

♥ Menopause Week | What is the menopause? ♥

World menopause day is **Wednesday 18th October 2023**.

Why we need to talk about the menopause.

- 10% of woman who worked during the menopause have left their job due to their symptoms.
- The average age of menopause is 51, whilst the average age of death is 83. We are living longer and working longer.
- 70-80 % of women will experience symptoms, 25% will experience severe symptoms.
- Many women don't recognise their symptoms as being part of the menopause. Each woman will experience the menopause differently but there are common factors.



Why does the menopause start?

Menopause can result from:

- The natural decrease in the production of oestrogen and progesterone, which are the reproductive hormones and regulate menstrual cycles.
- Early onset of menopause - the ovaries stop working
- Premature menopause can also happen when there has been complete hysterectomy when both uterus and ovaries are removed, or when chemotherapy/radiation therapy has been prescribed as part of cancer treatment.

Early onset of menopause

Early menopause can happen naturally if a woman's ovaries stop making normal levels of certain hormones, particularly the hormone oestrogen. This is sometimes called premature ovarian failure, or primary ovarian insufficiency.

The cause of premature ovarian failure is often unknown, but in some women it may be caused by:

- Chromosome abnormalities – such as in women with Turner syndrome
- An autoimmune disease – where the immune system starts attacking body tissues

- Certain infections, such as tuberculosis, malaria and mumps – but this is very rare
- Premature ovarian failure can sometimes run in families. This might be the case if any of your relatives went through the menopause at a very young age (20s or early 30s).

For more information on early menopause visit www.daisynetwork.org

What are the stages of menopause?

The menopause is split into three stages: Perimenopause, the menopause and post menopause.

- **Perimenopause** is the transition time leading up to the menopause:
 - Typically starts in your 40s (average age 47).
 - Usually lasts 4 years but can range from a few months to 10 years.
 - Many women think they are too young to be entering this stage of life and don't recognise the symptoms as part the reduction in hormone levels.
 - Symptoms may include trouble sleeping, mood swings or irregular periods.
- The **menopause** represents a single point in time, 1 year after all menstrual bleeding has stopped:
 - Typically starts between 45-55 years old (average 51) but many women can still be experiencing periods up to age of sixty and beyond.
- **Post menopause:**
 - These are the years after menopause and some symptoms, such as hot flushes, usually ease.
 - Health risks related to the loss of oestrogen increase as you get older.

For further information on menopause and symptoms visit:

www.menopausematters.co.uk

Managing symptoms

There are many ways that the symptoms of menopause can be alleviated and managed through the use of Hormone Replacement treatment (HRT), complementary therapies or herbal remedies, and diet and exercise.