



University Hospitals Sussex
NHS Foundation Trust

Menopause and You!

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Menopause

- Definition 'Your Last Period'
- Average age in UK 51 years
- 80% women have symptoms, 25% severe
- Only 20% seek help
- Symptoms last about 4 years (10% for 12 years!)
- 1% of women have very early menopause < 40 years
- So 30-40% of a woman's life is postmenopausal
- Everybody's experience of Menopause is different so
- NICE recommends 'Individualised' Care



THE SEVEN DWARVES OF MENOPAUSE

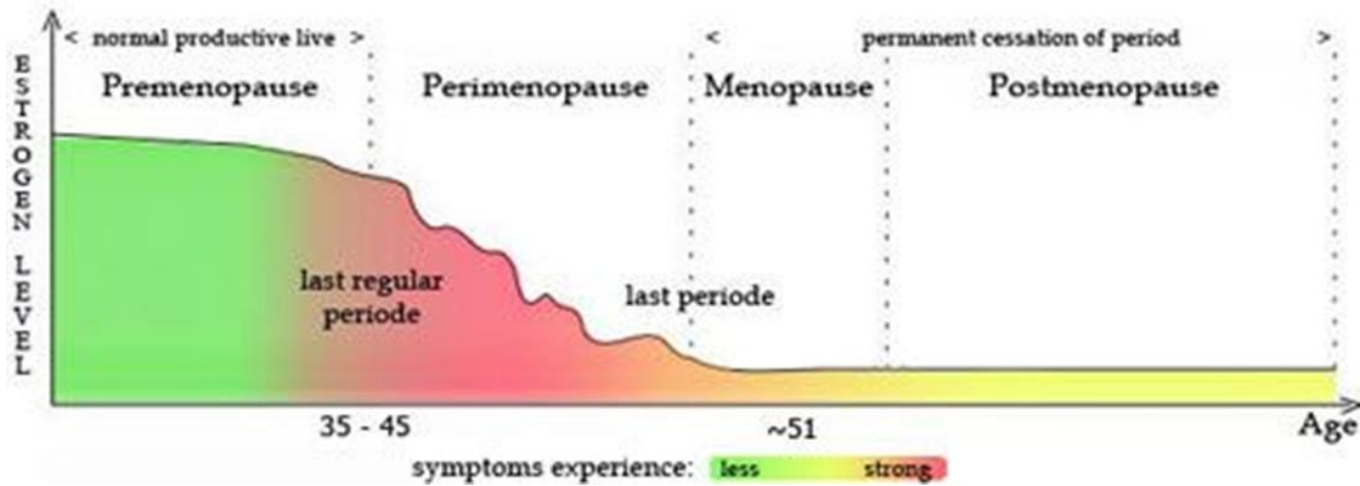


Itchy, Bitchy, Sweaty, Sleepy, Bloated, Forgetful, & Psycho



Symptoms

- Early
- Medium
- Late



Early Menopausal Symptoms

Physical

Hot Flashes, Night sweats

Palpitations, Dizziness, Headaches

Insomnia

Joint Aches

Psychological

Mood Changes, Irritability, Anxiety, Loss of Concentration, Forgetfulness, 'Not Coping'

Sexual

Vaginal Dryness, Loss of Libido



Medium/Late Menopausal Symptoms

Urinary Symptoms

- Frequent peeing /discomfort on peeing/infections
- Urinary leakage (stress incontinence)

Vaginal Symptoms

- Vaginal dryness, discomfort, burning or itching +/- discharge



Late Menopausal Problems

- Bone density decreases - fractures more likely
- Cardiovascular events increase e.g. heart attacks



Menopause Survey

April 2016

- > 1200 women nationally surveyed IPSOS MORI
- **50%** women do not consult a Doctor during menopause
- **42%** felt worse than expected
- **50%** said symptoms impacted on home and sex life
- **36%** said impacted on work and social life
- **66%** wanted more information



How Do You Know that You are Menopausal?

- Primarily we rely on the type and timing of symptoms
- Sometimes we might request blood tests to confirm menopause e.g. if the women is under the age of 45
- This will involve 2 blood tests approximately 6 weeks apart to give a reliable answer (but the tests may not be accurate if the combined contraceptive pill or injection is being used)



Diagnosis

- **Early Menopause:**

10% women experience < 45 years

- **Premature Menopause (Premature Ovarian Insufficiency - POI):**

1% women < 40 years – can be a delayed diagnosis
(childhood cancer survivors)



Treatment Options

- **Lifestyle:** Healthy diet, Stop/Reduce Smoking
- **Physical Interventions:** Exercise, Yoga, Relaxation, Suitable Clothing
- **Hormone Replacement therapy (HRT):** Systemic or Local
- **Cognitive Behavioural therapy (CBT)**
- **Vaginal Lubricants/Moisturisers:** e.g. Sylk, Yes
- **Antidepressants SSRIs/SNRIs**
- **Osteoporosis treatments**
- **Herbal remedies:** e.g. Black Cohosh, Soya



HRT is helpful for

- Hot Flashes and Night Sweats - HRT gives better symptom control than lifestyle changes/alternative therapies
- Joint and Muscle pain and Osteoporosis prevention
- Low mood
- Low libido
- Vaginal/bladder symptoms – systemic and/or local therapy

Types of HRT - Overview

Systemic:

Oral (Pills)

Transdermal – Patches/Gel

Local (Vaginal):

Vaginal Pessaries

Cream

Vaginal Ring



N.B. If you haven't had a hysterectomy, HRT needs to contain both Oestrogen (to control symptoms) and a Progesterone component (to protect the lining of the womb)

A contraceptive coil called a Mirena can be used as the progesterone

If women younger than 54 years (or less than 2 years after the last period) HRT formulation will usually give a monthly bleed

If the women is older than 54 years (or more than 2 years after the last period) we can try a 'no bleed' preparation

Medical reasons for not being able to use HRT

- Pregnancy
- Undiagnosed abnormal Vaginal Bleeding
- Active/Recent thrombosis (Blood Clots in Leg or Lung)
- Suspected/Active Breast/Endometrial Cancer(Womb lining)
- Current Liver Disease

Things to consider

- Safety of using HRT compared to using no or alternative treatment (alternative therapies not always 'safe')
- Length of use – no time limit (POI) Benefits outweigh risks in most women under age of 60 years
- Contraception
- Vaginal oestrogen – no monitoring needed or –
Lubricants or Moisturisers
- Lifestyle (Bioidentical hormones)
- What to expect: discussion of options/benefits/risks and follow up

Trust Resources

- Health and Wellbeing Intranet -
www.uhsussex.nhs.uk/careers/working-with-us/wellbeing
- Menopause Support –
www.uhsussex.nhs.uk/careers/working-with-us/wellbeing/physical-wellbeing-support-for-staff/#menopause-support
- Staff Psychological Support Service – formally known as The Staff Counselling Service / HELP -
www.uhsussex.nhs.uk/careers/working-with-us/wellbeing/mental-wellbeing-support-for-staff/#staff-psychological-support-service-formally-known-as-the-staff-counselling-service-help

Other Resources

- Menopause Matters website (Dr Heather Currie)
www.menopausematters.co.uk and also
www.bladdermatters.co.uk
- Manage My Menopause (Dr Eddie Morris)
www.managemymenopause.co.uk
- Women's Health Concern (Charity affiliated to BMS)
www.womens-health-concern.org
- Dietary Calcium Calculator www.cgem.ed.ac.uk
- www.nhs.uk – Menopause
- BBC Radio 4 Woman's Hour: Menopause pages
- 'One Stop Guide to Menopause' by Kathy Abernethy
- 'Managing Hot Flushes and Night Sweats: A Cognitive Behavioural Self Help Guide to the Menopause' by Myra Hunter

Hopefully from this.....



To this!

