

IN ASSOCIATION WITH DR DAWN HARPER, MEDIA GP  
SPECIALISING IN WOMENS' AND FAMILY HEALTH



# I'M NOT MAD *I'm menopausal!*

The menopause, sometimes referred to as 'the change of life', marks the end of menstruation. Although it is something all women share, everyone's experience is unique and personal to them. For many, it can be a difficult and uncomfortable time but with the right nutritional and exercise advice, daily-living tips and support services, symptoms can be reduced and managed leaving you free to enjoy life to the full.

# WHAT IS THE MENOPAUSE?

As your supply of eggs diminishes, your oestrogen and progesterone hormone levels will fluctuate and decline. Most of us actually use the term menopause incorrectly: strictly speaking it means the precise end of menstruation – your final period - but common usage of the word refers to a change which can last anything up to 15 years.

## Did you know there are 3 different stages in the process?

The premenopause is the early years - the classic 'Is it hot in here or is it just me?' - period! This is followed by the perimenopause which are the years just before and just after your final period. It's during the perimenopause that you'll experience most of your physical changes and the hot flushes will kick in properly. Finally, the postmenopause refers to the time from your last period forward. Most women will start to experience menopausal symptoms between 47-52, but it is still quite common for younger women to go into 'early menopause'.



## INTERESTING FACT

Oestrogen is the primary female sex hormone, although it is present in both men and women. It is found at highest levels in women of reproductive age and is responsible for regulating your menstrual cycle.



# IT'S GETTING HOT IN HERE!

Menopausal symptoms are sparked by the sudden withdrawal of the hormone oestrogen. Although the full list of menopausal symptoms is long and quite frankly, over-whelming, you must remember that no one woman will actually experience them all. Indeed many go through the process symptom-free. However, classic symptoms include:

- Hot flushes and night sweats
- Memory loss and an inability to concentrate
- Weight gain - especially around the middle
- Insomnia and tiredness
- Mood swings
- Vaginal dryness and a loss of sex drive
- Joint pain

## INTERESTING FACT

Intellectual decline generally begins in our 30s and 40s – we simply don't notice for most of our lives because new experiences and stimulation compensate. By staying open to new ideas, opinions and situations you will keep mentally healthy!

## INTERESTING FACT

Menopausal symptoms in Asian cultures are virtually unknown - in fact there is actually no term for "hot flush" in Japanese - and this has been attributed to the fact that their diets include a high level of isoflavones! These are plant compounds which have a similar chemical structure to oestrogen.



# TREAT THE SYMPTOMS LET'S GET PRACTICAL!

Use the following tricks to control your symptoms:

- Get relief from night sweats by cooling yourself with tepid water. A battery-operated fan and lavender water can also help cool you down in a flash
- Wear cotton underwear and avoid perfumed bath additives
- If you walk into a room and can't remember what you're there for don't leave until you succeed in remembering. Fight forgetfulness!
- If you lose something try writing down the last six things you did before you lost it and where you were at each point

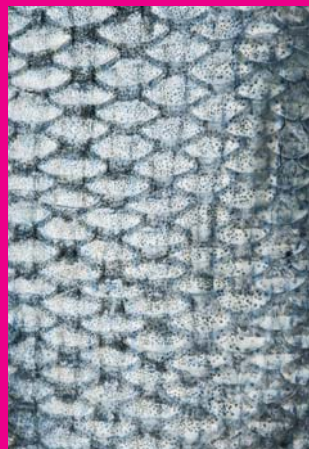


Keep a hot flush diary so you can spot any potential triggers (such as specific food or drink)

## HRT HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

In recent years HRT has been used by many to combat menopausal symptoms. Many doctors originally saw HRT as a 'way for life' but now this has been rethought with a recommended treatment period of 6 - 12 months. Some women do swear by HRT but with recent studies suggesting a link between it and serious conditions, such as breast cancer and heart disease, more are now choosing an alternative approach. Unfortunately, many doctors aren't fully educated in alternative treatments so women can feel left in the dark.





# FOOD and the Menopause

Today, we are much more aware of the link between our diet and our mind, body and sense of well-being. Here are a few easy-to-follow dietary do's and don'ts;



## THE 10 COMMANDMENTS:

- 1** Do limit sugary, salty and spicy food
- 2** Do eat and drink soya-based products and tofu
- 3** Do eat wholegrains
- 4** Do limit (or cut out completely) all caffeinated drinks (tea, coffee, cola)
- 5** Do drink plenty of water (aim for 2 litres a day)
- 6** Do limit alcohol (no more than 1-2 units per day)
- 7** Do up your intake of omega-3 fats by eating oily-fish such as sardines, mackerel or salmon
- 8** Do up your calcium intake by eating low fat dairy products, green leafy vegetables, seeds and nuts
- 9** Do go nuts with nuts! Walnuts, almonds, pistachios are a great source of Vitamin E
- 10** Do supplement your diet with a rich source of isoflavones such as Menovone one-a-day

# HEALTHY SPIRIT – THE POWER OF POSITIVITY!

There is a tendency to think of the menopause as something embarrassing or dreaded, but many cultures see it as the beginning of a new life...just for you! Both mental and physical symptoms can be well controlled, so the change needn't be something scary. The following tips will help you embrace the start of a new life:

- Create and write down your very own positive statement in every area you feel challenged, such as 'I can be content and look forward to the future at this time of my life' or 'I'm calm and relaxed' and repeat them to yourself before you go to bed, when you wake up and whenever you feel you need a bit of support
- Learn to relax and listen to your body: find somewhere peaceful to sit and close your eyes. Become aware of your breathing, make it slow and steady, then visualize each part of your body slowly relax and loosen one part at a time

Get involved  
in a new hobby  
that you  
will enjoy!

## NEW Menovone

### – Improved slow-release Isoflavone formulation

Independent tests have shown that maintaining a healthy diet during and after the menopause is important and that specifically isoflavone consumption may be of benefit at this time of change.

Unfortunately in the UK our diets are often very low in isoflavones, particularly when compared with Asian cultures where menopause symptoms are surprisingly, virtually unknown. You can easily boost your daily isoflavone intake with a nutritional food supplement such as Menovone.

New Menovone is an effective slow-release nutritional food supplement, scientifically developed for women during and after the menopause. Menovone contains 60mg of natural plant isoflavones along with essential vitamins and minerals like folic acid, vitamins D, E and B vitamins to help meet the changing nutritional needs of a woman.

Menovone is ideal for women who are looking for a natural approach to managing the menopause and contains no drugs or HRT.



# HELP IS AT HAND

If you have any concerns or questions about the menopause, help is at hand. The following resources can offer advice and support:

- Support groups and advice forums can be very helpful to answer your questions and provide the opportunity to speak to people in the same situation
- The Menopause Exchange is a menopause information service which produces factsheets and a quarterly newsletter to help women deal with problems they might experience while going through the menopause. Call 020 8420 7245 or email [norma@menopause-exchange.co.uk](mailto:norma@menopause-exchange.co.uk)
- The Natural Menopause Advice Centre (funded by an educational grant from Wassen International ltd) provides advice for sufferers who are looking to try a natural treatment for menopausal symptoms. [www.nmas.org.uk](http://www.nmas.org.uk)

**“As a working woman, hot flushes were not only uncomfortable they were also a hindrance. Since I started taking Menovone I’ve seen a dramatic improvement in all my menopausal symptoms.”**

GABRIELLE GREGORY, BRIGHTON, 50



## EXERCISE LET'S GET PHYSICAL!

At any stage of the menopause, exercise is every woman's secret weapon! Each time you exercise, your body converts androstenedione into oestrogen and just four 30 minute sessions a week will keep your oestrogen topped up! Your brain will thank you as exercise boosts oxygen supply which will help your mental agility, and also stimulates the release of 'feel-good' chemicals called endorphins.

# BEING A FRIEND



Although it is something all women share, everyone's experience of the menopause is different, which can leave women feeling very alone and in need of support. If you've spotted some of the classic symptoms in a friend or family member, or know someone that is going through the menopause and want to lend a helping hand, you may find the following tips useful:



- Lend an ear
- Offer practical advice and diet tips
- Be patient if they are suffering from mood swings or forgetfulness
- Cook them dinner for a night's respite from the hot oven if they are suffering hot flushes
- As exercise can help reduce symptoms, suggest joining a class together or entering a fun run
- Offer them a copy of this guide, which you can request free of charge using the email address below

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information about treating the symptoms of the menopause naturally, for Menovone product enquiries or for free copies of this leaflet for your friends or family, please contact Wassen on: 01372 379828 or email [menopauseadvice@wassen.co.uk](mailto:menopauseadvice@wassen.co.uk)

## ESSENTIAL READING

*Dr Dawn Harper's Health Check* is inspired by the hundreds of letters she receives. It dispels the myths and gives the facts on the most common ailments from acne to the menopause.

