

## **Menopause**

*Described as the cessation of menses, or the transition in a woman's life when the ovaries stop producing eggs.*

Menopause is a natural event that normally occurs between the ages of 45 and 55.

Symptoms of menopause are caused by changes in the levels of two hormones: *estrogen* and *progesterone*

The symptoms can be mild, moderate or severe. The symptoms are unique in every woman and can change from woman to woman.

### **Common symptoms in menopause include:**

- 1-Heart pounding or racing
- 2-Hot flashes
- 3-Night sweats
- 4-Skin flushing
- 5-Sleeping problems (insomnia)

### **Other symptoms in menopause may include:**

- 1-Decreased interest in sex
- 2-Mood swings
- 3-Vaginal dryness
- 4-Forgetfulness

*Some testing can be done if necessary to check hormone levels*

### **Treatment:**

- Treatment with hormones can help to decrease symptoms
- If you have severe symptoms that affect your lifestyle, discuss the decision to take hormones with your doctor, weighing your risk against possible benefits.

### **Alternatives to hormone therapy:**

- 1-Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and spicy foods
- 2-Dress lightly and in layers
- 3-Eat soy foods
- 4-Get adequate calcium and vitamin D intake
- 5-Get plenty of exercise
- 6-Practice slow deep breathing whenever a hot flash starts
- 7-Remain sexually active
- 8-Try relaxation techniques such as Yoga, Tai chi or meditation
- 9-Use water-based lubricants during sexual intercourse

Source:

*The North American Menopause Society: [www.menopause.org](http://www.menopause.org)*