



Onset of menopausal symptoms

Do I really have to suffer from them from now on?

Easy answer: No, there are a multitude of possibilities to treat them!

Around 80% of women will go into menopause between the age of 48 and 52 years. During this time, you may experience perimenopausal symptoms which can be rather annoying and may interfere with your daily life – and nights! In general, these symptoms can last for 7 to 14 years which is a very long time to go through various uncomfortable sensations. Luckily, most women will not be bothered by any symptoms, other than noticing the alteration in their menstrual periods. But some are not so lucky.

Perimenopausal symptoms consist of hot flushes, followed by spells of sweating which are especially awkward during night times. These will reduce quality sleeping time, which will cause irritability and mood swings during daytime. You will feel tired and depleted of energy, and sleep deprivation can ultimately cause depression. Other symptoms include age- and hormone-dependent changes to your skin and hair. Soft-tissue skin tends to be dryer due to reduced blood flow which can lead to urinary bladder infection and worsening urinary incontinence.

The reason behind this upheaval of the female body is the loss of oestrogen and progesterone due to reduced activity of the ovaries. These two female hormones can be measured through a blood test and now even in your saliva. Additionally, it is even more important to rule out other conditions in the body such as thyroid gland dysfunction, lack of vitamins or trace elements.

The good news is that there are many treatment options and remedies available to reduce and even relieve you from your discomfort.

First of all, improve your lifestyle: eat healthy food, avoid alcohol and smoking, don't overdo it on caffeine, do sport and take time to relax, or even start yoga, meditation or qigong classes.

Dietary supplements such as vitamins (e.g. B6, B12 and D3) and minerals (e.g. calcium) are helpful, and vitamins C and

E, as well as the trace element selenium, have antioxidant properties. The antioxidant activity can be best described as fighting against destructive cells in your body – even possible cancerogenic cells.

Another option to tackle your problems could be found at your quality herbal shop down the road after consulting your specialised doctor. Recommended products may include black cohosh, chaste tree, red clover, primrose oil and many more.

There are also natural plants, roots and mushrooms, like maca and ashwagandha, which can help you to cope with stress and regulate the balance between different control centres in your brain.

Over the last few years, melatonin has become one of the most emphasised hormones to overcome sleeplessness. Calming effects as well as sleep-inducing activity can be obtained from balm, St John's wort and passion flowers.

Finally, hormone therapy treatment may be prescribed by your doctor. It can be applied as tablets, patches, gels, creams or even ointments, depending on your underlying medical history. Nowadays, bio-identical hormones are even extracted from soy or yam roots.

There is a huge variety in clinical symptoms associated with perimenopause, but chances are better than ever for you to find the necessary individualised treatment that you need. Consult your general practitioner or gynaecologist for the best way to help you. 🌿

Dr. Bettina Allgaier-Zalto

