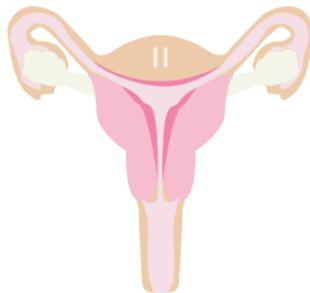




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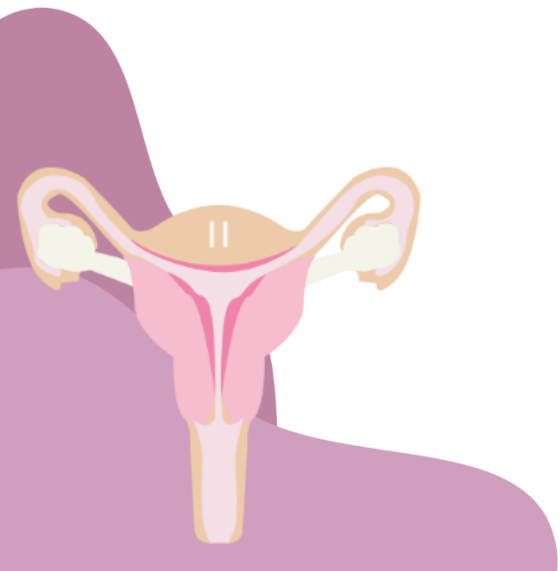
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# Postmenopausal care



## What is menopause?

Menopause is a natural physiological process that happens to women at the end of her reproductive age due to the end of her ovarian activity. Often happens to woman when they reach the age of 45-55 years.



## What are the symptoms of perimenopause?

It happens in the few years before menopause between 40 and 50 years of age. It happens due to decrease in the production of the female hormone estrogen. It is characterized by some of the following symptoms:

- Irregular cycles
- Hot flashes and Sleep disturbances
- Mood swings
- Problems in the vagina and bladder
- Infertility



## What are the symptoms of perimenopause?

- Sexual activity disturbances
- Cholesterol level changes
- Bones weakness:

Decreased estrogen levels disturbs the balance between bone substance production and breakdown. This needs to an increased rate of bone substance breakdown compared to bone production, which finally leads to weak bones that become easily fractured.



## What are the symptoms of perimenopause?

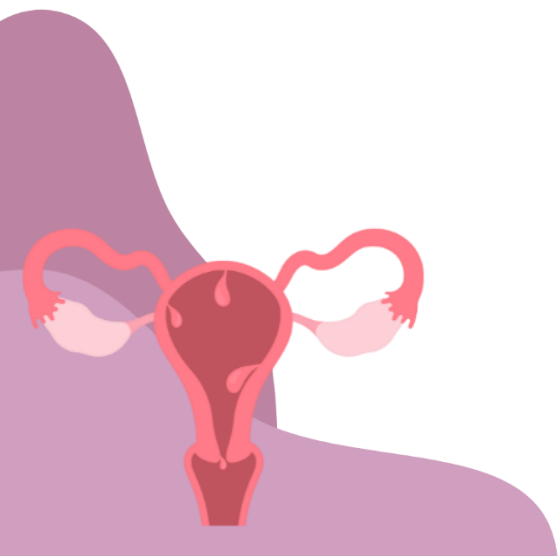
The hormonal changes associated with menopause can affect women's health physically, psychologically, and socially. These symptoms include:

- Hot flashes and sweating at night, in which the woman feels bouts of heat associated with feeling of hot this in the face, neck, and chest. It is associated with skin redness and sweating with palpitations and a feeling of discomfort which can last for minutes.



## What are the symptoms of perimenopause?

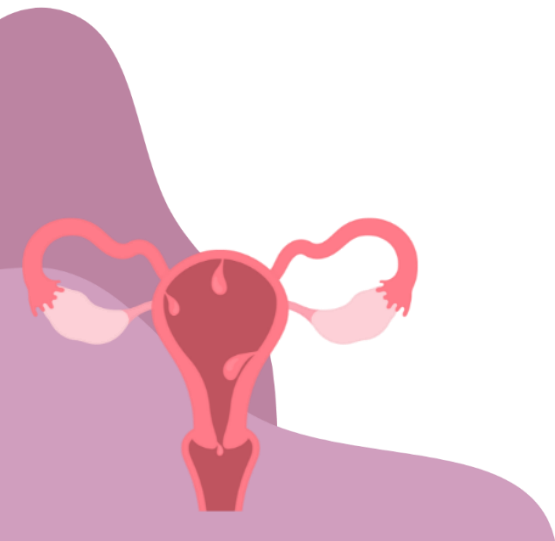
- Changes in the regularity of the monthly cycles along with changes in the blood flow and usually ends up in the cessation of the cycles.
- Difficulties in sleep and insomnia.
- Dryness in the vaginal with pain during intercourse and urinary incontinence.
- Changes in the mood and/or depression and/or anxiety.



# What are the hormonal changes and causes of menopause?

Most women reach menopause when the monthly cycles stop due to:

- Cessation of follicular growth in the ovary
- The menstrual cycle varies between different women during their reproductive age in terms of regularity, amount, and length. However, the age at which menopause takes a place is between 45 and 55 years in women all over the world.



# What are the hormonal changes and causes of menopause?

- The diagnosis of menopause is established **after the passage of 12 consecutive months** without monthly cycles without any physiological or pathological causes and without medical intervention.
- Menopause can happen due to surgical operations involving removal of the ovaries or treatments that involve loss of ovarian function like **(chemotherapy and radiotherapy)**.





# What are the methods of diagnosing menopause?

Laboratory tests are not usually necessary for the diagnosis of menopause, however the Dr. might recommend doing some analyses to check the following 3 hormones:

## 1. Follicular stimulating hormone

1. and (Estradiol):

- Because the levels of follicular stimulating hormone increase and the levels of estrogen decrease during menopause.



## What are the methods of diagnosing menopause?

### 2. Thyroid-stimulating hormone:

- Because decreased thyroid function might lead to symptoms resembling menopause.

## What is the treatment for menopause?

Menopause does not need any medical treatment. The treatment options concentrate on decreasing the symptoms and protecting the woman from the long-term consequences of menopause, and **this can include:**



# What is the treatment for menopause?

- Hormonal treatment:

Treatment with **estrogen hormone** is the most effective treatment for hot flushes caused by menopause

- Vaginal estrogen for vaginal dryness
- Low-dose antidepressants
- Medications for osteoporosis prevention or treatment according to individual patient needs
- Some doctors might prescribed medications for the treatment of osteoporosis and prevention of accidental fractures.



## What is the treatment for menopause?

- These medications include **calcium**, **vitamin D**, and **nutritional supplements** to help strengthen the bones.

## What are the complications of menopause and how to prevent them?

After reaching the age of menopause and the possibility of being affected by certain medical conditions increases.

For example:

### 1. Cardiovascular diseases:

- Due to decreased estrogen delivered.



# What are the complications of menopause and how to prevent them?

## 2. Osteoporosis:

- This condition leads to the weakness of the bones and increase the risk of fracture.

## 3. Urinary incontinence:

- The patient might encounter increased frequent and sudden need for urination. This is a due to the loss of elasticity in the vaginal and urethral tissues.



# What are the complications of menopause and how to prevent them?

## 4. Sexual dysfunction:

- The decrease in vaginal secretions, dryness and loss of elasticity can lead to discomfort in the sexual process and vaginal spotting after intercourse.

## 5. Overweight:

- Some women might experience increase in their weight after menopause due to decreased metabolism.



# What are the complications of menopause and how to prevent them?

Following a normal healthy lifestyle helps women to achieve a better health and well-being after menopause through the following:

## 1. Balanced food intake:

- Following a balanced diet helps the woman achieve good health before, during and after menopause. The diet should contain calcium and vitamin D to keep the bones strong and healthy.

## 2. Physical exercise:

- Regular physical exercises like regular walking improves the health in general and improves bone health in particular.



# What are the complications of menopause and how to prevent them?

## 3. Regular medical follow-up:

- Visiting the doctor regularly helps to detect medical problems early and aids in early intervention. One visit a year to the doctor is satisfactory. Regular check-ups include dental examination, bone density measurements (DEXA) and others





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Sources and references:

All images used are from [canva.com](https://www.canva.com)

Review and audit:

The content of this booklet has been reviewed by consultant obstetricians and gynecologists at King Fahd University Hospital.

# Obstetrics and Gynecology Department

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Health Awareness Unit

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