

Homeopathy and the Menopause

The menopause need not be the end, it could be the beginning. It usually occurs in women between the ages of 40 and 55. A hysterectomy and some other gynaecological procedures may induce a premature menopause. While for some women the menopause can last for months or years, giving rise to a variety of troublesome symptoms, many women do not experience unpleasant symptoms at all. Instead, they find liberation from periods and enhanced energy. The menopause is often welcomed as a chance to change old habits and develop new interests. It is a time of transition when unresolved issues from the past often surface. Looking at these and letting them go can often help you to move on positively into a new phase of life.

What happens at the Menopause?

During the menopause the hormones oestrogen and progesterone, which control the menstrual cycle, are produced in lower quantities until periods stop altogether. Other hormones including follicle-stimulating hormone and luteinising hormone, now produced in higher quantities, can give rise to unwanted symptoms of the menopause, such as hot flushes and night sweats which are the most common. For some women, other symptoms include mood swings, depression, irritability, fatigue, panic attacks, palpitations, vaginal dryness, muscle and bone pain and sometimes weight-gain.

How can homeopathy help?

A homeopath will make an assessment of your needs as a whole person in addition to the mental, emotional and physical problems associated with the menopause. This means that your feelings and life situations as well as physical symptoms are taken into account when finding the best remedy for you as an individual. Hormonal imbalances respond particularly well to homeopathic treatment.

During this important transitional stage of life, homeopathic treatment will give you more confidence, a happier perspective, a clearer sense of self and of what you want out of life, as well as a smoother passage through the change. Homeopathy has remedies to balance and support women throughout the whole of their lives, including puberty, pregnancy and childbirth as well as menopause. If you experience menopausal symptoms, do contact a homeopath for advice and help. They will treat your constitution, based on the whole of your symptoms and personality. This will restore a healthy balance, both physically and emotionally, and bring a sense of well-being. The menopause is a natural process so it makes sense to treat it as naturally as possible, with diet, exercise, and homeopathy. These methods enable you to take charge of your health and go forward with joy and confidence to the next phase of your life. By taking care of your health at this time you will be laying the basis of good health into your later years.

Homeopathic remedies

A single remedy may be prescribed from a variety of sources and in a number of dilutions, such as Pulsatilla (an anemone flower), Sepia (a sea creature), or Sulphur (a mineral). The homeopath has thousands of remedies to choose from and the process of choosing the right remedy is very individual. Just a handful of these remedies are readily available in pharmacies and health food shops. It can be very difficult to evaluate your own situation clearly. Take a look at our other leaflet, Homeopathy Simply Explained, for further explanation.

Unlike first-aid prescribing, if you are suffering from menopausal problems you are advised not to prescribe for yourself, but rather to consult a homeopath and so obtain a professional opinion. The correctly chosen remedy in the right potency may help not only the flushes, for example, but may help you achieve

a new balance.

HRT and its problems

Some women find that hormone replacement therapy (HRT) agrees with them but very many do not. There may be unpleasant side effects, or concern about the possible long-term effects, as yet unknown. Certainly, because HRT has an effect on the circulatory system, it should be avoided if there is any history of circulatory problems, the cardiovascular benefits are unproven. It can increase the risks of raised blood pressure, migraines, strokes and thrombosis and should be avoided if there is a history any of these complaints. There are also increased risks of breast and endometrial cancer. HRT is a way of delaying the menopause. You may find therefore that while some symptoms are contained, they return as soon as you stop the HRT. There are so many natural ways to compensate for the hormonal changes.

Changing food habits might help

These are only a few suggestions as there are many ways to healthier eating. Natural phyto-oestrogens can be found in tofu and miso. Vitamin E helps to reduce hot flushes. Foods which contain vitamin E include spinach and other dark green vegetables, vegetable oils, eggs and tuna. Avoid hot spicy foods, and reduce anxiety and palpitations by cutting down on coffee. Eating whole grains, and adequate amounts of fruit and vegetables will help. Most people in the west eat too much protein, which causes the body to take calcium from the bones to process it. A properly balanced long term vegetarian diet protects against osteoporosis.

Other ways to help

Weight bearing exercise such as walking and cycling can guard against some of the negative effects of the menopause and help protect against osteoporosis. Yoga and meditation are valuable in helping to keep mind and body flexible. Many women experience increased energy and serenity after the menopause. Times of transition bring their own gains.

General health

Not all problems that occur at the time of the menopause are due to these changes in the body. There may be different reasons for aches and pains, poor sleep and any other problems. For many women this time of life corresponds with other changes, such as children leaving home, which may be stressful, or there may be unrelated health problems. If symptoms persist a medical practitioner can be consulted for a general health check. Whatever the problem, homeopathy, in the hands of a qualified homeopath, can probably help.

Homeopathy and transition

The female menopause is not the only important transition in the lives of human beings. Some people believe that we experience phases of transition every 7 years. Certainly puberty is a major time of change and many of the problems which can arise in these years can also benefit from homeopathic treatment.

Men as well as women experience transitional changes around their late forties or fifties. They also may feel they can benefit from a fresh look at their diet and lifestyle. They may also be helped by homeopathic treatment in order to make the best preparation for the next stage of their life.

Homeopathy in books

If you would like to know more about some of the remedies most often indicated and the circumstances in which they might be helpful there are a number of good books on the market to give you more information. Many homeopaths recommend one of these paperback books, obtainable from

homeopathic pharmacies if your bookshop does not have them.

Homeopathy and the Menopause by Beth MacEoin RSHom. Harper Collins 1995
Menopause, the commonsense approach by Ruth Appleby RSHom. Gill & Macmillan 1998
Women ripening through the menopause by Melissa Assilem RSHom. Idolatry Ink 1996
Whole woman homeopathy, the comprehensive guide by Judyth Reichenberg-Ullman ND DHANP. Prima Publishing 2000

It is important that you feel happy with the manner and approach of your homeopath. In that way you will be more able to give your homeopath the information needed to prescribe well for you.

How do I find qualified homeopath?

To find a homeopath consult the Register of the Society of Homeopaths. All homeopaths registered with the Society practise in accordance with a Code of Ethics and Practice, hold professional insurance and have passed stringent academic and clinical assessments before being admitted to the Register.

This leaflet is by The Society of Homeopaths

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