopause

Suggestions for maintaining good health through diet at the time of menopause include:

- Choose a wide variety of foods, including plenty of vegetables, fruits, cereals, whole grains and small portions of lean meat, fish or chicken.
- Increase fluids and eat low-fat dairy foods with high calcium content.
- Decrease caffeine and limit alcohol (aim for one to two standard glasses or less per day, and two alcohol-free days each week).

Exercise and menopause

Regular exercise is important. At least 30 to 45 minutes on most days of the week will help to:

- maintain your heart health and improve your general health
- keep your bones healthy and prevent bone density loss through osteoporosis – particularly weight-bearing and strength-training activities
- maintain good balance and reduce the risk of injury from falls
- provide a feeling of relaxation and wellbeing
- possibly improve hot flushes.

Mood and menopause

Some women experience mood changes such as mild depression, anxiety and irritability with menopause. These symptoms are often related to physical changes such as hot flushes, night sweats and poor sleeping.

Changes in mood may also arise due to how you are feeling about reaching this stage of your life – particularly if you are experiencing early menopause.

Mood changes can also be related to stressors that women are often dealing with around the time that they experience menopause, such as:

- physical signs of ageing
- changes to libido
- health issues
- changes to the family unit (such as children leaving home, or divorce)
- caring for ageing parents
- career changes
- financial worries.

Visit your doctor or a psychologist if you are experiencing significant or persistent changes in mood that last longer than two weeks, as you could be experiencing depression.

The good news is, depression is treatable. The sooner a person with depression seeks support, the sooner they can recover.

Benefits of HRT SHOULD far outweigh the risks for healthy women around the time of menopause

Menopausal hormone therapy (MHT)

Menopausal hormone therapy (MHT) – previously known as hormone replacement therapy (HRT), and also known as hormone therapy (HT) – effectively reduces many of the unpleasant effects of menopause symptoms. MHT may be appropriate for use in women with moderate to severe menopausal symptoms.

For women who have undergone a premature menopause, some form of hormone therapy is recommended until the age of 50 years, unless there is a health reason for not using hormone therapy.

MENOPAUSE
FLASHES
HOT
PERIODS
ESTROGEN
IRREGULAR
NIGHT
OSTEOPOROSIS
MOOD SWINGS
CRAMPS
CANCER
Menopausepause
Night Sweats
Symptoms
LOSS
Stress
Tired
Hot Flashes
Weight Gain
Mood Swings
Fatigue
Irregular Periods
Hot Flashes
Cramps
Mood Swings
Fatigue
Irregular Periods
Hot Flashes
Weight Gain
Stress