

Menopause

SYMPTOMS LIST

Menopause and perimenopause can cause a range of symptoms, including:

Hot flashes - Hot flashes are among the most common symptoms of menopause. They cause someone to suddenly become hot, sweaty, and flushed, especially in the face, neck, and chest. Some women also experience chills.

Night sweats - Night sweats are hot flashes that occur at night. Scientists are not sure why they occur, but it appears that falling estrogen levels can affect the hypothalamus, which regulates body temperature.

Irregular periods - Throughout the menopausal transition, it is normal to have irregular or missed periods. Eventually, a woman will stop having periods entirely.

Mood changes - Mood changes are unpredictable shifts in mood that are not related to life events. They can cause someone to feel suddenly sad, weepy, or angry. Mood changes are common during perimenopause and menopause.

Breast soreness - Breast tenderness is another common symptom of menopause, though its frequency tends to decrease in the later stages.

Decreased libido - Menopause also commonly affects libido, or desire for sex. This can be the direct result of having lower levels of testosterone and estrogen, which can make physical arousal more difficult. However, it can also be a secondary result of the other symptoms of menopause, such as mood changes, or a side effect of a medication.

Vaginal dryness - As female sex hormones ensure that there is a good circulation of blood around the vagina, a lack of them can decrease blood flow and, therefore, natural lubrication. This may cause dryness, which can be uncomfortable or make penetrative sex more difficult.

Headaches - Someone entering menopause may experience more frequent headaches or migraine episodes as a result of a dip in estrogen. This can be similar to the headaches that some women experience before a period. However, unlike during a normal menstrual cycle, hormone levels during perimenopause can fluctuate more unpredictably.

Tingling extremities - During menopause, some women experience tingling in the hands, feet, arms, and legs. This symptom is the result of hormone fluctuations affecting the central nervous system and typically only lasts for a few minutes at a time.

Burning mouth - A burning mouth is another potential symptom of menopause and may manifest as a feeling of burning, tenderness, tingling, heat, or numbing in or around the mouth. This is another result of hormonal changes. The mucus membranes in the mouth have sex hormone receptors, which decrease with a decline in estrogen. This can contribute to pain and discomfort.

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Changes in taste - Some women may notice changes in their sense of taste, with stronger flavors, during menopause. They may also experience a dry mouth, which can lead to a higher risk of developing gum disease or cavities.

Fatigue - Fatigue can be a distressing and sometimes debilitating menopause symptom. This could be the result of lower quality sleep as a result of hot flashes and night sweats or the result of hormonal fluctuations themselves.

Bloating - Women can experience bloating during menopause for a number of reasons. They may experience water retention, gassiness, or slower digestion as a result of stress. If they change their eating habits around this time, they may also experience bloating.

Other digestive changes - Female sex hormones influence the microbes a person has in their mouth and digestive tract. This can mean that during menopause, a woman's gut flora changes in composition. They may notice changes in their digestion or that they react differently to certain foods.

Joint pain - Estrogen helps decrease inflammation and keep the joints lubricated. As a result, some women experience joint pain as a result of decreased estrogen. Estrogen is responsible for regulating fluid levels throughout the body, so when the body becomes low in this hormone, women are more prone to joint aches or menopausal arthritis.

Muscle tension and aches - Women going through perimenopause or menopause can also experience muscle tension or aches. This is due to the same factors as menopausal joint pain.

Electric shock sensations - Women can experience sensations that resemble electric shocks during perimenopause and menopause. It is not clear what causes this, but it may be the result of changing hormone levels in the nervous system.

Itchiness - Because estrogen is related to collagen production and skin hydration, a decline in this hormone can lead to increased itchiness or dryness, both around the vulva and elsewhere on the body.

Sleep disturbance - A woman's sleep can become lighter or disrupted for many reasons during menopause. They may wake frequently due to night sweats, wake up earlier, or find it difficult to get to sleep.

Difficulty concentrating - A decline in estrogen can sometimes cause mental foggy or difficulty concentrating. Hot flashes and sleep issues may also be contributing factors.

Memory lapses - As with concentration and focus, menopause can also affect memory. Again, this could be a direct result of lower estrogen levels or compromised sleep.

Thinning hair - During menopause, hair loss or thinning is another result of ovarian hormonal fluctuations. This causes the hair follicles to shrink, meaning that hair grows more slowly and sheds more easily.

Brittle nails - During or after menopause, the body may not produce enough keratin, which is the substance that nails need to stay strong. This can lead to brittle, weak nails that crack or break easily.

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Weight gain - Women can gain weight due to a number of factors during menopause. A decline in estrogen can result in weight gain, as can lower amounts of physical activity. Mood changes can also mean that a woman eats differently.

Stress incontinence - Stress incontinence refers to a frequent or sudden urge to urinate. Some people also refer to it as an "overactive bladder." This symptom is common during menopause, as changes in hormone levels can cause the bladder and pelvic muscles to become weaker.

Dizzy spells - The hormonal changes that take place during menopause affect insulin production, which can make it difficult for the body to maintain blood sugar stability. This is the main reason that some women experience dizzy spells during perimenopause and menopause.

Allergies - Some women report new or worsening allergy symptoms when they experience menopause. This happens because during menopause, women can have spikes in histamine. Histamine is the chemical that causes allergic reactions.

Osteoporosis - During perimenopause, a decline in estrogen can also result in a loss of bone density. In severe cases, this can lead to osteoporosis, which causes the bones to become more fragile and break easily.

Irregular heartbeat - Some women may experience an irregular heartbeat, or arrhythmia, during or after menopause. It is always best to discuss symptoms relating to the heart with a doctor.

Body odor - Hot flashes and night sweats can result in an increase in body odor during menopause. If a woman often feels stressed or anxious, they may also notice that they are sweating more.

Irritability - Either due to hormonal fluctuations or the impact of other menopause symptoms, women going through this change may find that they feel irritable. Stress or a lack of sleep may also contribute to this.

Depression - For some women, hormonal imbalances may trigger depression. However, in this case, depression is often situational and may not be long term. A lack of sleep and stress can contribute to this. In some cases, menopause may trigger depression or low mood because of the change it signifies in a woman's life. Any significant life change can play a role in depression, even if the change is a positive one.

Anxiety - Anxiety is another mood-related symptom that some women experience during menopause. It may worsen at night or only occur intermittently as hormone levels fluctuate. As with menopause-related depression, this anxiety may be situational and improve once hormones level out.

Panic disorder - In some cases, women may experience panic attacks during menopause. When these attacks occur unexpectedly or suddenly, they can indicate panic disorder. This may happen due to hormonal changes or the fear of feeling anxious itself.

Source: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/what-are-the-34-symptoms-of-menopause?c=175774106187#symptoms>

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