

MENOPAUSE

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What it is?

It is a term used to describe the end of menstruation in women. It signals the end of her child-bearing years. This is due to cessation of ovarian function. Menopause is a perfectly natural change that occurs in every woman between ages 45 and 55 years. This change may occur earlier or later. Some women, however, experience early Menopause due to surgical removal of the ovaries and the womb referred to as total Hysterectomy.

PERI-MENOPAUSE

Peri-Menopause describes the period leading up to Menopause. This stage may take up to one year, and during this time there are changes in the menstrual cycle, and so periods may become irregular. There is also the risk of pregnancy, hence it is recommended that condoms be used during this time. It is also advised that hormonal type contraceptives be avoided, owing to the likelihood of Cerebrovascular accident commonly referred to as strokes.

Changes related to Menopause include:

Hot Flashes:

A sudden hot feeling with excessive perspiration, followed by chills.

Night Sweats:

Sometimes, this is severe enough to disrupt your sleep, and may consequently give rise to irritability, fatigue and feelings of depression.

Breast Tenderness:

Experienced by some women.

Vaginal Dryness:

May be experienced during menopause. It is recommended that in order to avoid painful sexual intercourse KY-Jelly or other lubricants may be used.

Weight Gain:

Some women may put on weight but this is primarily due to Hormonal changes.

Loss of Bone Density:

This is a natural part of aging, however, in women, the change is accelerated after Menopause. Loss of bone density causes bones to become brittle (Osteoporosis) and may easily break.

Mood Swings:

Unexplained changes of mood can be a feature of the Peri-Menopausal stage.

What may be done?

Hormonal Replacement Therapy:

Hormone Replacement Therapy should be used only after medical consultation.

Diet:

Maintain a healthy nutritious diet. Include plenty of green leafy vegetables and nuts and avoid excess alcohol consumption, sweets and caffeine.

Exercise:

Exercise regularly and get adequate rest. Exercise strengthens the bones.

Social Activity:

Become involved in social and community activities, as this may help to take your attention away from some of the discomforts of Menopause.

*AVOID WORRYING AND IT IS RECOMMENDED TO
KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOUR DOCTOR.*

References:

- 1. World Health Organization*
- 2. Sex Matters for Women Authors, Sallie Foley), <et al>.*