Your periods are coming very close together, but don’t worry—Menopause is a normal part of life, just like puberty. It is the time of your last period, but symptoms can begin several years before that. And these symptoms can last for months or years after.

What Are the Signs of Menopause?

Women may have different signs or symptoms at menopause. That’s because estrogen plays a role in many different body systems. Changes in your period.

Some time around 40, you might notice that your periods have changed—how long it lasts, how much you bleed, or how often it happens may not be the same as before. And as growing older, you might feel yourself feeling very warm sometimes, you might feel hot flashes or sweats.

Hot flashes are very common around the time of menopause because they are related to changes in your estrogen levels. They may last a few years after menopause begins. If you have a sudden feeling of heat in the upper part of your body, you might feel faint. Red blotches may appear on your face and neck. Flashes can be as mild as a light blush or severe enough to wake you from a sound sleep (called a hot flush).

Menopause doesn’t usually happen before your ovaries are 30 to 40 years old. The average age is 51.

Some types of cancer may be part of the cause. But, so is getting older. As you age, you may develop other problems, like high blood pressure or weight gain, that put you at greater risk for heart disease. Changes in estrogen levels can affect your blood pressure and levels of triglycerides, fasting blood glucose, and LDL, HDL, and triglycerides checked regularly. Talk to your health care professional to find out what you should do to protect your heart.

What Is Menopause?

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What Can I Stay Healthy After Menopause?

Staying healthy after menopause may mean making some changes in the way you live.

Don’t smoke. If you do use any type of tobacco, stop— it’s never too late to benefit from quitting smoking.

Eat a healthy diet—one low in fat, high in fiber, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain foods, as well as all the important vitamins and minerals. Make sure you get enough calcium and vitamin D—in your diet or in vitamin/mineral supplements.

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After menopause, your body is busy breaking down old bone and replacing it with new bone. Day in and day out your body is breaking down old bone and replacing it with new bone. Day in and day out your body is breaking down old bone and replacing it with new bone.
**AgePage**

**Menopause**

*“My work never talked to me about menopause. She said women never talk about it either.”*  

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Menopause is a normal part of life, just like puberty. It is the time of your last period, but symptoms can begin several years before that. And these symptoms can last for months or years after.

**What Are the Signs of Menopause?**

Women may have different signs or symptoms at menopause. That’s because estrogen is used by many parts of your body. So, changes in how much estrogen you can cause a wide variety of symptoms. But, that doesn’t mean you will see all, or even most, of these changes. The signs that happen around the time of menopause may really be a result of growing older, not changes in estrogen.

**Problems with the vagina and bladder.**

Changing estrogen levels can cause your genital area to get drier and thinner. This could make sexual intercourse uncomfortable. You could have more difficulty getting to the bathroom. Sometimes your urine might leak during exercise, sneezing, coughing, or running.

**Sleep problems.**

You might start having trouble getting a good night’s sleep. Maybe you can’t fall asleep easily, or you wake too early. Night sweats might wake you up. You might have trouble falling back to sleep if you wake during the night.

**Mood changes.**

You might find yourself more moody, irritable, or depressed around the time of menopause. It’s not clear why this happens—is there something in your body or is it related to changes in your life? Common changes such as growing children or aging parents, or always feeling tired could be causing these mood changes.

**Changes in your body.**

You might think your body is changing. Your weight could start to fluctuate. You might have more hair loss. Your breasts may shrink. Your skin may become more wrinkled. Your periods are coming very close together.

**Sex.**

Around the time of meno-pause you may find that your feelings about sex have changed. You could be less interested. Or, you could feel freer and more interested in sex. You can stop worrying about becoming pregnant or getting an STD. You might have a new sense of freedom and adventure. Your best friend might hardly be aware of a change at all.

**What is Menopause?**

Menopause is different for each woman. For example, hot flashes and sleep problems may trouble your sister. Meanwhile, you could have a new sense of freedom and adventure. Your best friend might hardly be aware of a change at all.

**What Are the Signs of Menopause?**

Menopause doesn’t usually happen before your 40s. It’s not unusual to have symptoms from your 30s to your mid 50s or later. The average age is 51. Menopause usually starts with hot flashes and sleep problems. Some types of surgery can bring on menopause. This can happen if you have surgery to remove your uterus (hysterectomy) before menopause will make your periods stop. It can also happen if you have surgery to remove both ovaries. This can happen right away if you have surgery to remove both ovaries (oophorectomy), menopause symptoms can start right away, no matter what your age is. But, it’s not unusual for a year or two after your last period.

**What is Menopause?**

Menopause is a normal part of life, just like puberty. It is the time of your last period, but symptoms can begin several years before that. And these symptoms can last for months or years after.

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…how long it lasts, how much you bleed, or how often it happens may not be the same as before. The change in your body may indicate your last menstrual period is needed before you can say you have been “through menopause.”

A full year without a period is called menopause. After menopause, your body is busy breaking down old bone and replacing it with new bone. Estrogen helps control bone loss. So losing estrogen around the time of menopause causes women to begin to lose bone. Estrogen helps keep the bone you have healthy. But, that doesn’t mean you will have all, or even most, of these changes. In fact, some of the signs that happen around the time of menopause may really be a result of growing older, not changes in estrogen.

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Menopause

“Your periods are coming very close together, which means you may need to start making less estrogen. But, when you have your periods (menstrual periods) how long it lasts, how much you bleed, or how often it happens may not be the same as before. This can happen because your body has lost its main supply of estrogen.

What Are the Signs of Menopause?

Women may have different signs or symptoms at menopause. That’s because estrogen affects different body parts in your body. Estrogen helps to control bone loss. So losing estrogen around the time of menopause causes women to begin to lose bone. This is called osteoporosis. Estrogen helps the body to make the healthy bone. Estrogen helps the body to make the healthy bone.

Hot flashes: These are very common around the time of menopause because they are related to changes in estrogen levels. They may last a few years after menopause. A hot flash is a sudden feeling of heat in the upper part of your body. Sometimes, your heart may beat faster, and your face and neck might become flushed. Red blotches may appear on your face, chest, and arms. Heavy sweating and cold shivering can follow. Estrogen is needed to keep you from having a light blush or severe enough to wake you up. You might have night sweats if you have a hot flash late in the night. You might have night sweats if you have a hot flash late in the night.

Menopause, or the “change of life,” is different for each woman. For example, hot flashes and sleep problems may trouble your sister. Meanwhile, you might have a new sense of freedom and independence. Your best friend might hardly be aware she is even menopausal.

What is Menopause?

Menopause is a normal part of life, just like puberty. It is the time when your ovaries will begin to lose their ability to make estrogen. When you lose the ability to make estrogen, you lose the ability to make the main hormone that helps you to have your menstrual periods. The average age is 51. Most women lose their ability to make estrogen during their middle years. Some women may have estrogen at any time from your 30s to your mid 50s or later. After menopause, you can have occasional periods as you have hormonal changes that happen around the time of menopause may really be a result of growing older. Some hot flashes last between 20 and 30 years after menopause.

Problems with the vagina and bladder. Changes in estrogen levels can cause changes in other areas of your body. Changes in your body can cause problems like a bladder that leaks, and a bladder that leaks. Menopause may be part of the cause. But, so is getting older. As you age, you may develop other problems, like high blood pressure or weight gain, which put you at greater risk for heart disease. You might have high blood pressure and levels of triglycerides, fasting blood glucose, and LDL. Have your cholesterol levels checked regularly. Talk to your health care provider about what you should do to protect your heart.

Menopause and Bones?

Two common health problems can start to happen at menopause, and you might not even notice.

Sleep problems. You might start having trouble getting a good night’s sleep. Maybe you can’t fall asleep easy, or you wake too early. Night sweats might wake you up. You might have trouble falling back to sleep after waking up.

Changes in your body. You might find yourself more moody, irritable, or depressed around the time of menopause. It’s not clear why this happens—is there is a problem with your body or your hormones? Estrogen helps to give you a feeling of well-being. If you have healthy bones, you might feel better.

Sex.

Sex is a very important aspect of menopause. You might think that stopping your periods is over. You might think that stopping your periods is over.

Some time around 40, you might notice that your periods are coming more often—how long it lasts, how much you bleed, or how often it happens may not be the same as before. This can happen because your body has lost its main supply of estrogen.

Are changes in menopause related to changes in estrogen levels. They may last a few years after menopause. A hot flash is a sudden feeling of heat in the upper part of your body. Sometimes, your heart may beat faster, and your face and neck might become flushed. Red blotches may appear on your face, chest, and arms. Heavy sweating and cold shivering can follow. Estrogen is needed to keep you from having a light blush or severe enough to wake you up. You might have night sweats if you have a hot flash late in the night.

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Problems with the vagina and bladder. Changes in estrogen levels can cause changes in other areas of your body. Changes in your body can cause problems like a bladder that leaks, and a bladder that leaks. Menopause may be part of the cause. But, so is getting older. As you age, you may develop other problems, like high blood pressure or weight gain, which put you at greater risk for heart disease. You might have high blood pressure and levels of triglycerides, fasting blood glucose, and LDL. Have your cholesterol levels checked regularly. Talk to your health care provider about what you should do to protect your heart.

How Can I Stay Healthy After Menopause?

Some songs about menopause may mean making some changes in the way you live.

Don’t use any type of tobacco, stop— it’s never too late to benefit from quitting smoking.

Eat a healthy diet—one low in fat, high in fiber, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain foods, as well as all the important vitamins and minerals. Make sure you get enough calcium and vitamin D—in your diet or in vitamin/mineral supplements. Make sure you get enough calcium and vitamin D—in your diet or in vitamin/mineral supplements. You might find that your feelings about sex have changed. You could be less interested. Or, you could feel freer and sexier after menopause.

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What is Menopause?

Menopause is a normal part of life, just like puberty. It is the time when your ovaries will begin to lose their last period, and their doctors, often begin several years before your menstrual period. It is for 1 year after your last period. The reason you can even think about it is because you can say you have been “through menopause.” Postmenopause follows menopause. Chapter 2. Menopause.

Menopause doesn’t usually happen before you are 40, but you can have occasional periods as you have hormonal changes that happen around the time of menopause may really be a result of growing older. Some hot flashes last between 20 and 30 years after menopause.

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Menopause

“My work never talked to me about menopause. She says her mother never talked about it either.”

“Is it hot in here, or is it me?”

“Menopause, or the “change of life,” is different for each woman. For example, hot flashes and sleep problems may trouble your sisters. Meanwhile, you could have a new sense of freedom and energy. Your best friend might hardly be aware of a change at all.

What Is Menopause?

Menopause is a normal part of life, just like puberty. It is the time when a woman stops having her last period, but symptoms can begin several years earlier. After menopause, women may have different signs of changes in their reproductive system as they grow older. You might find yourself more moody, irritable, or depressed around the time of menopause. It’s not clear why this happens—there may be family changes such as growing children or aging parents, or always feeling tired could be causing these mood changes.

Sex. Around the time of meno-pause, your sexual organs are not the same. You may not be able to have sex as you used to because your body is busy breaking down your eggs and sperm. Hot flashes are very common around the time of meno-pause because they are related to changes in estrogen levels. They may last a few years after menopause. A sudden feeling of heat in the upper part of your body could start to happen at menopause, and you might not even notice. How much you bleed could change. It could be lighter... or... heavier. You might have spotting, heavy bleeding, or spotting before you are 40, but it can happen any time from your 30s to your mid-50s or later. The average age is 51.

Smoking can cause your genital area to get dryer and thinner. This could make sexual intercourse uncomfortable. You could have more... or... less lubrication. Any type of tobacco, stop—it’s never too late to benefit from quitting smoking.

Your periods are coming very close together. You might find your vagina is dry, your ovaries will still make hormones. That means you could still have symptoms of menopause like hot flashes when your ovaries start to make less estrogen. But, when your ovaries are removed (oophorectomy), menopause symp-toms can start right away, no matter what your age is. Because your body has lost its main supply of estrogen.

What Are the Signs of Menopause?

Women may have different signs or symptoms at menopause. That’s because estrogen affects so many parts of your body. So, changes in how much estrogen you can cause can affect your body. But, that doesn’t mean you will do all, or even most, of the things that happen around the time of menopause maybe really be a result of growing older. Many hot flashes last between 30 seconds and 10 minutes. Problems with the vagina and bladder. Changes in estrogen levels can cause your vagina and bladder to get drier and thinner. This could make sexual intercourse uncomfortable. You could have more vaginal or urinary infections. You might find it hard to hold urine long enough to get to the bathroom. Sometimes you might start having problems with exercising, sneezing, coughing, laughing, or running.

May mean making some changes in the way you live. As you age, you may develop other problems, like high blood pressure or weight gain, that put you at greater risk for heart disease and osteoporosis. Change in estrogen levels of the lungs, bladder.

Your body is busy breaking down your eggs and sperm. This time of change in estrogen levels to your menstrual cycle. You might notice that your period is different—how long it lasts, how much you bleed, or how often it happens may not be the same. It’s not unusual, but you may find yourself feeling very warm and sweaty. This is called a hot flash. It might happen any time from your 30s to your mid-50s or later. The average age is 51. Smoking can... make your genital area dry and thinner. This could make sexual intercourse uncomfortable. You could have more... or... less lubrication. Any type of tobacco, stop—it’s never too late to benefit from quitting smoking.

Changes in your body. You might think your body is changing. Your waist could get larger. You could lose muscle and gain fat. Your skin could get thinner. You might have heart problems, and your joints and bones could start to ache. Are these a result of having less estrogen or just related to growing older? We don't know.

What About My Heart and Bones?

Two common health problems can start to happen at menopause, and you might not even notice.

Hot flashes.

You might find yourself more moody, irritable, or depressed around the time of menopause. It’s not clear why this happens—there may be family changes such as growing children or aging parents, or always feeling tired could be causing these mood changes.

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Try to keep track of when hot flashes happen—a diary can help. You might be able to use this information to find out what triggers your flashes and then avoid it.

When a hot flash starts, go somewhere cool.

If you're at work, take a cool drink (water or juice) when a flash is starting.

Use a water-based vaginal lubricant (jelly) or a vaginal estrogen cream or tablet to help with vaginal discomfort.

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When a hot flash starts, go somewhere cool.

If you can, take a cold drink (water or juice) when a flash is starting.

Use a water-based vaginal lubricant (like jelly) or a vaginal estrogen cream or tablet to help with vaginal discomfort.

Have a cold drink (water or juice) when a flash is starting.

Use sheets and clothing that let your skin “breathe.”

Dress in layers that you can take off if you get too warm.

Do weight-bearing exercise, such as walking, jogging, or dancing, at least 3 days each week for healthy bones. But try to be physically active in other ways for your general health.

National Institutes of Health
Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

www.nih.gov/PHTindex.htm

National Library of Medicine

MedlinePlus
In Health Topics, go to: "Menopause" www.nlm.nih.gov

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
409 12th Street, SW
P.O. Box 96920
Washington, DC 20090
1-800-222-6374 (toll-free)
E-mail: infoacog@acog.org

American College of Physicians
1440 L Street, NW
P.O. Box 7012
Washington, DC 20001
E-mail: info@acp.org

North American Menopause Society
2041 Gervais Street
Columbia, SC 29201
1-800-726-0001
E-mail: info@menopause.org

North American Menopause Society
7001 Wisconsin Ave
Bethesda, MD 20814
1-800-458-2826
E-mail: info@nams.org

The National Institute on Aging
At Menopause: The Next 20 Years
www.nia.nih.gov

A hundred years ago life expectancy was a lot shorter. Reaching menopause then often meant that a woman’s life was nearing its end. Not so now. Women are living much longer. Today, a woman can expect to live, on average, almost 32 more years. You have the time and freedom to make these later, busy years. Follow a healthy lifestyle and plan to make the most of those years ahead of you!

More Information

Other resources with information on health, aging, including osteoporosis and the latest on menopausal hormone therapy, contact:

National Institute on Aging
Aging Information Center
P.O. Box 8057
Gaithersburg, MD 20898-8057
1-800-222-2225 (toll-free)
1-800-222-4225 (TTY/toll-free)
E-mail: info@nia.nih.gov

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E-mail: info@nia.nih.gov

To order publications (in English or Spanish) or to sign up for regular email alerts, visit: www.nia.nih.gov/aging

The National Institute on Aging website is www.nia.nih.gov

Visit NIHSeniorHealth.gov
www.nih.gov/nihseniorhealth

Visit the friendlier website from the National Institute on Aging and the National Library of Medicine. This simple-to-use, easy-to-read website has large type and a ‘talking’ function that reads text aloud.

A hundred years ago life expectancy was a lot shorter. Reaching menopause then often meant that a woman’s life was nearing its end. Not so now. Women are living much longer. Today, a woman can expect to live, on average, almost 32 more years. You have the time and freedom to make these later, busy years. Follow a healthy lifestyle and plan to make the most of those years ahead of you!

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1-800-222-2225 (toll-free)
1-800-222-4225 (TTY/toll-free)
E-mail: info@nia.nih.gov

For more information on health and aging, including osteoporosis and the latest on menopausal hormone therapy contact:

National Institute on Aging
Aging Information Center
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To order publications (in English or Spanish) or to sign up for regular email alerts, visit: www.nia.nih.gov/aging

The National Institute on Aging website is www.nia.nih.gov

Visit NIHSeniorHealth.gov
www.nih.gov/nihseniorhealth

Visit the friendlier website from the National Institute on Aging and the National Library of Medicine. This simple-to-use, easy-to-read website has large type and a ‘talking’ function that reads text aloud.

A hundred years ago life expectancy was a lot shorter. Reaching menopause then often meant that a woman’s life was nearing its end. Not so now. Women are living much longer. Today, a woman can expect to live, on average, almost 32 more years. You have the time and freedom to make these later, busy years. Follow a healthy lifestyle and plan to make the most of those years ahead of you!

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Try to keep track of when hot flashes happen—a diary can help. You might be able to use this information to figure out what triggers your flashes and then avoid it.

When a hot flash starts, go somewhere cool. If you don’t take a shower, try sleeping in a cool room or under a fan. Don’t resign yourself to the fact you can take off if you get too warm.

Use a way to keep your body temperature, such as a fan or jell-O drink, that let your skin “breathe.”

Have a cold drink (water or juice) when a flash is starting.

Use a water-based vaginal lubricant (like K-Y jelly) or a vaginal estrogen cream or tablet to help with vaginal discomfort.

When a hot flash starts, go somewhere cool.

If night sweats wake you, try sleeping in a cool room or with a fan on.

Dress in layers that you can take off if you get too warm.

Take medicine to lower your blood pressure if your doctor prescribes it for you.

If you’re bothered by hot flashes, go somewhere cool. If you don’t take a shower, try sleeping in a cool room or under a fan. Don’t resign yourself to the fact you can take off if you get too warm.

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Learn what your healthy weight is and keep it there.

Do weight-bearing exercise, such as walking, jogging, or dancing, at least 3 days each week for healthy bones. But try to be physically active in other ways for your general health.

Other things to remember:

Take medicine to lower your blood pressure if your doctor prescribes it for you.

Use a water-based vaginal lubricant (such as petroleum jelly) or a vaginal estrogen cream or tablet to help with vaginal dryness.

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Visit NIH SeniorHealth.gov (www.nichsr.nih.gov), a senior-friendly website from the National Institute on Aging and the National Library of Medicine. This simple-to-use website features popular health topics for older adults. It has large type and a ‘talking’ function that reads text aloud.

The National Institute on Aging website is

www.nia.nih.gov

www.menopause.org

www.ménopause.org

www.niaapublications.org

www.niapublications.org

National Library of Medicine

MediCheckPlus

In Health Topics, go to: "Menopause"

For More Information

Other resources with information on menopause include:

National Institute of Aging: Lost Hormones?

www.nia.nih.gov

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

409 12th Street, SW

P.O. Box 96920

Washington, DC 20090-5969

1-202-638-5577

The National Institute on Aging Information Center

P.O. Box 8057

Gaithersburg, MD 20898-8057

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E-mail: info@niai.org

For help deciding how to best manage menopause. You can see a gynecologist, geriatrician, general practitioner, or internist.

Talk about your symptoms and whether they bother you. Make the doctor know about your medical history and your family medical history. This includes whether you are at risk for heart disease, osteoporosis, and breast cancer.

Remember that your treatment decision is never final. You can—and should—review it with your doctor during a checkup. Your needs may change, and so might what you know about menopause.

What About Those Phytoestrogens?

Phytoestrogens are estrogen-like substances found in some cereals, vegetables, legumes (beans), and herbs. They might work in the body much like estrogen or proges- tern. They might relieve some symptoms of menopause, but they could also have risks like estrogen. We don’t know. Be sure to tell your doctor that you want to decide to try eating a lot more foods that contain phytoestrogens or to try using a food supplement. Any food or over-the-counter product claim that it can cure anything is a drug-like effect could change how other drugs work and cause an overdose.

How Do I Decide What to Do?

Talk to your health care provider for help deciding how to best manage menopause. You can see a gynecologist, geriatrician, general practitioner, or internist.

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