



Hello,

Menopause can often be an exaggerated version of PMS; therefore, it may be very helpful for you to read the PMS letter alongside this one.

I am sharing snippets of information to guide you through menopause as learnt from an expert on women's hormonal wellbeing, [Maryon Stewart](#). She opts for the natural approach to healing. See her book *Managing Menopause Naturally*, published by New World Library, Jan '21.

Nevertheless, anyone who does wish to explore options other than the purely natural one, please see the natural vs HRT information on our website.

Maryon shares that published medical research clearly shows that menopause need not be the beginning of the end of quality of life, because with a little science-based knowledge it can be the beginning of a whole new chapter in a woman's life – symptom free and feeling better than ever.

Technically, menopause is actually one day, it is the day our last cycle starts. In the UK the average age is 51 (the typical range is 45-55) with a small percentage of ladies experiencing it earlier or later. Usually, menopause has taken place when one has not had a cycle for 12 months.

Perimenopause, is the term used to refer to the 8 years leading up to menopause. Usually, the first signs of this stage are a change in the length and flow of the menstrual cycle.

WHY ARE PERIMENOPAUSE AND POSTMENOPAUSE CHALLENGING TIMES?

The greatest challenge is the unpredictability and the uncomfortable symptoms, together with not really knowing what to do about what is happening inside us.

In a 2018 survey of 1100 ladies, taken by Maryon, 96% said they were not prepared for menopause and 68% said that they were shocked by it.

Also, menopause usually takes place at a psychological turning point for women, as there are other issues that may weigh on their mind at this time, such as:

- Teenager challenges
- Marrying off children
- Caring for elderly relatives
- Fear of old age

Further aggravations may be:

- Relationship challenges
- Social poisons (e.g. drugs, alcohol, smoking)
- Children with difficulties
- Financial stress
- Eating disorders
- Increased age
- Post childbirth
- Operations
- Illnesses
- Life changes
- The pressure one places on oneself to be 'geshikt', 'a superwoman' – around the clock

All the above raise cortisol levels, a stress hormone, which, when released, can mimic menopause symptoms and generate fatigue.

Bear in mind, that in addition to alleviating the symptoms, our aim is to protect the heart, bones and memory in the long term, since the drop in oestrogen that takes place when our ovaries retire, means that we are no longer protected by it.

So, even if you do not experience a challenging peri- and/or postmenopause, there is still good reason to take steps to protect your health.

This entire stage of life is not the beginning of the end – it is a new beginning if handled correctly.

WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING IN THE BODY, THAT CAUSES MENOPAUSE SYMPTOMS?

- Drop in oestrogen and other hormone changes
- Drop of nutrients due to age, resulting in nutrient deficiencies
- Drop in our metabolic rate, partly due to age and inactivity, which results in weight gain and mood changes

THERE ARE TWO ROUTES ONE CAN FOLLOW, TO ADDRESS THE SYMPTOMS AND CHANGES ABOVE – MEDICAL OR NATURAL

MEDICAL ROUTE - HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (HRT)

Amazing and life-changing for some and a nightmare for others. Some women cannot take these. Women usually hear about HRT but they are often not familiar with their alternative options. HRT is administered in the following ways.

- Tablets
- Patches

- Gels
- Implants
- Pessaries

In the above-mentioned survey of 1100 women, 62% of the women who took HRT came off due to adverse side effects. Maryon states that there is also an increased risk in breast cancer and ovarian cancer. She personally recommends that those with a history of cancer or breast cancer in the family, blood clots or migraines should consider not taking it.

Before we share Maryon's natural approach, let's share what can actually transpire within us.

Menopause symptoms can be divided into three main groups. Please bear in mind that this does not all happen at once and not everyone experiences all the symptoms, and even the ones they do experience may not be severe. This is not being shared to scare you, but rather to help you recognize new things possibly happening in your body and why they may be happening. Information can set you up for success to deal with the changes.

OESTROGEN DROP CAN CAUSE:

- Hot flashes
- Night sweats
- Dryness in the private area
- Loss of libido
- Weight gain
- Recurring UTIs – urinary tract infections
- Incontinence
- Painful intimacy

OTHER SYMPTOMS:

- Headaches and migraines
- Joint muscle aches and pains
- Fatigue
- Constipation
- IBS – irritable bowel syndrome
- Thinning of hair and skin
- Bloating
- Insomnia
- Loss of energy
- Palpitations

MENTAL SYMPTOMS:

- Mood swings
- Panic attacks
- Confusion – 'brain fog'
- Depression

- Memory loss
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Lack of confidence

MARYON'S NATURAL MENOPAUSE SOLUTION

All her top recommendations are based on published medical research and include:

Replenishing oestrogen levels to boost brain chemistry naturally, by consuming plant oestrogen similar in structure to our own oestrogen but less potent. These plant foods have a molecular structure so similar to our own oestrogen, that we can fool the brain into thinking we have normal levels of oestrogen again, thus resulting in the thermal surges we know as hot flashes and night sweats disappearing altogether. It has been hailed by many as the natural HRT. This helps protect the falling oestrogen, protecting heart, bones and mind. Natural oestrogens occur in foods including soya, tofu, chickpeas, linseed, flaxseed, pumpkin seeds and edamame beans. Bear in mind that some women cannot stomach soya products, so they can take hormone moderating supplements that have been scientifically tested instead. An example is a supplement, which contains red clover. (Please be aware that taking the recommended higher dose can ¹ cause bleeding)

Exercising regularly for fitness and mental stability, releases the happy hormones called endorphins which make mood swings and irritability easier to cope with. Even daily walks or yoga stretches can help keep your body functioning well. Exercise helps to speed up a flagging metabolism, common in midlife, burning up fat rather than having it settle around the middle.

Nutrient levels should be optimised in your diet and avoid caffeine, alcohol, very spicy foods, junk food and wheat.

Magnesium has been seen to be in short supply in 50- 80% of women. When taken together with other essential nutrients such as B vitamins, vitamin D, calcium, zinc and fatty acids, it has shown a positive effect on brain chemistry. Good sources of magnesium include fresh fruit and vegetables, especially green ones. Essential fatty acids found in healthy vegetable oils and oily fish like salmon, also play a big role in hormone health. Those who consume a diet rich in omega-3s have less mood swings, better libido, and far more energy.

Scientifically based natural supplements will boost levels of nutrients to support your body nutritionally. Not all supplements contain what they say on the label, so it is important to make wise and informed choices taking products that have been through clinical trials and have been shown to be both safe and effective. Sometimes supplements conflict with certain medications - please bear this in mind beforehand.

Protect heart and lower cholesterol by following a healthy diet as described above. Get your cholesterol checked from time to time.

Losing weight not through dieting but through lifestyle changes.

Build bones and muscle. It is advised to get your bone density checked and to do the appropriate exercises.

Regain zest and vitality by engaging in feel good activities.

Reduce Stress by learning to relax; which also reduces hot flashes e.g. yoga for at least 20 minutes, deep breathing, visual imagery, and mindfulness. These also help with the menopausal symptoms of anxiety, insomnia and fatigue.

Sharpen the brain by engaging it in stimulating activities.

Reduce dryness in the private area by using lubricants, as well as keeping the body very well hydrated.

Rekindle libido by following advice in Maryon's book. This can also be enhanced by improving your diet as suggested above.

Rebuild fallen self-esteem by reading or listening to suitable material, engaging in self-help programs, therapy or positive self-talk.

Many women have gained by reading Maryon's book, *Manage Your Menopause Naturally*, mentioned above. They have also found it helpful as a resource for their husbands to learn about this stage of life so that they too can understand what is happening and don't take anything personally.

She also has a free [Midlife Refuel Club](#) and live session every Wednesday night discussing a topic of relevance, where one feels very supported and can also ask any questions.

It takes time before one realizes what is actually happening inside one's body. Our aim is to let you know that this is all normal and with the right self-care one can make a huge difference to one's health, state of mind, in the present and future.

At the menopause stage of life, those who already suffered from PMS may once again have to adjust their hormones. Someone who has had PMS may feel overwhelmed by the increase in new symptoms. Someone who has never suffered may get a shock when they suddenly experience all unwanted shifts in their wellbeing and functioning.

Some may actually have an easier transition as a result of caring for themselves, after learning how to deal with PMS. They may already be taking good supplements, exercising and eliminating key unsupportive foods such as caffeine, wheat and sugar.

Please share knowledge of our site, hormonalhealth.org with others.

As Maryon says, "We learn to sing, not sink! We learn to build a parallel universe alongside all our commitments".

Taking these tips on board can help relieve your symptoms, leaving you feeling happier, more focused, less irritable and much more like your old self.

With thanks to הקב"ה and wishing you ברכות for an easy time,



Sara Devora Chrysler

Please note: Maryon Stewart is the pioneer of the natural menopause movement. She runs a virtual 6 week online Natural Menopause Solution, teaching women how to manage menopause and reclaim their well-being. You are invited to join her free [Midlife Refuel Club](#).

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