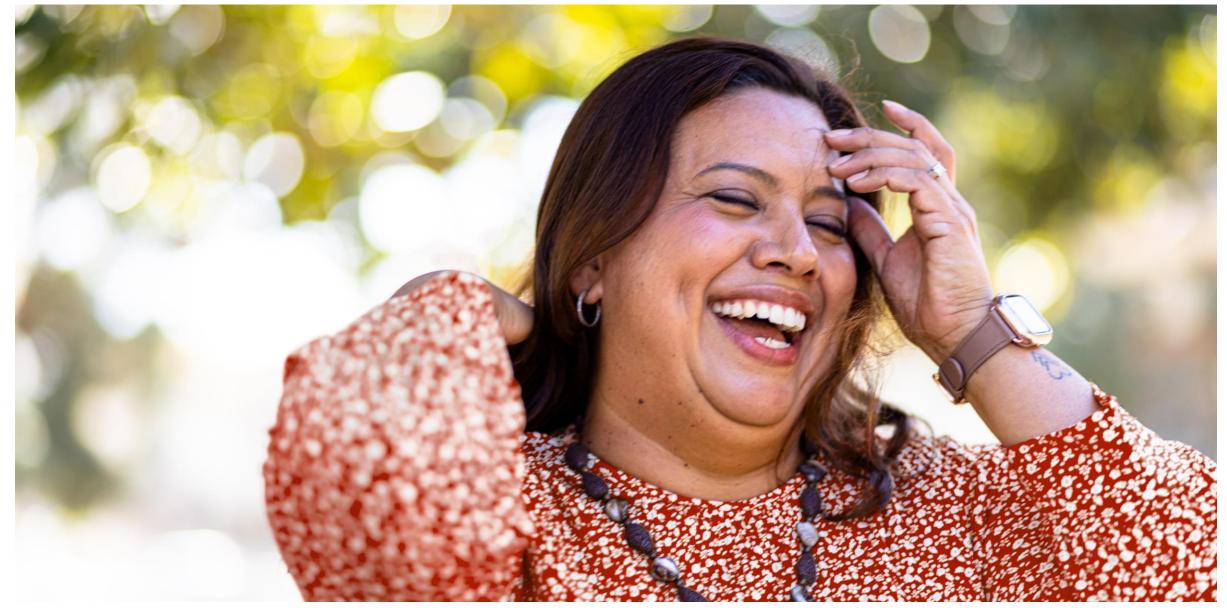


Navigating Hormonal Transitions: Peri-Menopause and Menopausal Screening & Treatment Strategies in Women's Health

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Objectives

- 1. Equip attendees with the latest pharmacological insights, screening tools, and treatment strategies for navigating hormonal transitions during peri-menopause and menopause.
- 2. Enhance clinical competency by delving into the nuanced pharmacological aspects of peri-menopausal and menopausal care. Explore personalized treatment approaches, potential challenges, and interdisciplinary collaboration opportunities.
- 3. Foster a holistic approach to women's health by integrating pharmacological interventions into a broader framework of patient care. Emphasizing the importance of addressing not only hormonal transitions but also the psychosocial, lifestyle, and preventive aspects of women's health.



Introduction

- As advanced practice nurses, we play a pivotal role in women's health. Understanding the hormonal transitions during perimenopause and menopause is essential for providing evidence-based care.
- In this presentation, we will delve into the nuances of perimenopause, discuss effective screening methods, and explore treatment strategies to optimize women's well-being.



Perimenopause: Unraveling The Transition

Definition and Duration:

- Perimenopause is the gradual transition from reproductive years to menopause.
- Typically begins in the late 30s or early 40s and continues until menopause (around age 51).
- Clinical Features:
 - Irregular Menstrual Cycles: Hormonal fluctuations lead to unpredictable periods.
 - Hot Flashes and Night Sweats: Sudden heat sensations disrupt sleep.
 - Mood Changes: Anxiety, irritability, and depression.
 - Vaginal Dryness: Reduced estrogen affects vaginal tissues.
 - Bone Health: Increased risk of osteoporosis.



Me at 39 when someone asks me how long I've been going through perimenopause:

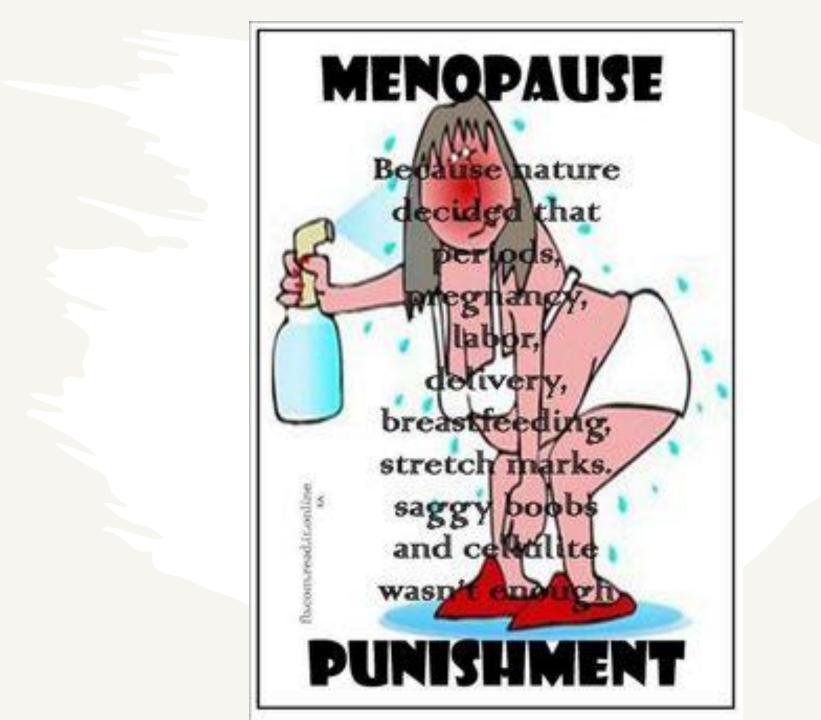


Menopause: The Culmination

Definition and Timing:

- Menopause marks the permanent cessation of menstruation.
- Typically occurs around age 51, but individual variations exist.
- Symptoms:
 - Vasomotor Symptoms: Hot flashes, night sweats, and sleep disturbances.
 - Genitourinary Symptoms: Vaginal dryness, dyspareunia, and urinary changes.
 - Emotional Changes: Mood swings, anxiety, and cognitive alterations.
 - Physical Changes: Bone loss, skin changes, and weight fluctuations.





The Effects of Perimenopause and Menopause: Impact on Quality of Life

Symptoms and Challenges:

- Hot flashes, sleep disturbances, mood swings.
- Physical changes: Hormone fluctuations affect well-being.
- Psychosocial impact: Relationships, self-image, and stress.
- Quality of Life (QoL) Effects:
 - Decreased QoL: Symptomatic perimenopausal women experience lower QoL compared to premenopausal and postmenopausal women¹.
 - Menopause Impact: Fluctuating symptoms affect daily life, including sleep, mood, and physical health².
 - Psychosocial Factors: Educational level, social support, and knowledge about menopause influence QoL³.

<u>1.</u> (Rautenberg et al., 2023) <u>2. (</u>Velasco-Téllez, et al., 2020) <u>3. (Larroy et al., 2020</u>)



Importance of Screening

Early Detection Matters:

- Early identification of hormonal changes allows for timely intervention.
- Screening helps identify women at risk for complications related to hormonal imbalances.
- Addressing symptoms promptly improves quality of life.
- Screening Tools and Protocols:
 - Hormone Levels: Measuring levels of follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) and estradiol can provide insights into hormonal status.
 - Symptom Assessment: Assessing symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, mood changes, and sleep disturbances.
 - Bone Density Testing: Osteoporosis risk increases during menopause; screening helps detect bone loss.
 - Cardiovascular Risk Assessment: Hormonal changes impact cardiovascular health.



Importance of Screening

Psychosocial Impact:

- Hormonal transitions affect mental health, including anxiety and depression.
- Screening allows for early intervention and support.
- Individualized Approach:
 - Tailor screening based on individual risk factors, symptoms, and patient preferences.
 - Consider lifestyle, family history, and comorbidities.



Screening Tools for Hormonal Transitions

Meno Health Questionnaire:

- This comprehensive questionnaire helps ۲ gather information about a woman's menopause experience and general health.
- It covers personal details, medical history, and lifestyle factors.
- Healthcare providers can use it to tailor care plans and support overall health.

13. SYMPTOMS

bothered you are now and in the past few weeks by any of the following:

	Not at all	A little bit	Quite a bit	Extrer
ave hot flashes				
ave night sweats				
ave difficulty getting to sleep				
ave difficulty staying asleep				
et heart palpitations or a sensation of outterflies in my chest or stomach				
el like my skin is crawling or itching				
el more tired than usual				
ave difficulty concentrating				
memory is poor				
m more irritable than usual				
el more anxious than usual				
ave more depressed moods				
m having mood swings				
ave crying spells				
ave headaches				
eed to urinate more often than usual				
ak urine				
ave pain or burning when urinating				
ave bladder infections				
ave uncontrollable loss of stool or gas				
vagina is dry				
ave vaginal itching				
ave an abnormal vaginal discharge				
ave vaginal infections				
ave pain during intercourse				
ave pain inside during intercourse				
ave bleeding after intercourse				
ick desire or interest in sexual activity				
ave difficulty achieving orgasm				
opportunity for sexual activity is limited				
stomach feels like it's bloated or 've gained weight				
ave breast tenderness	n	n	n	

Perimenopause and Menopause checklist

<u>Perimenopause and menopause</u> symptom checklist | Jean Hailes

What's bothering you?

Perimenopause and menopause symptom checklist

Symptoms of perimenopause and menopause are different for everyone. Tick 🗹 the boxes to show which symptoms are bothering you. Take the checklist with you to your next medical appointment.

Symptom	Not at all	A little bit	Quite a bit	Extremely
Hot flushes (feeling waves of heat)				
Sweating at night				
Trouble sleeping				
Muscle and joint pains				
Heart beating quickly or strongly				
Brain fog (difficulty concentrating)				
Forgetfulness				
Less sexual desire				
Dry vagina (causing painful sex)				
Anxiety				
Itchy skin				
Tiredness				
Wee (urinary) problems				
Irregular periods				
Mood changes (feeling unhappy or depressed)				
Weight gain				
*based on the Greene Climacteric Scale				

What is perimenopause?

Perimenopause is the time leading up to menopause, when periods become irregular and hormone levels fluctuate.

What is menopause?

Menopause is your final menstrual period. Most women in Australia reach menopause from 45 to 55 years of age.

If symptoms are affecting your quality of life, talk to your doctor.

For more information, visit the NSW Menopause Toolkit nsw.gov.au/menopause

Jean Hailes for Women's Health



Importance of Early Detection

- Approximately 75% of women experience symptoms during peri-menopause.
- Timely Intervention and early identification of hormonal changes allows for prompt intervention.
- Screening helps identify women at risk for complications related to hormonal imbalances.
- Addressing symptoms promptly improves quality of life.
- Tailor screening based on individual risk factors, symptoms, and patient preferences.



Quality of Life Assessment

Why Assess Quality of Life?

- Quality of life (QoL) is a crucial aspect of overall well-being.
- During hormonal transitions, understanding QoL helps tailor interventions and support.



Screening Tools for QOL Assessment

WHOQOL-BREF Questionnaire:

•Measures overall QoL and specific aspects.

•Includes domains related to:

- Physical Health
- Psychological Health
- Social Relations
- Environment

•Consists of 24 questions assessing various dimensions of QoL.

•Also includes questions about an individual's overall perception of their QoL and health ¹



Symptom Specific Tools

Consider tools that focus on menopausal symptoms affecting QoL:

- Sleep Disturbance: Impact on daily functioning.
- Psychological Distress: Assess mood, anxiety, and stress.
- Depressive Symptoms: Evaluate mood-related challenges.
- Mood Symptoms: Address emotional well-being.



Assess Personal Medical History

Assess risk factors for:

- Breast Cancer
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Thromboembolic Disease
- Osteoporosis



How is Menopause Diagnosed?

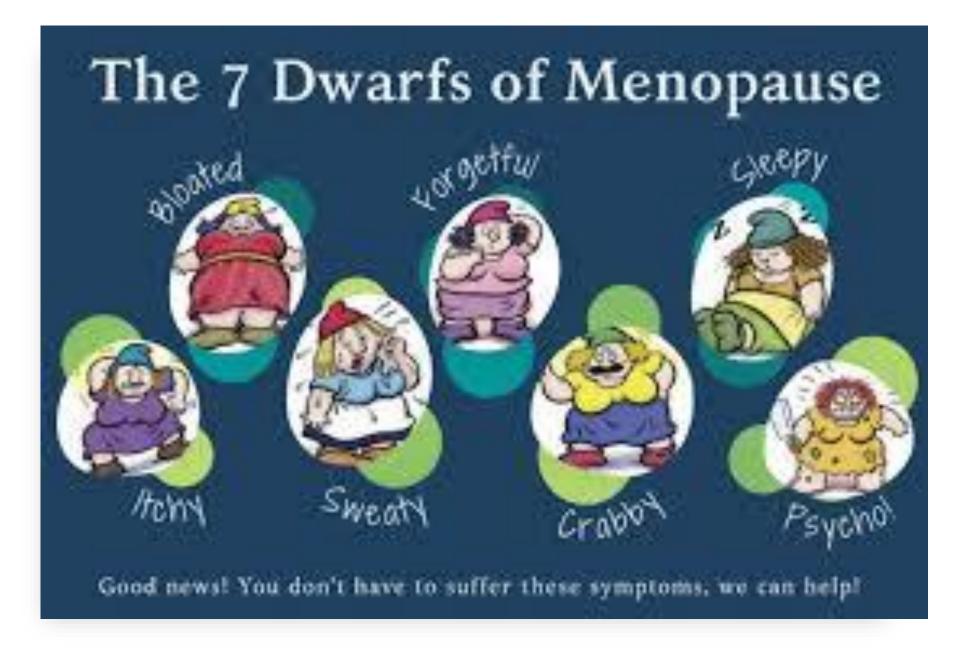
- Peri-Menopause: not advisable to test hormones and base off symptoms.
- For patients younger than 45 years who present with irregular or absent menstrual cycles, providers should order follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH).
 - FSH levels vary during perimenopause.
 - Endocrine disorders should be ruled out as causes of secondary amenorrhea
 - Hyperprolactinemia
 - hypothyroidism)
 - Pregnancy
- Patients younger than 40 years presenting with irregular cycles and menopausal symptoms, conduct a complete work-up for secondary amenorrhea
 - FSH
 - serum estradiol
 - Pregnancy



How is Menopause Diagnosed?

- For people older than 45 years who have symptoms of menopause or amenorrhea, a work-up with laboratory tests and imaging is not indicated unless symptoms are suggestive of an alternative diagnosis.
- Pregnancy should be ruled out among sexually active patients who are not using contraception.
- Atypical vasomotor symptoms or more frequent an atypical diagnosis should be considered.
 - carcinoid syndrome, pheochromocytoma, and hematologic or solid organ malignant diseases





Pharmacological Interventions

Pharmacological interventions are appropriate during peri-menopause and menopause when managing specific symptoms or improving overall well-being. Here are scenarios where they may be considered:

- Moderate to Severe Symptoms:
 - When menopausal symptoms significantly impact a woman's quality of life (e.g., hot flashes, mood changes, sleep disturbances).
 - Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) or other medications can provide relief.
- Vasomotor Symptoms:
 - For bothersome hot flashes and night sweats, HRT or non-hormonal options (e.g., SSRIs, gabapentin) may be effective.



Pharmacological Interventions

- Bone Health:
 - Osteoporosis risk increases during menopause.
 - Medications (e.g., bisphosphonates) can help maintain bone density.
- Psychological Distress:
 - Antidepressants (SSRIs) are useful for managing mood symptoms.
 - Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) can address anxiety and depression.

Individualized Approach:

- Consider patient preferences, risk factors, and coexisting conditions.
- Collaborate with the patient to tailor treatment.



Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

Role: HRT involves replacing estrogen and/or progesterone to alleviate menopausal symptoms. First line of treatment for vasomotor symptoms for both menopausal and perimenopausal patients. The estrogen component of therapy reduces bothersome menopausal symptoms, while the progestin protects the endometrium from hyperplasia and reduces the risk of endometrial cancer.

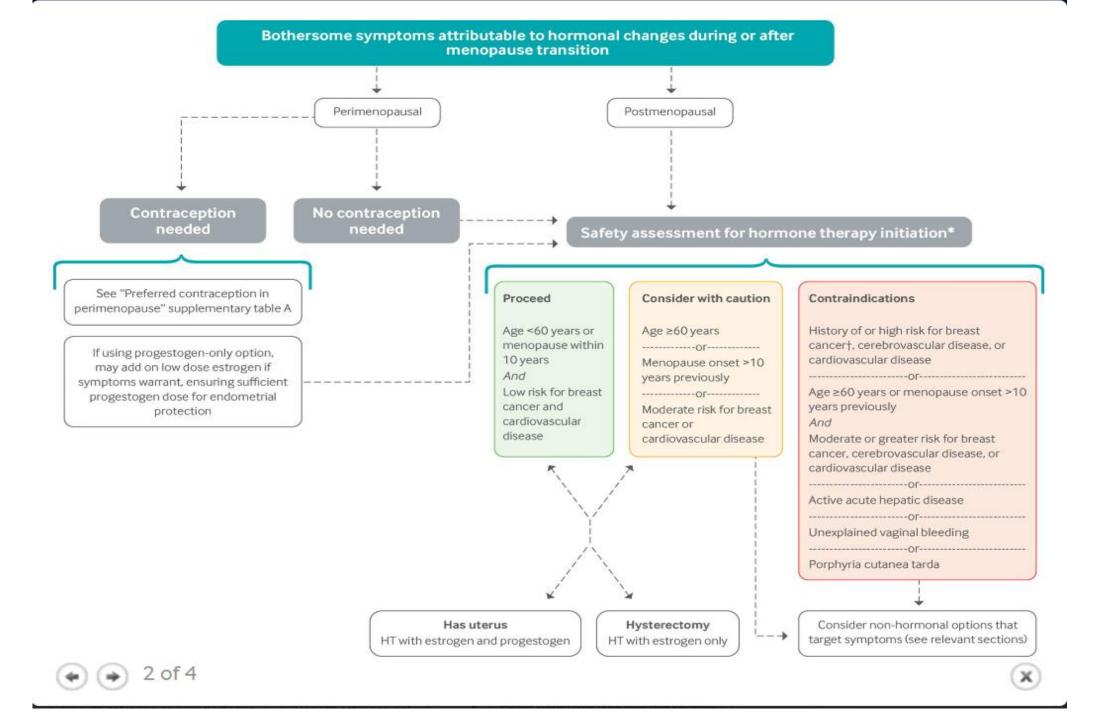
Benefits:

- Reduces hot flashes, night sweats, and vaginal dryness.
- Improves bone health.
- May enhance mood and cognitive function.

Considerations:

- Individualized approach based on symptoms, risk factors, and patient preferences.
- Discuss potential risks (e.g., breast cancer, cardiovascular events) with patients.





Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

Types of HRT:

- Estrogen-only: Suitable for women who have had a hysterectomy.
- Combined (Estrogen + Progestin): For women with an intact uterus.

Routes of Administration:

- Oral: Pills or tablets.
- Transdermal: Patches, gels, or creams.
- Vaginal: Creams or rings for localized symptoms.

Duration:

- Short-term: For symptom relief during early menopause.
- Long-term: For osteoporosis prevention in postmenopausal women.



Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

Other hormone therapies for treating the symptoms of menopause during menopausal transition are combination therapy of levonorgestrel releasingintrauterine system (LNG-IUS) with oral or percutaneous estrogen, low-dose combined oral contraceptives (COCs), and estrogen–progestogen therapy (EPT).



Hormone Therapy Contraindications

Breast cancer

Endometrial cancer (advanced stage hormonal or non-hormonal)

Untreated endometrial hyperplasia or cancer

Unexplained vaginal bleeding

Myocardial infarction, stroke, or transient ischemic attack

Uncontrolled hypertension

Peripheral artery disease

Unprovoked venous thromboembolism

Known clotting disorder

Cirrhosis

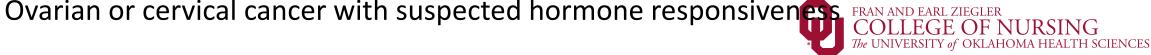
Active hepatitis

Porphyria cutanea tarda



Hormone Therapy Comorbidities of Concern

Controlled hypertension
Hyperlipidemia
Diabetes
Smoking
Provoked venous thromboembolism
Chronic inflammatory states
HIV
Gallbladder disease



New Treatment Options

Conjugated Estrogens/Bazedoxifene (Duavee) is a fixed-dose combination medication for the treatment of menopause symptoms and postmenopausal osteoporosis.

- Selective Estrogen Receptor Modulator (SERM)
- Conjugated Estrogen
- Dosage 0.45mg/20mg orally daily
- For women with an intact uterus
- Not studied in woman over 75
- Not recommended for in people with renal impairment
- Came out in 2016 but was taken off the market due to packaging issues, back on market in 2023.



New Treatment Options

Fezolinetant (Veozah) is used for the treatment of menopausal vasomotor symptoms.

- Approved in the by the US FDA in May of 2023
- Fezolinetant is the first neurokinin 3 (NK3) receptor antagonist to treat severe hot flashes.
- side effects include:
 - abdominal pain, diarrhea, insomnia, back pain, hot flushes and elevated hepatic transaminases.
- Dosage:
 - 45mg daily
- Monitor Liver Function at baseline, 3, 6, and 9 months.
- Contraindicated in liver disease, severe renal disease, concomitant use with CYP1A2 inhibitors
- Costly



Role of Bio-Identical Hormones

Bio-Identical Hormones (BHRT):

- BHRT refers to hormones that are processed to closely mimic the hormones naturally produced by your body's glands.
- These hormones can be beneficial for individuals experiencing symptoms of low or unbalanced hormones, especially during perimenopause and menopause.
- BHRT aims to alleviate various symptoms associated with hormonal changes, such as hot flashes, mood fluctuations, and genitourinary discomfort.
- Not FDA approved.
- Various formulations: creams, troches, patches, pellets.
- Are not without risk.



- Approximately half of women experiencing menopausal transition explore complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) treatments.
- Disclosure Gap: Many women do not openly discuss their CAM use with healthcare providers.



Phytoestrogens and Soy Isoflavones:

- Usage: Phytoestrogens, including soy isoflavones, have been traditionally used for menopausal symptom management.
- Variable Effects: However, a meta-analysis suggests that soy isoflavones do not significantly reduce vasomotor symptoms compared to placebo.
- Population Studies: Large-scale studies have found no consistent improvement in vasomotor symptoms with soy isoflavones.



Equol

- Equol Conversion and Metabolism: Some women can convert the isoflavone daidzein to equol, which is believed to be the biologically active form.
 - Equol is a chemical that originates from soy.
 - It shares some similarities with the hormone estrogen
 - Equol exists in two forms: R-equol and S-equol. When soy is consumed, specific gut bacteria transform the soy's chemicals into equol. However, this conversion only occurs in 20-60% of individuals. Those who can convert soy chemicals into equol are referred to as equol producers.
 - Can provide relief of menopausal symptoms but not enough evidence to support effectiveness in other conditions such as osteoporosis.



Black Cohosh:

Research on black cohosh is complex and conflicting.

- Heterogeneity: Variability in black cohosh compounds exists due to limited regulation in most countries.
- Safety Consideration: If product purity is assured, black cohosh may be a helpful and safe option.



Non Hormonal Options

Antidepressants:

- Paroxetine (Brisdelle): An FDA-approved non-hormonal medication specifically for hot flashes due to menopause.
- Fluoxetine, Citalopram, and Escitalopram: These SSRIs have been studied and found effective for symptom relief.
- Venlafaxine and Desvenlafaxine: These SNRIs (serotoninnorepinephrine reuptake inhibitors) may also help.



Non Hormonal Options

Gabapentin and Pregabalin:

 Originally used for seizures and nerve pain, these medications have shown benefit in managing hot flashes.

Clonidine:

Typically used for high blood pressure, clonidine can reduce hot flashes.

No benefit for vaginal issues, sexual dysfunction, or improvement on bone health.



Non Hormonal Options

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):

- CBT has shown promise in managing menopausal symptoms, including hot flashes and night sweats.
- It focuses on changing thought patterns and behaviors to improve overall well-being.

Clinical Hypnosis:

- Clinical hypnosis can help alleviate hot flashes and night sweats.
- It involves deep relaxation and guided imagery to reduce symptom intensity.



Discontinuing HRT

Risk-Benefit Balance:

- HRT is typically recommended for the shortest duration necessary to manage menopausal symptoms.
- Prolonged use may increase the risk of certain health issues.
- Consider discontinuing if the benefits no longer outweigh the risks.

Natural Aging:

• Menopausal symptoms often decrease naturally.

Health Conditions:

- Certain medical conditions (e.g., breast cancer) may necessitate stopping HRT.
- The risk of breast cancer is associated with HRT use.



Lifestyle Modifications

- Diet: Calcium-rich foods, vitamin D, and magnesium.
- Exercise: Weight-bearing exercises to maintain bone density.
- Stress Management: Yoga, meditation, and relaxation techniques.



Long-Term Health Considerations

Cardiovascular Health:

- Estrogen's Role: Estrogen protects against heart disease.
- Monitor Blood Pressure and Cholesterol Levels.
- Lifestyle Modifications: Regular exercise, healthy diet, and smoking cessation.

Bone Health:

- Calcium and Vitamin D Supplementation.
- Weight-Bearing Exercises.
- Avoid Smoking and Excessive Alcohol.

Emotional Well-Being:

- Counseling and Support Groups.
- Address Mood Changes and Anxiety.



Follow UP

Cardiovascular Health:

- Estrogen's Role: Estrogen protects against heart disease.
- Monitor Blood Pressure and Cholesterol Levels.
- Lifestyle Modifications: Regular exercise, healthy diet, and smoking cessation. Breast Health:
 - Screenings per guidelines and patient risks

Vaginal Health;

• Pap Smear per guidelines and patient risks

Bone Health:

- Calcium and Vitamin D Supplementation.
- Weight-Bearing Exercises.
- Avoid Smoking and Excessive Alcohol.

Emotional Well-Being:

- Counseling and Support Groups.
- Address Mood Changes and Anxiety.



Conclusion

- Navigating perimenopause and menopause requires informed decisions, personalized care, and a holistic approach. By understanding the hormonal transitions and implementing evidence-based strategies, women can embrace this life stage with confidence and vitality.
- Remember, perimenopause and menopause are not phases to endure but opportunities to thrive!



HOTFLASHING IS MY SUPERPOWER

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