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Speaker Disclosure(s):

We have no financial relationships
or affiliations to disclose.





Bringing Perimenopause Into the Light:

Dispelling the mystery around women's midlife reproductive transition




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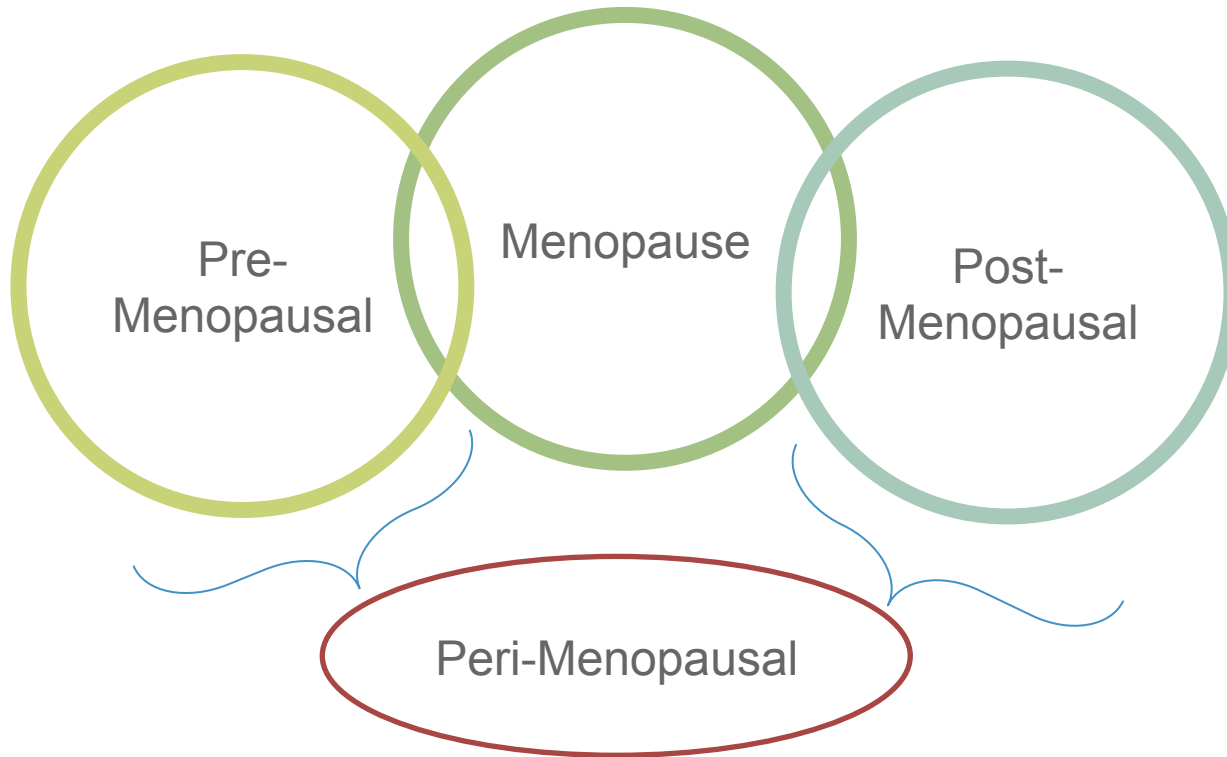


1. Content Disclaimers

Let's get on the same page...



“Menopausal Transition”

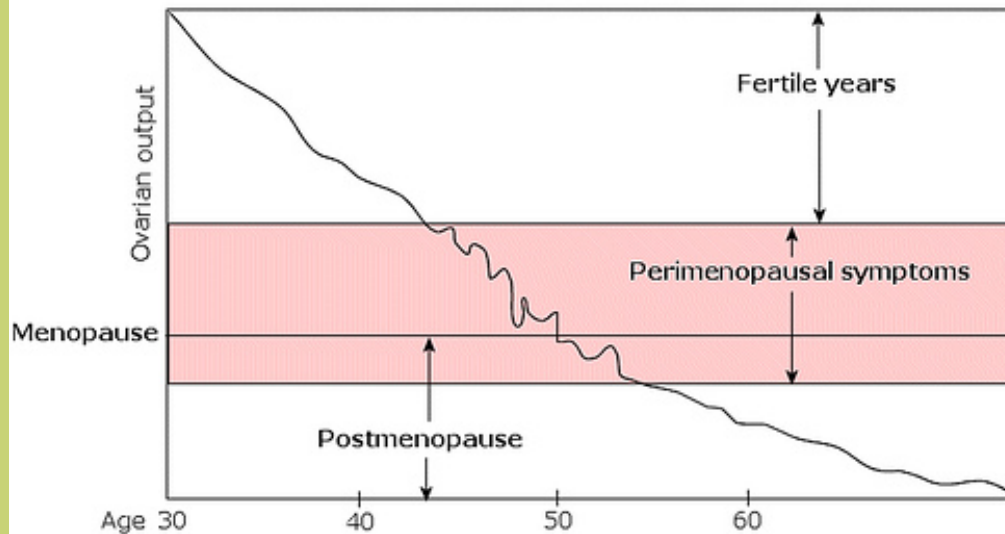


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Hormone Levels in Natural Menopause



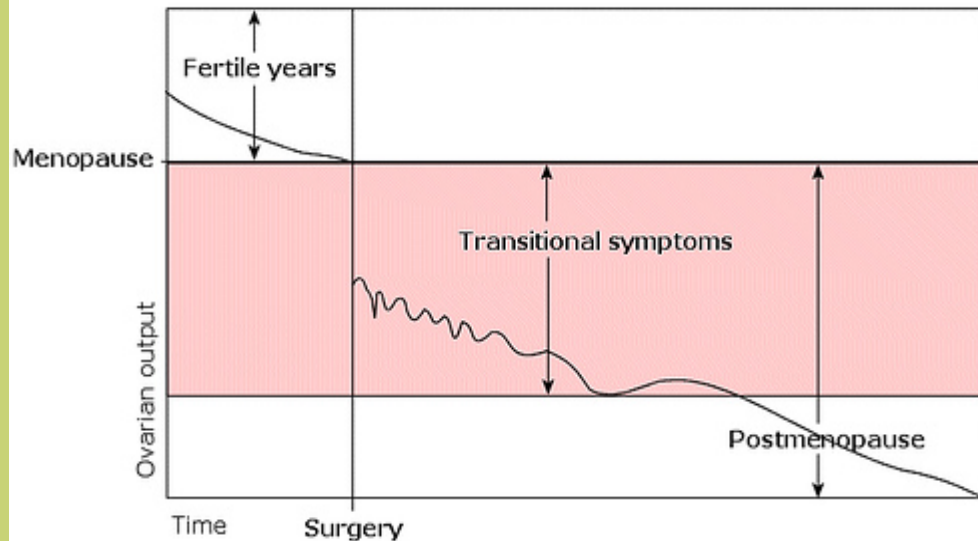
<http://surmeno.blogspot.com/2006/08/natural-vs-surgical-menopause-what-is.html>

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Hormone Levels in Surgical Menopause



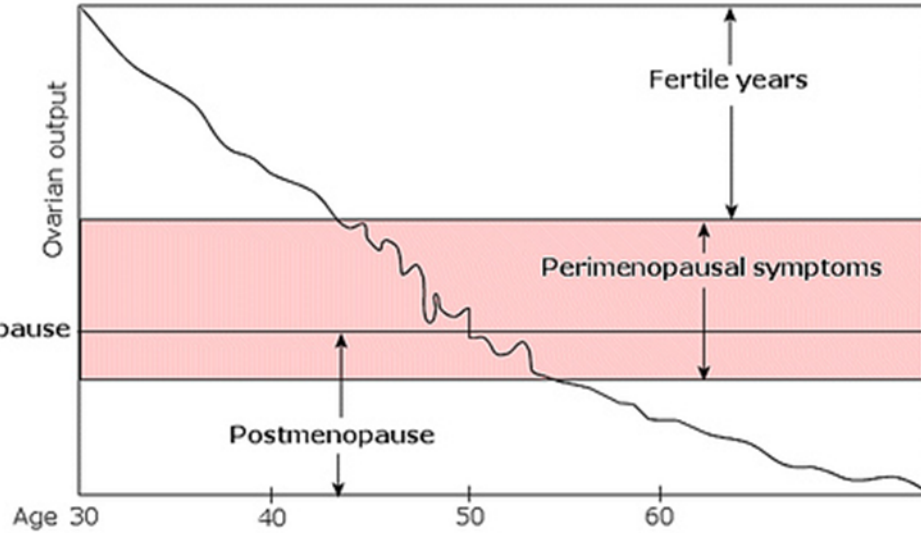
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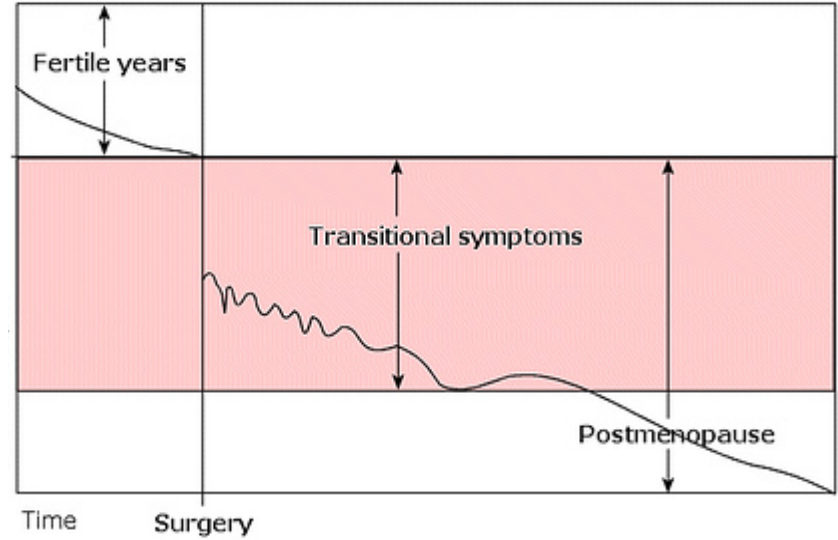
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✦ *Therapist* ✦ *Educator*
✦ ~~Medical Doctors~~



2.

Menopausal Transition

What exactly are we talking about?



✦ *“Medical, academic,
and popular discourses
on menopause all have
their inception in the first
half of the 20th century”*

(Newhart, 2013, p. 366)



Three “Waves” of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

- ✦ Late 1938--- First Synthetic
 - “hormone deficiency disease”
- ✦ 1962-1975---Estrogen Replacement Therapy (ERT) → endometrial cancer
- ✦ 1980s---HRT → serious health risks (90s)



✦ *“HRT treatments have framed the medicalized understanding of menopause over the last 80 years, shaping not only the available medical options, but influencing the everyday understanding and sense of control over menopause for millions of women”*

(Newhart, 2013, p. 367)



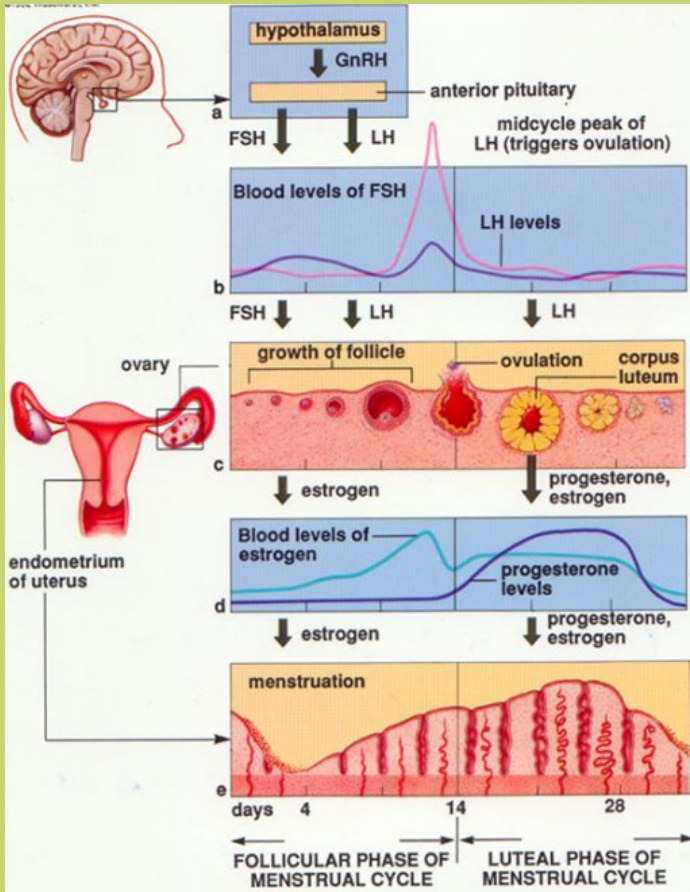
✦ *“Each generation has experienced menopause differently depending on the status of these treatments during relevant stages of life course.”*

(Newhart, 2013, p. 367)

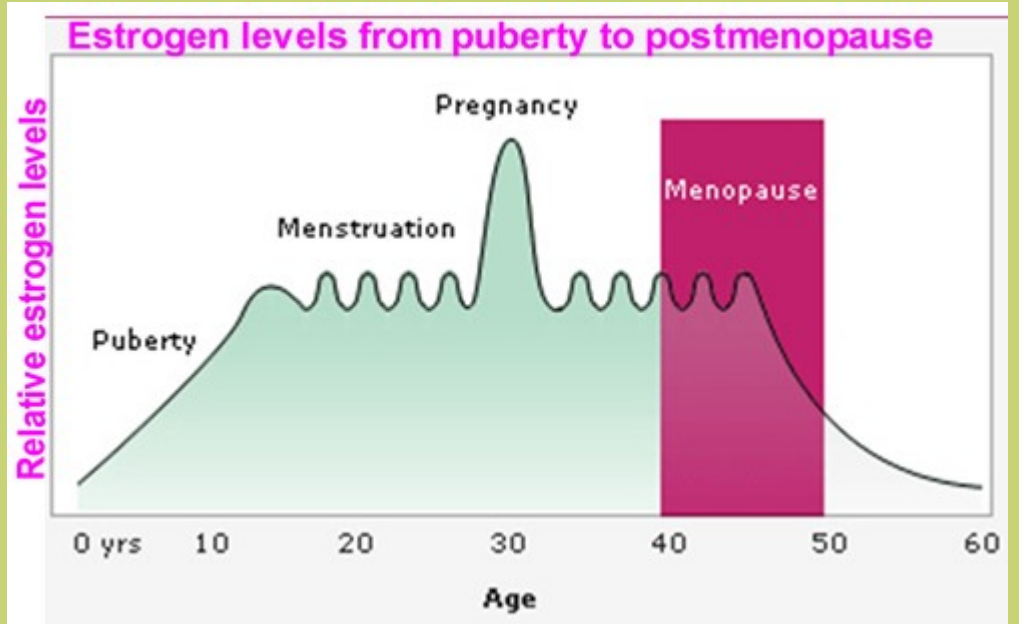


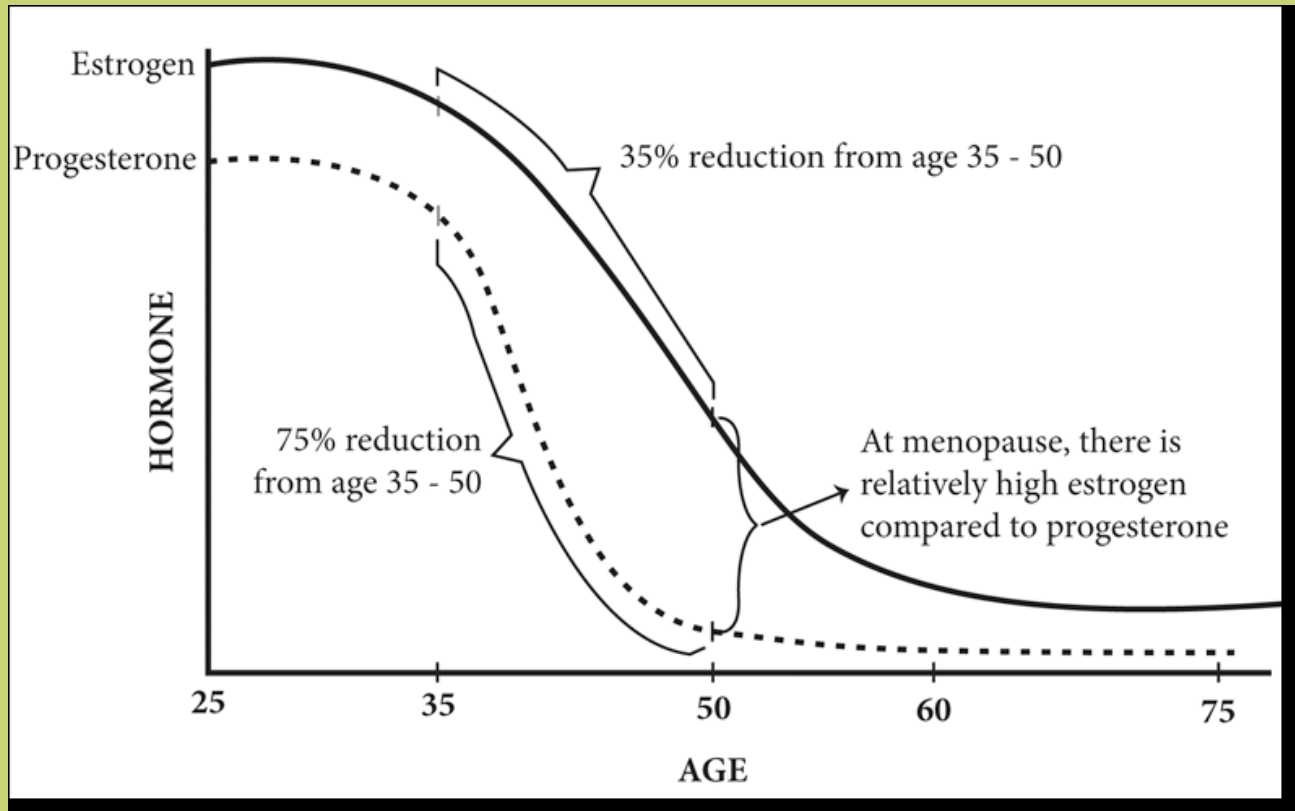
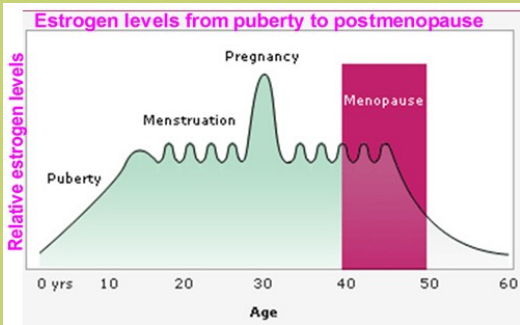
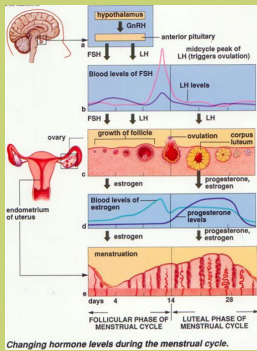


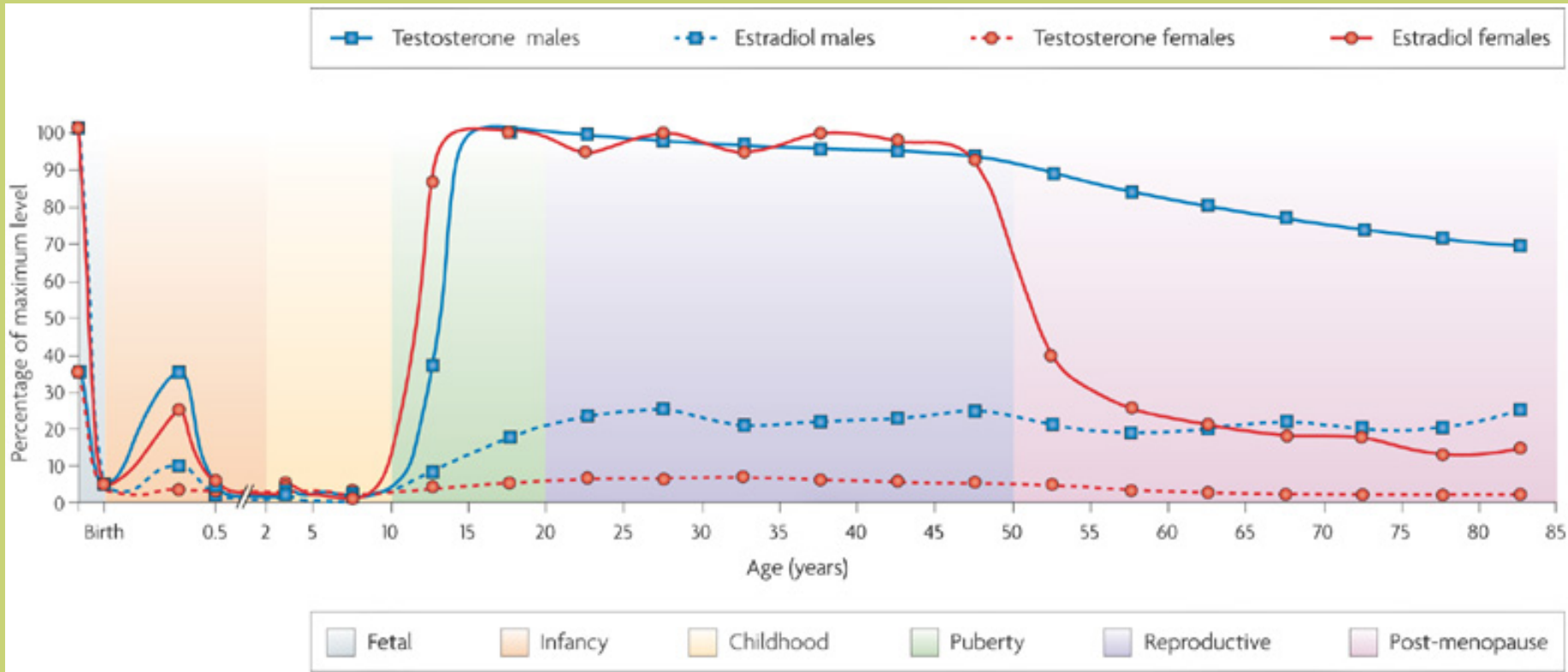
Basic Anatomy & Physiology Lesson



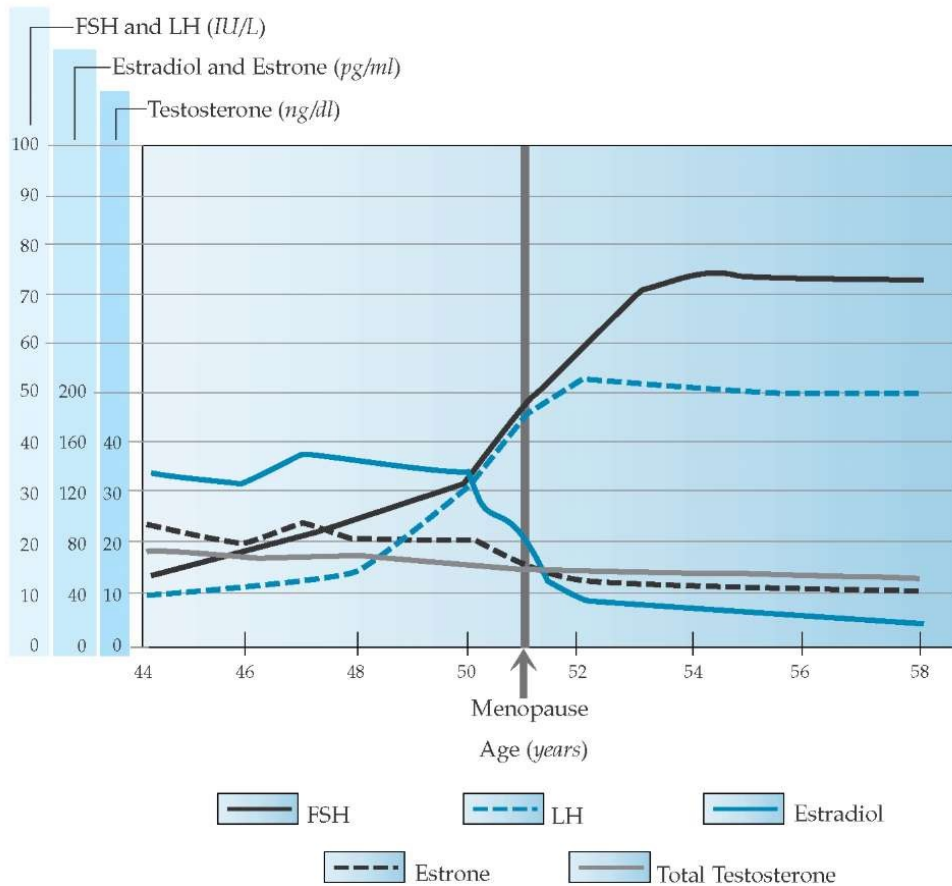
Changing hormone levels during the menstrual cycle.





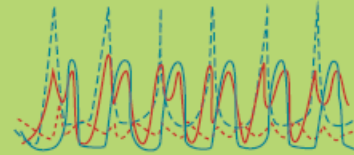


Nature Reviews | Genetics

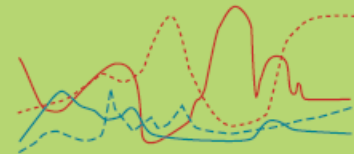


CHANGES IN HORMONE LEVEL PATTERNS OVER SIX MONTHS

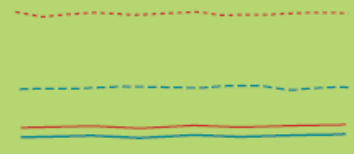
Premenopause (180 days)



Perimenopause (180 days)



Postmenopause (180 days)



— Estrogen — Progesterone
 - - - FSH - - - LH

Excerpted from the September 1999 issue of the *Harvard Women's Health Watch*, 1999, President and Fellows, Harvard College.

Definitions:

men-o-pause

/menə-pôz/

Derived from the Latin root for WTF is happening to me...the time of life where a woman doesn't know if she is coming or going, on fire or freezing, happy or sad, wants to diet or eat everything in sight. Common phrases used during this time include: "muffin top", "hot flash", "mood swing", "brain fog". Women in menopause may self medicate with: wine, chocolate, vodka, ice cream, carbs, new shoes, online purchases, Netflix, or by looking at pictures of Sam Elliot.



Definitions:

- ✦ Premenopause: Birth- FMP
- ✦ Perimenopause: About 4 years before FMP
- ✦ Menopause: technically FMP (45-50)
- ✦ Post-menopause: 12 months after FMP
(U.S. mean=51)
- ✦ Menopausal transition: (40-54)
- ✦ Climacteric: 7-10 years; peri-stable post

Newhart (2013)





Physical

Changes in hormones can cause varying physical symptoms.



Physical Indications *

+ Irregular Cycle

- Cycle differences
- Skipped
- Flow irregularity

+ Hot flushes/flushes

+ Night Sweats

+ Heart Palpitations

+ Facial hair growth

+ Joint pain &/or stiffness

+ Vaginal

- Dryness
- Atrophy

+ Headaches

+ Breast Tenderness

+ Insomnia

*Physical activity moderates





Psychological

Changes in hormones can cause varying physical symptoms.



Psychological Indications

- + Anxiety
- + Panic
- + Depression
- + Mood Instability
- + Irritability
- + Forgetfulness
- + Insomnia





Sexual

Physical and Psychological changes can indirectly, or directly affect Sexuality.



Sexual Indications

- + Vaginal dryness/atrophy → → pain with penetration
- + Combined with partner age, health status
- + Diminished desire
- + Hot flash frequency (Daily/Weekly)
- + Desire, arousal, and/or orgasm difficulty
- + Partner status
- + Mental health
 - Depression, fatigue (more likely she owned), irritability, & self-reported feeling of health status

Smith, R.L., Gallicchio, L., and Flaws, J.A. (2017). Factors affecting sexual activity in midlife women: Results from the Midlife Health Survey





Relational

Disruptions in usual relationship dynamics.



Relational Indicators

- + Natural family dynamic changes
 - Aging
 - Parenthood
 - Aging parents
- + New roles and responsibilities
- + Mood changes → → relationship stress





Existential

Raises larger questions about meaning and purpose.



✦ Existential Indicators

- ✦ What does it mean to be “old”?
- ✦ Now that I am no longer fertile...feelings?
- ✦ What role(s) do I play in society?
- ✦ What role(s) do I play in my family?
- ✦ Am I still sexy?





Culturally Specific

Various sub-cultures may experience additional or increased



✦ *“For women who have had to cope with racism and sexism, menopause may represent one more sociocultural hurdle that threatens their well-being.”*

✦ *Huffman et al (2005)*



*Each individual will experience the menopause transition differently...
throw out everything you “know” and explore the lived experience of the individual specifically.*





3. Navigating the Menopausal Transition



"I am leading the way through the menopause maze. With my vitamins, my melatonin sleep patches, my bioidentical estrogen cream...progesterone cream, a touch of testosterone...I've tricked my body into thinking it's younger. And I'm telling you, no hot flashes, no mood swings, and my sex drive, it's right back to where it was...Okay, go ahead, laugh. It's working. By the time you ladies are 50, I'll be 35."-- Samantha Jones, Sex and

the City 2

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✦ Medical Model “Treatment”

- ✦ Prescription Hormone treatments
- ✦ Bioidentical Hormones
- ✦ Nonhormone Prescription drugs



Alternative Therapies

- + Nonprescription Treatments
- + Clinical hypnosis (Menopause Position statement, 2015)
- + Acupuncture



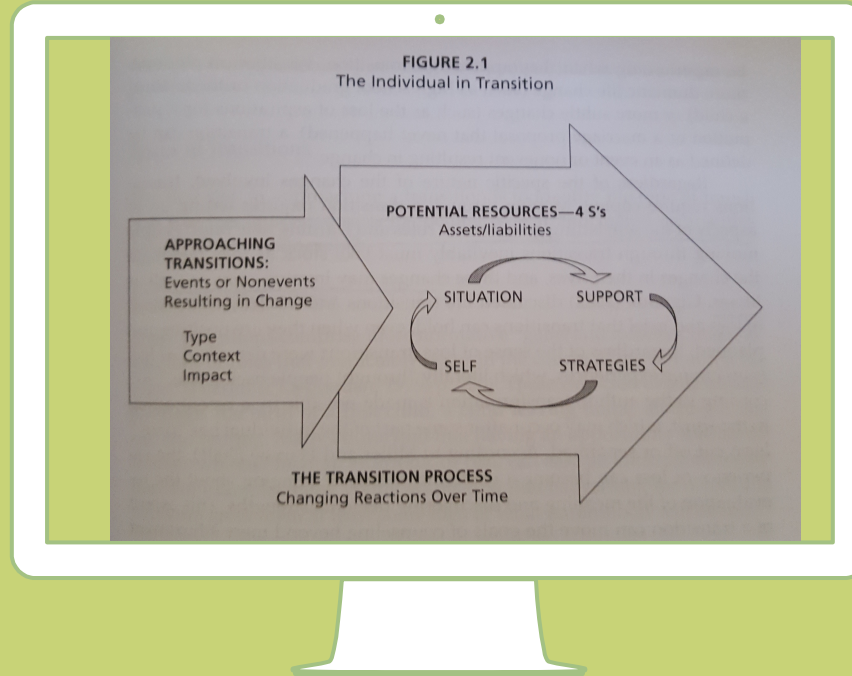
4.

Integrative Approaches to Menopausal Transition

Let's explore a few psychological management/treatment options



Transition Theory (Schlossberg, 2012)



Coping Resources – The 4 S's

(Anderson, Goodman, & Schlossberg, 2012)



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Coping Resources – The 4 S's

(Anderson, Goodman, & Schlossberg, 2012)

- Event or nonevent
- Concurrent stresses
- Perception
- Role changes



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- Relationship partner
- Family, friends
- Medical community
- Other institutions



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- Relationship partner
- Family, friends
- Medical community
- Other institutions

- Personal characteristics
- Psychological resources

Importance of “non-events”

- + Lost childbearing opportunities?
- + Old relationships?
- + Other perceived lost opportunities due to aging?

- ❖ Grieving
- ❖ Refocusing
- ❖ Reshaping



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- Event or nonevent
- Concurrent stresses
- Perception
- Role changes

- Relationship partner
- Family, friends
- Medical community
- Other institutions

- Control the meaning
- Modify the situation

- Personal characteristics
- Psychological resources

Strategies

- + Modify the situation
 - What can she/they control?
 - Manage stress
 - Healthful habits
 - ✓ Balanced diet
 - ✓ Physical activity & exercise
 - ✓ Sleep
 - ✓ Modify drinking behaviors



✦ Strategies

- ✦ Modify the situation
 - Specific sexuality suggestions
 - Communication with partner
 - Education (responsive desire)
 - Regular sex/masturbation
 - Lube, lube, lube
 - Vaginal care (daily moisturizing)
 - Fantasy



Symptoms of Menopause



Reduced fertility

Urinary tract infections

Anal incontinence

Overactive bladder syndrome

Urge incontinence

Urinary incontinence

Anxiety

Depression

Headache

Decreased libido

Fatigue

Insomnia

Hot flashes

Irritability

Weight gain

Osteoporosis

Memory lapses

Vaginal dryness

Night sweats

Flow changes

Cycle skipping

Burning or itchy vagina

Pain on penetration

Vaginal discharge

Vaginal irritation



✦ *Attitudes towards menopausal transition may effect stress, anxiety, and depression, and vice versa which can effect the perceived severity of symptoms.*



✦ *By educating and helping to process the normal transition that their bodies and lives are going through, we can help change the attitudes and perceptions of the menopausal transition generally and the symptoms specifically.*



Resources

Anderson, M., Goodman, J., & Schlossberg, N. (2012). *Counseling adults in transition: Linking Schlossberg's theory with practice in a diverse world* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company, LLC.

Lee, B., Im, E., and Chee, W. (2010). Psychometric evaluation of midlife women's symptom index in multiethnic groups. *Western Journal of Nursing Research* 5, 32(8), pp. 1091-1111.

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Smith, R.L., Gallicchio, L., and Flaws, J.A. (2017) Factors affecting sexual activity in midlife women: Results from the Midlife Health Study. *Journal of Women's Health*, 26(2) pp. 103-108.



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Slides available at www.MeganTorreyPayne.com/AASECT17

