

## What is the Menopause?

The menopause is when a woman stops menstruating and is no longer able to get pregnant naturally. Periods usually start to become less frequent over a few months or years before they stop altogether. Sometimes they can stop suddenly.

The menopause is a natural part of ageing that usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age, as a woman's oestrogen levels decline. In the UK, the average age for a woman to reach the menopause is 51.

However, one in 100 women experience the menopause before the age of 40. The menopause can be an unsettling time for some women due to the significant changes they will experience, while others can go through the process with no problems at all.

## What are the stages of Menopause?

### Premature Menopause/ Premature Ovarian Insufficiency

# The Menopause

**A List of Menopause Symptoms**

- Physical symptoms**
  - Hair loss
  - Weight gain
  - Brittle nails
  - Vaginal dryness
  - Sleep disorders
  - Dizziness
  - Incontinence
  - Allergies
  - Breast pain
  - Headaches
  - Joint pain
  - Itchy skin
  - Irregular periods
  - Irregular heartbeat
  - Osteoporosis
- Psychological symptoms**
  - Mood swings
  - Fatigue
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - Irritability
  - Difficulty concentrating
  - Memory lapses
  - Loss of libido
- Vasomotor symptoms**
  - Changes in body odor
  - Hot flashes
  - Night sweats
- Oral symptoms**
  - Burning tongue
  - Gum problems
- Digestive symptoms**
  - Bloating
  - Digestive problems
- Nervous system symptoms**
  - Electric shock sensations
  - Tingling extremities

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Around one in 100 women experience the menopause before 40 years of age. This is known as Premature Menopause or Premature Ovarian insufficiency.

## Peri Menopause

Peri menopause is the stage leading up to the menopause where symptoms can begin and again can vary from person to person.

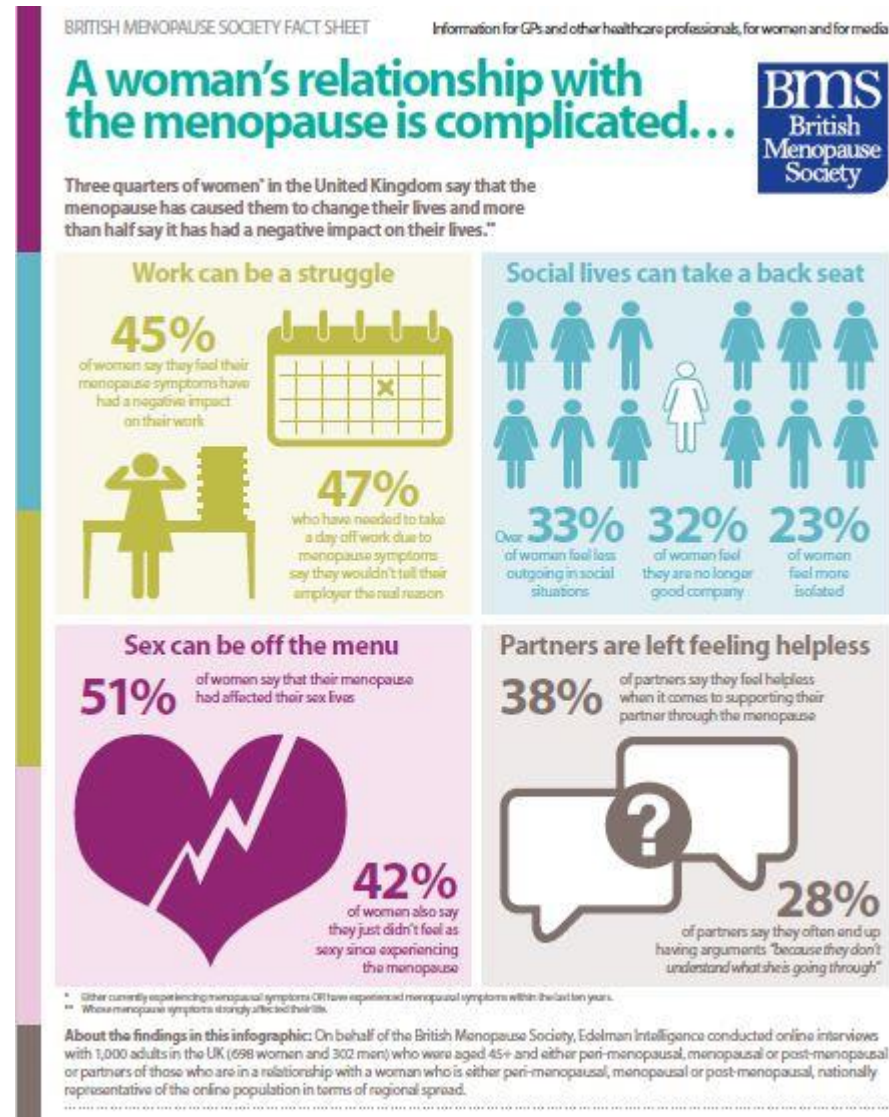
## Menopause

Menopause is defined as the time when there has been no menstrual periods for 12 consecutive months and no other biological or physiological cause can be identified. It is the end of fertility, the end of the childbearing years. (A woman may still, however, be able to become pregnant unless 12 consecutive months have passed without a period.)

## Post menopause

The day after menopause, a woman is declared in postmenopausal.

Unfortunately, many of the symptoms experienced during perimenopause can linger into post menopause. Moreover, consistently low hormone levels may produce the risk of developing more serious health conditions if not addressed promptly.



Aging women can relieve any symptoms and reduce the risk of complications by promoting hormonal health.

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### Who will experience symptoms?

Three in four women will experience menopausal symptoms and one in four of those cases will be serious and will have a real impact on day to day activities, this can at times become distressing.

Most women will experience some symptoms around the menopause. The duration and severity of these symptoms varies from woman to woman.

Symptoms usually start a few months or years before your periods stop, known as the perimenopause, and can persist for some time afterwards.

On average, most symptoms last around 4 years from your last period. However, around 1 in every 10 women experience them for up to 12 years.

If you experience the menopause suddenly rather than gradually – for example, as a result of cancer treatment – your symptoms may be worse.

Some medications and surgeries can see some women going through the menopause earlier than expected age due to the changes in the body.

