

# Health Bubble

CHAMP –SHARING TOMORROWS QUALITY HEALTH TODAY

## MENOPAUSE

Menopause is a milestone in the life of a woman, this is when the ovaries stop producing eggs naturally and the monthly menses (periods) stop.

Menopause is caused by the reduction in the production of the hormone oestrogen by the ovaries. The hormone oestrogen plays a role in the menstrual cycle, causing the ovaries to produce mature eggs. When the levels of oestrogen drop the ovaries stop producing eggs regularly and eventually stop producing eggs.

A woman is said to be in menopause after 12 months without a menstrual period.

This process begins somewhere in the fourth decade of life (40s) and is usually complete by the beginning of the sixth decade (60s).

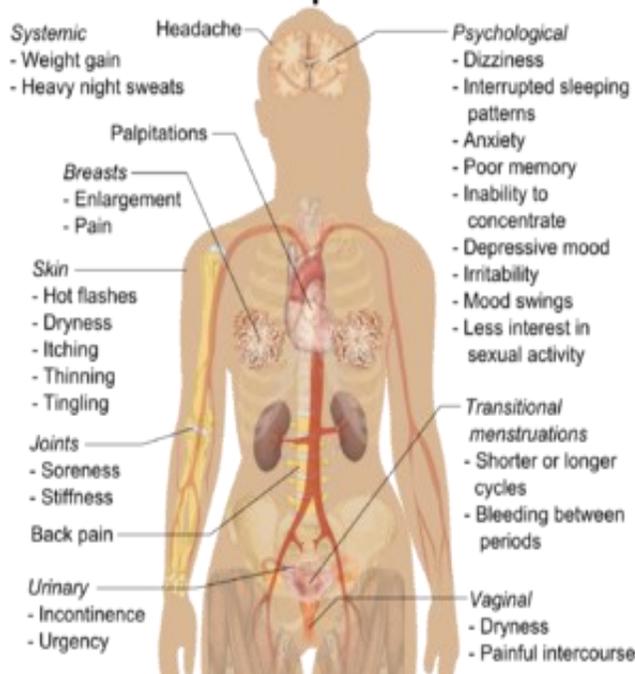
In a few women the ovaries stop producing eggs due to other reasons, surgical removal of ovaries, certain types of radiation therapy and chemotherapy, some infections (though rare) affect the ovaries and certain medical conditions prevent the ovaries from producing eggs, before the age of 45 years, this condition is called Premature Ovarian Failure.

### LIFE AFTER MENOPAUSE

There are several “natural” herbal remedies that claim to halt the effects of menopause. At the end of the day as a post menopausal woman it is important to keep up with exercise, eat a healthy diet with an increase in fibre and water. Increasing the amount of dairy products is recommended in order to help maintain bone density.



### Symptoms of Menopause



*While some women are affected by all symptoms of menopause, there are some that transition without any excessive symptoms.*

**DIAGNOSIS:** Because menopause is a natural process that happens after the age of 45 years, it is only when this process starts earlier than 45 years a doctor may recommend testing certain hormone levels to rule out any other conditions that may mimic menopause.

### TREATMENT

Menopause in itself is not “treated”, if a woman feels that the side effects of the hormone changes are affecting her normal life, the symptom that is affecting her the most is then managed. One of the options for treatment is hormone replacement therapy, it is important to note that this does not protect against pregnancy, therefore if under the age of 50 years you will need to continue with some form of contraceptive for up to two years after your last period and if older than 50 years for one year. Vaginal lubricants are used in the case of excessive vaginal dryness. Clonidine may be used to treat hot flashes and night sweats.



[www.champzambia.org](http://www.champzambia.org)