

MENOPAUSE

It doesn't have to be unpleasant.

Menopause is a natural biological process that marks the end of a woman's reproductive years. While menopause is a natural part of aging, its physical and emotional effects do not have to impact a woman's overall well-being.

Menopause is a biological shift in hormones. The shifting, unpredictable hormones of menopause are why women have symptoms. It is also why menopause doesn't have to be unpleasant. By regulating the changing hormones the symptoms of menopause may be greatly reduced or even eliminated.

Hormonal Changes of Menopause

1. Decline in Estrogen:

Estrogen is a key hormone that regulates the menstrual cycle and plays a crucial role in maintaining bone density, heart health, and vaginal elasticity. During menopause, the ovaries produce less estrogen, leading to a decline in its circulating levels.

2. Decline in Progesterone:

Progesterone is another hormone produced by the ovaries, and it works in conjunction with estrogen to regulate the menstrual cycle. As menopause approaches, progesterone production also decreases.

3. Increase in Follicle-Stimulating Hormone (FSH) and Luteinizing Hormone (LH):

The decline in estrogen and progesterone levels triggers an increase in the production of FSH and LH. Elevated levels of FSH and LH are characteristic of menopause and are often used as diagnostic markers.

Typical Symptoms of Menopause

- Hot Flashes - sudden, intense feeling of heat.
- Night Sweats - excessive sweating during sleep.
- Vaginal Dryness - may lead to discomfort during sex.
- Mood Swings - emotional changes, including depression.
- Sleep Disturbances - changes in sleep patterns.

Natural Treatments for Menopause

Here are some herbal treatments that women may consider for managing menopausal symptoms.

It is highly recommended that you work with a Naturopathic Doctor before implementing any of these treatments.

Black Cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*)

Black cohosh is one of the most studied herbal remedies for menopausal symptoms.

Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*) and Dong Quai (*Angelica sinensis*)

These herbs have a mild estrogenic effect.

Evening Primrose Oil (*Oenothera biennis*)

Evening primrose oil contains gamma-linolenic acid (GLA), which helps to regulate hormonal changes.

Chasteberry (*Vitex agnus-castus*)

Chasteberry modulates LH, progesterone, prolactin, and estrogen, which helps to regulate hormonal changes.

Dietary Lifestyle Changes

- Increase Calcium and Vitamin D Intake** - The risk of osteoporosis increases during menopause.
- Incorporate Phytoestrogens** - Phytoestrogens are plant compounds with estrogen-like properties.
- Focus on Healthy Fats** - Prioritize sources of healthy fats, such as omega-3 fatty acids found in fatty fish, flaxseeds, chia seeds, and walnuts. These fats support cardiovascular health and may positively impact mood and inflammation.
- Stay Hydrated** - Adequate hydration is important. Drink plenty of water to support overall health and maintain hydration levels.
- Manage Sugar Intake** - Limit added sugars in the diet can help stabilize blood and prioritize natural sources of sweetness, such as fruits.

