

Women's Health: Menopause

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Life after menopause can be as healthy, independent and fulfilling as any of the younger stages of life. Taking advantage of the appropriate resources available can help achieve this.

Menopause is the transition period in a women's life when her ovaries stop producing eggs, her body produces less estrogen and progesterone, and menstruation becomes less frequent, eventually ceasing altogether.

Every woman experiences menopause differently, including the age at which it begins. Some women reach menopause in their 30s or 40s, while others not until their 60s; but on average, it most often occurs between the ages of 45 and 55.

Signs and Symptoms

The signs and symptoms of menopause vary. One woman may breeze through it with few issues, while another may experience a number of physical and emotional changes such as:

- Hot flashes and skin flushing
- Decreased fertility
- Vaginal dryness and painful sexual intercourse
- Urinary changes
- Sleep disturbances
- Irregular periods
- Changes in appearance
- Emotional and cognitive changes

Self-care

Fortunately, many of the signs and symptoms are only temporary and can often be controlled or reduced by simple self-care techniques. Some suggestions include:

- Decrease the effects of hot flashes by avoiding extremely warm places, wearing light clothing or dressing in layers, and not eating spicy foods.
- Decrease vaginal discomforts by using over-the-counter water-based lubricants, moisturizers or vaginal estrogen.

- Strengthen your pelvic muscles by practicing Kegel exercises; they can strengthen the muscles near your bladder.
- Optimize your sleep. Avoid caffeine and exercise right before bed, and practice relaxation techniques.
- Stop mood swings by learning ways to avoid stress, getting more exercise or joining a support group.

Transitioning

Menopause is a natural part of a woman's life. There is no way to prevent it, and every woman will experience it at some point in her life. Consider preparing for its arrival. The following strategies can help make a woman's transition into her menopausal and postmenopausal years healthy:

- Understand how and why your body will change.
- Be informed about health issues after age 50 and after menopause.
- Develop a health and wellness plan that includes regular screenings, exercise and a healthy diet. This will help to maintain a healthy weight as well.
- Avoid smoking and excessive alcohol consumption.

Contact [Sullivan Benefits](#) for assistance on how to educate your employees and their family members about a variety of women's health issues and risks.

Congratulations, just taking the time to read this article is a positive step toward introducing wellness and the benefits available from a healthier lifestyle. Thank you for your time and **THINK WELLNESS!**

Source: Zywave