



# Menopause

## OVERVIEW

The menopause is a natural condition in women, caused by the ovaries gradually ceasing to function, usually in the fifth or sixth decade of a woman's life. Some women have very few problems with their menopause, while for others, it can mean months or even years of suffering from various unpleasant symptoms. Even now, some doctors fail to take the symptoms seriously, sometimes blaming them on 'nerves' or stress.

The gradual loss of function of the ovaries results in disruption of the normal production of the female sex hormones. In particular, the disruption causes wild fluctuations in the levels of oestrogen. This in turn causes a range of effects, the most commonly experienced being 'hot flushes'. These cause embarrassing facial flushing and excessive sweating, severe enough to soak bedding or clothing.

## DEFINITION

The menopause, also known as 'the change of life' or the climacteric, represents the ending of the menstrual cycle and reproduction in women. This occurs on average at the age of about 45 to 50 years.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

If your menopause is particularly troublesome, there are various practical and nutritional steps you can take to relieve the problems without the need for drug treatment and its possible complications.

### *Diet*

A diet that mainly consists of fruit, vegetables and cereals will help with severe, frequent hot flushes. If you choose to continue eating red meat or poultry, try to find organic suppliers. Organic meat is less likely to contain hormones and other substances that are likely to make your condition worse.

For very severe hot flushes, try a day of fasting, taking in only pure water or good quality fruit juice, before starting this new diet. Avoid coffee, tea, smoking and alcohol. These all make it harder for your body to cope with the hormonal changes that are affecting you. If hot flushes remain troublesome include in your diet 2-4ozs of pulses or beans per day.

If menstrual loss is heavy it may be advisable to have haemoglobin and ferritin levels checked by your GP.

Blood sugar disturbances sometimes play a part in menopausal symptoms, so if these dietary changes don't help enough, try eliminating these from your diet as well:

- all refined cereal foods (e.g. white flour / refined breakfast cereals)
- refined sugars and excess sweeteners (including honey)
- potatoes and bananas

See leaflet about 'Low Glycaemic Eating'

### *Practical advice*

You can improve your circulation by ending every shower or bath with 30 seconds of cool water or by rubbing the skin vigorously all over with a dry loofah or a soft brush. You should do one or the other of these twice daily.

If feeling a little low is part of your menopausal problems, try a breakfast or supper of whole grain rolled oats, with milk (and bananas if possible). This increases your intake of a substance called l-tryptophan, which you may become deficient in around the time of the menopause. Increasing your intake can help improve your sense of well-being.

For recommended suppliers and supplement advice please contact Pauline. Telephone: 01905 798567

Email: pauline@paulinestarthomeopath.com

## HOMEOPATHY

Homeopathy can help restore balance to the body and alleviate the symptoms of the menopause. Moreover treatment by a qualified homeopath will raise the general level of health and so prevent recurrences of menopausal symptoms. Please phone Pauline to discuss this. Telephone: 01905 798567

Email: pauline@paulinestarthomeopath.com

