



## Menopausal Symptom Among Pre Menopausal Women

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Menopause is defined by the World Health Organization and the Stages of Reproductive Aging Workshop working group as the permanent cessation of menstrual periods due to loss of ovarian follicular activity that occurs naturally or is induced by surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation. Natural menopause is recognized after twelve consecutive months without menstrual periods that are not associated with a physiologic (e.g., lactation) or pathologic cause. This can be divided into three stages, premenopausal, perimenopausal and postmenopausal. Premenopause is the word used to describe the years leading up to last period, when the levels of reproductive hormones are already becoming lower. Perimenopause is defined as the period immediately prior to menopause and the first year after menopause and postmenopause is the period after the final menstrual period. Majority of women do not move from a time of regular menses to an abrupt cessation of menstruation. As women approach menopause her menstrual periods become longer or shorter before the menstruation stops all together. This menstrual irregularity may persist for more than 80% of women. During premenopause most women begin to experience some type of gradual slowdown of their reproductive cycle resulting in premenopausal symptoms and health issues between their early 30s to their 40s. This period is generally associated with unavoidable manifestation of aging process in women. More than half of women in this age group report physiologic or psychological symptoms often attributed to menopause. 30% of those women indicate that the symptoms are bothersome. Menopause may be smooth experience for some women with only symptom of cessation of menstrual flow while others face one or more of menopausal symptoms. But there is lack of awareness of its cause, effect and management pertaining to it. A wide gap in the knowledge has been documented in the women from developed and developing countries. Developments in modern medicine have significantly prolonged the life span of humans. Various preventive medicines and improvements in the treatment of disease have also led to a rapid extension of the anticipated life span of women. This continuing rise in the average life expectancy has increased the focus on quality of life as an important health parameter for the aging population.

Currently men and women in India in the 60 plus age group number 60 million that is about 6% of the population. Projection for the year 2025 shows that aging population would increase to about 12% of the total and roughly half of this population will be women in the elderly age group. According to Indian menopause society research there are about 65 million Indian women over the age of 45. Average age of menopause is around 48 years but it strikes Indian women as young as 30-35 years. Mean age at menopause ranges in Indian women from 40.32 to 48.84 years and in developed countries from 48.0 to 51 years. So menopausal health demands even higher priority in Indian scenario.

Although menopause is a natural physiological event, it should be recognized as a challenge for identification and prevention of organic diseases in women during post-menopausal years. Health personnel can identify and help the women to understand and adapt to the various changes taking place within her body, so that the women will be better equipped to face the changes and minimize the risk of this potentially disruptive period. Numerous physical and psychological symptoms have been attributed to the hormonal changes of menopause. The presence and severity of symptoms vary tremendously from woman to woman<sup>13</sup>. When a woman begins the process of going into a permanent state of ceasing to have her menses she can begin to experience premenopausal symptoms. For some the period of transition will take just a few years but on an average, a woman can expect to be in premenopause for 10 years. Some have postulated that it is the woman's attitude towards menopause, aging or issues related to self-esteem and body awareness that affect her ability to cope with the menopause transition<sup>14</sup>. Besides all these effects, menopause can affect the quality of life by being a major cause of morbidity due to cardiovascular diseases and osteoporosis in postmenopausal women.

Symptoms including weight gain, unexplained headaches, hot flashes, pain or stiffness in the joints can be indicators of menopausal symptoms. According to national institute of health the following symptoms are strongly linked to menopause, like hot flash-

es, night sweats, vaginal dryness, and sleep disturbances. A survey conducted by NIH revealed that 80% of the women reported vasomotor symptoms, 60% experienced sleep disturbances and 38% reported mood symptoms during the menopause.

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