

Understanding Menopause

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Introductions

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**#Make
Menopause
Matter**



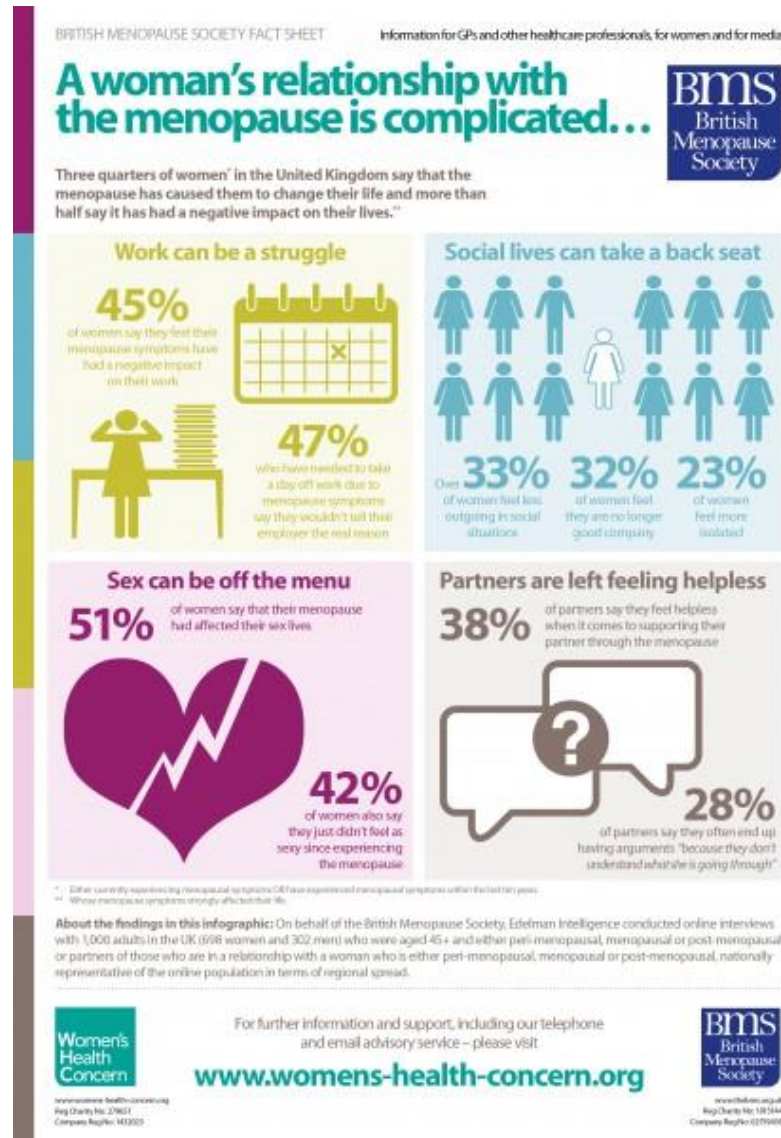
Why Menopause Matters

- All women will experience menopause
- 1 in 4 will experience debilitation symptoms
- Symptoms can impact all aspects of life.
- There are around 4.4 million women aged 50 and over in work, a 72% rise since 1994.
- The Office for National Statistics puts UK life expectancy at 83.1 years for women.

Why Menopause Matters

- In a recent BBC survey 48% of women say the menopause had a negative impact on their mental health.
- 41% said it had affected their work
- 25% said it made them want to stay at home
- Approximately 1 in 4 women consider leaving the workplace.

Why Menopause Matters



What is Menopause

- **Well it can be confusing.....**
- **Menopause**
- A natural stage in every woman's life that occurs when the ovaries run out of or stop producing eggs.
- Hormone levels fluctuate and eventually fall and women stop having periods.

Peri Menopause

- **Peri menopause**
- Peri menopause is described as the time in a woman's life when she is experiencing menopausal symptoms but still having periods. It can be difficult for any woman to know when peri menopause started for her until she is able to look back.

Post Menopause

Post menopause

- Once a woman has experienced twelve consecutive months without periods she is postmenopausal for the rest of her life.

When does it happen

- The average age of menopause is 51
- It usually happens between 45-55 years of age
- It can occur later
- Or earlier...

Why might it happen earlier

- Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI)
- In Britain 110,000 women between the ages of 12 and 40 are affected
- Hysterectomy/Oophorectomy
- Certain types of chemotherapy
- Pelvic Radiotherapy
- Auto-immune diseases
- Genetic Causes

Why might it happen earlier

- Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI)
- Current figures indicate that this affects
 - 1 in every 100 women under the age of 40
 - 1 in 1,000 women under 30
 - 1 in 10,000 under 20
- In Britain 110,000 women between the ages of 12 and 40 are affected

PMDD

- Affects approximately 5-10% of women
- Is NOT a hormone imbalance
- Commonly misdiagnosed as Bipolar Disorder.
- Symptoms begin during the week or two before menstruation and stop within a few days of periods starting.
- A diagnosis of PMDD requires the presence of at least five of these symptoms.

PMDD

- Symptoms of PMDD
 - Feelings of sadness or despair or even thoughts of suicide
 - Feelings of tension or anxiety
 - Panic attacks, mood swings, or frequent crying
 - Lasting irritability or anger that affects other people
 - Lack of interest in daily activities and relationships
 - Trouble thinking or focusing
 - Tiredness or low-energy
 - Food cravings or binge eating
 - Trouble sleeping
 - Feeling out of control
- Physical symptoms, such as bloating, breast tenderness, headaches and joint or muscle pain

Menopause and Hormones

- **Oestrogen**
- Regulates the menstrual cycle
- Nourishes the tissues of the body keeping them elastic, acts as a lubricant . This affects the reproductive tract, the urinary tract, the heart and blood vessels, breasts, skin, mucous membranes and pelvic muscles.
- Keeps bones strong, Helps regulate cholesterol levels. Keeps the brain, liver and heart healthy, controls our internal thermostat.

Understanding Oestrogen

Effects of Estrogen

Brain

Estrogen helps to maintain body temperature.

Estrogen may delay memory loss.

Estrogen helps to regulate parts of the brain that prepare the body for sexual and reproductive development.

Heart & Liver

Estrogen helps to regulate the liver's production of cholesterol, thus decreasing the build-up of plaque in the coronary arteries.

Ovary

Estrogen stimulates the maturation of the ovaries.

Estrogen stimulates the start of a woman's menstrual cycle – an indication that a girl's reproductive system has matured.

Vagina

Estrogen stimulates the maturation of the vagina.

Estrogen helps maintain a lubricated and thick vaginal lining.

Breast

Estrogen stimulates the development of the breasts at puberty and prepares the glands for future milk production.

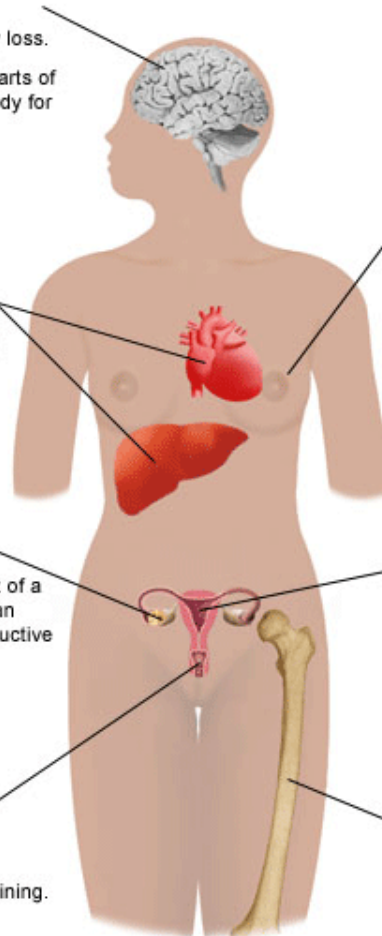
Uterus

Estrogen stimulates the maturation of the uterus.

Estrogen helps to prepare the uterus to nourish a developing fetus.

Bone

Estrogen helps to preserve bone density.



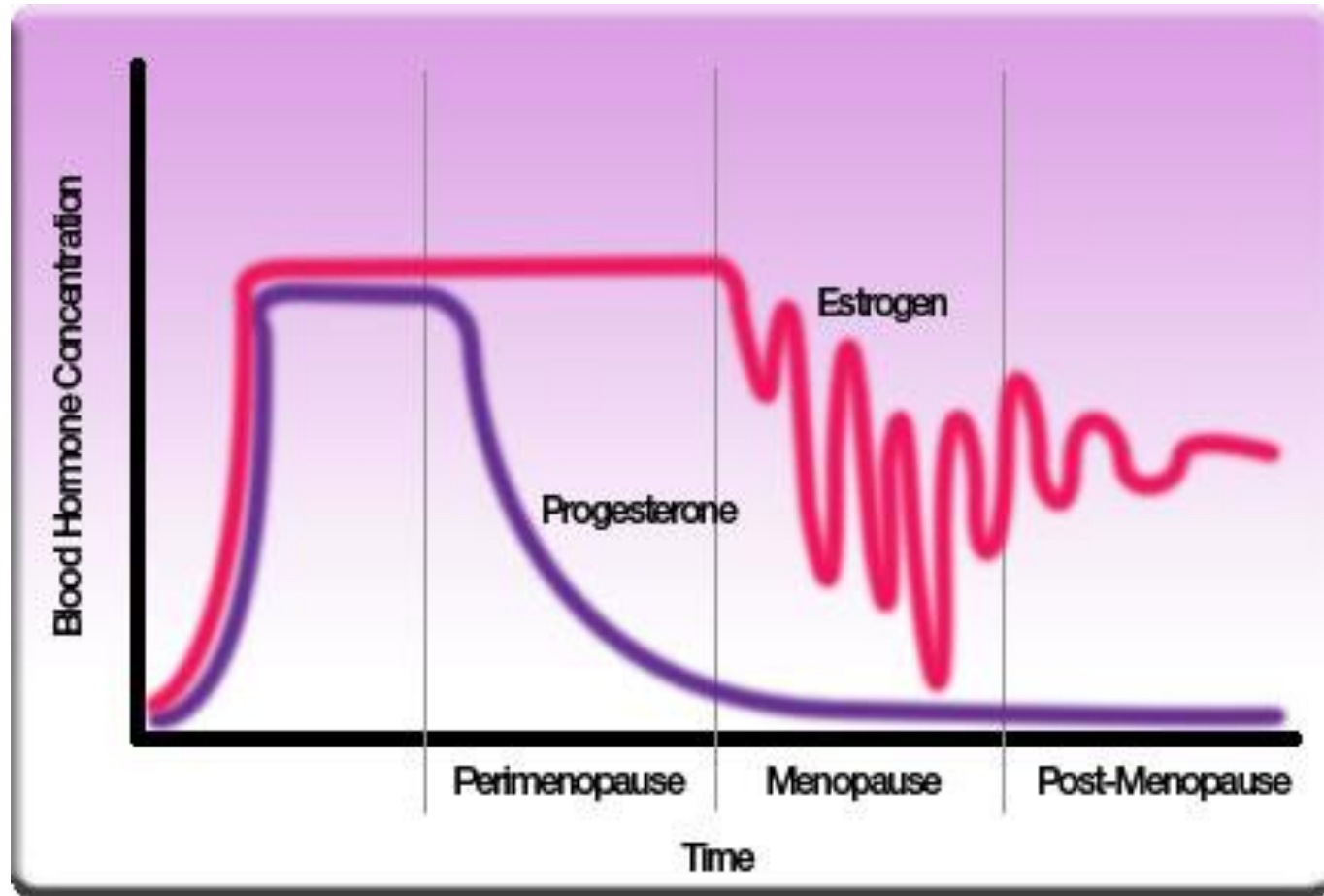
Menopause and Hormones

- **Progesterone**
- As well as helping to sustain pregnancy it also regulates the monthly menstrual cycle.
- Acts as one of the body's main calmers, promotes good sleep, increases pain threshold, helps normalise blood sugar levels.

Menopause and Hormones

- **Testosterone**
- Helps to keep you motivated and optimistic, helps you feel more confident.
- Promotes libido, supports bone density, keeps skin supple, turns fat into muscle, helps with cognitive function.

Menopause and Hormones



Menopause Symptoms

A List of Menopause Symptoms

- Hot Flashes *
- Night Sweats *
- Irregular Periods *
- Loss of Libido *
- Vaginal Dryness *
- Mood Swings

- Fatigue
- Hair Loss or Thinning
- Sleep Disorders
- Difficulty Concentrating
- Disturbing Memory Lapses
- Dizziness
- Weight Gain

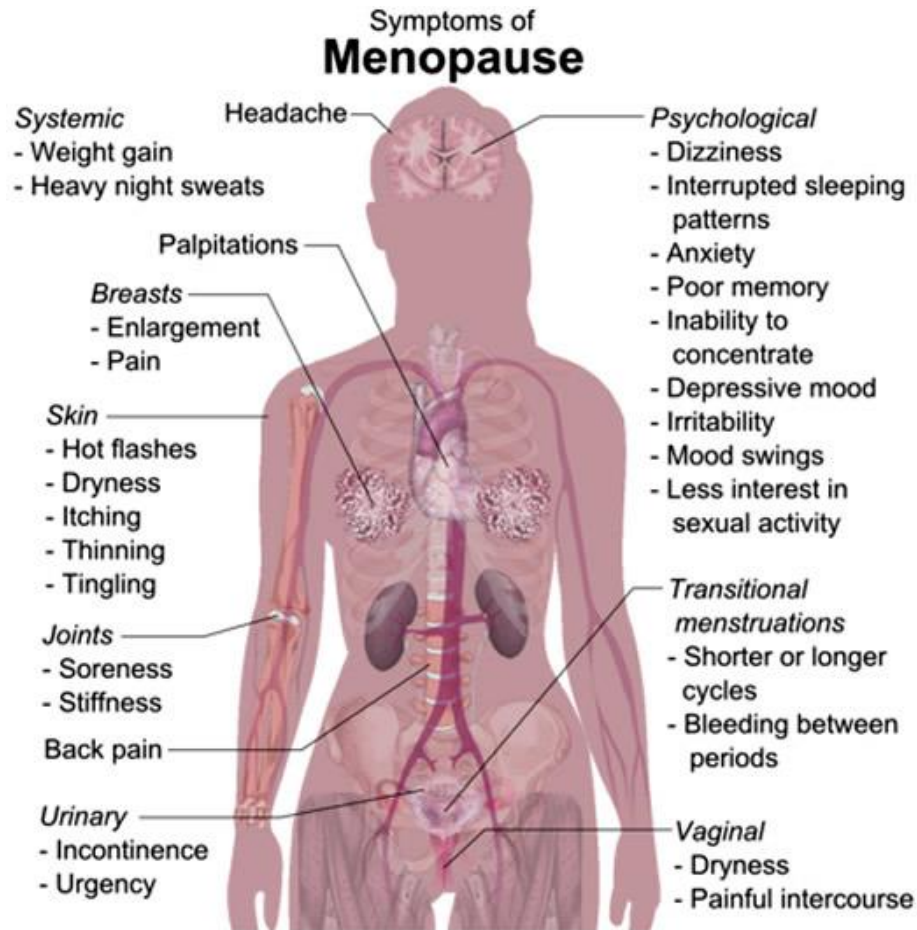
- Incontinence
- Bloating
- Increase in Allergies
- Changes in Fingernails (weakening)
- Changes in Body Odor
- Irregular Heartbeat
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Feelings of Dread
- Breast Pain
- Headaches

- Aching Joints and Muscle Problems
- Burning Tongue
- Electric Shock Sensation
- Digestive Problems
- Gum Problems
- Increased Tension in Muscles
- Itchy, Crawly Skin
- Tingling Extremities
- Osteoporosis (After Several Years)

 * most common symptoms



Symptoms



Hormones and the Brain



Menopause and the brain

- So what happens to the female brain
- Oestrogen fluctuates and depletes
- Neuro chemicals become disturbed
- Sleep and mood can suffer

Brain Fog



What women say

- I feel like I'm going mad
- I feel so alone/sad/angry/lost
- I don't know who I am anymore
- I have lost my joy
- Its such a relief to speak to somebody who understands

Menopause in the media



Menopause in the media

“Then this depression hit me - and I don’t use the word depression lightly. This was a blackness where I would wake up - nothing else in my life was going wrong, I’m a very lucky woman, no money worries or anything like that - and I would wake up and think ‘I don’t see the point in carrying on. I just don’t see the point in life,’” Carol Vorderman

Challenges

- Lack of personal/professional knowledge
- Unable to access help
- Increased anxiety
- Reduced confidence
- Major health concerns
- Concerns over management options
- Medicine shortages

Sorting the facts from the fiction



NICE Guidelines

NICE

National Institute for
Health and Care Excellence

Background Stress



Challenges

- Ageing/dependent parents
- Loss of partner
- Children
- Empty nest
- Work stress/redundancy/finances
- Social isolation
- Social stereotypes
- Loss of youth/fertility in youth-loving culture

Menopause and ageing



Menopause and ageing



Relationships

- Partners
- Families
- Friends
- Colleagues

Menopause and work

- **CIPD Survey says**
- 59% say it has a negative impact on work
- 65% said more difficult to concentrate
- 30% said they had taken sick leave
- Women chose not to disclose
- Privacy (45%)
- Embarrassment (34%)
- Unsupportive Manager 32%

How can we help?

- Provide a safe non judgemental space
- Somebody to talk to
- Offer tools, skills, strategies
- Recognising the symptoms
- Potential for signposting
- Support through transition

A time of transformation

"SO MANY WOMEN I'VE TALKED
TO SEE MENOPAUSE AS AN
ENDING. I'VE DISCOVERED
THAT THIS IS YOUR MOMENT
TO REINVENT YOURSELF AFTER
YEARS OF FOCUSING ON THE
NEEDS OF EVERYONE ELSE."

—Oprah Winfrey



Get in touch

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- LinkedIn Diane Danzebrink
- Facebook Menopause Support
- YouTube Diane Danzebrink
- Podbean podcast Menopause – the good, the bad and the downright sweaty.

A final thought

***“IF YOU ARE A WOMAN
KNOW A WOMAN
OR LOVE A WOMAN
YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND
MENOPAUSE”***