



**Menopause NI**

**Empowering Women Together**

# KNOW YOUR SYMPTOMS

Recognising the symptoms of perimenopause and menopause is essential for gaining a clearer understanding of your experience.

With this knowledge, you can make informed decisions to effectively support yourself during this transition.

[www.menopauseni.com](http://www.menopauseni.com)

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# SYMPTOM CHECKER

## A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

1

### **Irregular periods**

Irregular periods around the typical menopausal age (45 to 55 years) are usually the first clue to menopause. These periods may be heavier or lighter than normal. Changes in frequency, duration, and flow affect most women

2

### **Mood swings**

While their bodies adjust to the dip in hormone levels, some women experience mood swings when they can feel irritable or depressed.

3

### **Night sweats**

Night sweats are periods of sweating occurring at night, which affects quality of sleep.

4

### **Panic attacks**

Fluctuating hormones around menopause (perimenopause) and during menopause can cause panic attacks.

5

### **Hot Flashes**

Hot flashes are a sudden feeling of warmth on the upper part of the body normally accompanied by redness. These affect around 75% of menopausal women.

6

### **Joint pain/muscle ache**

As oestrogen levels affect the joints, ligaments, tendons, and muscles women may experience joint pains and muscle aches.

7

### **Anxiety**

With the changes in hormone levels, menopausal women may notice increased feelings of anxiety, excessive worry or fear.

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### **Depression**

Low mood and depression can be triggered by hormonal changes. Women who have a past history of depression are more vulnerable to depression during the menopause.

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## A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

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### **Sleep Disturbances**

Changing levels of hormones can affect sleep patterns, like getting to sleep and staying asleep. Anxiety, night sweats or mood changes can also lead to disturbed sleep.

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### **Dry skin**

On the face and other areas of the body, caused by changes in hormone levels.

11

### **Forgetfulness**

Poor sleep and reduced oestrogen levels can result in foggy memory.

12

### **Hair loss/thinning**

Hormone levels do influence hair growth. With menopause, many women experience hair loss and thinning.

13

### **Fatigue**

Fatigue is a common symptom for many perimenopausal and postmenopausal women. You can feel tired even if you have had a good nights sleep.

14

### **Difficulty Concentrating**

Lack of sleep affects health and makes women feel tired. This may cause trouble with focus and reduced concentration.

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### **Headaches**

Women who have experienced headaches during their periods are more likely to experience them during menopause.

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### **Weight gain**

Some women experience weight gain during menopause that is triggered by lower levels of oestrogen.

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## A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

### **17** Dryness of mouth

A decrease in saliva secretion induced by low oestrogen levels can cause dryness of the mouth.

### **18** Breast tenderness/soreness

Fluctuations in hormone levels can cause breasts to become sore or tender.

### **19** Brittle nails

Nails may weaken, break, or peel easily, and can often due to aging rather than menopause itself.

### **20** Osteoporosis

This is a drop in bone density by more than 20% and it can increase the risk of fractures.

It is common in older age and is something we should be aware of.

### **21** Dry eyes

Can be uncomfortable and caused by changes in hormone levels

### **22** Digestive problems

Major hormonal changes seen in menopause can lead to stomach upset such as bloating, indigestion, constipation or diarrhoea.

### **23** Migraines

Fluctuating levels of hormones, particularly a dip in oestrogen levels, have been found to trigger migraines in some women.

### **24** Tingling sensations in the extremities

"Pins and needles" sensation or numbness in hands, feet, arms, and legs.

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## A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

- 25 Electric shock-like sensations**  
Brief, mild sensations resembling electric shocks under the skin or in muscles
- 26 Changes in immune system**  
Poor immune system due to hormonal changes can make women prone to new allergies or worsening of existing ones may occur
- 27 Changes to body odour**  
This may occur due to sweating and hormone changes.
- 28 Burning mouth**  
This is a sensation of burning that affects the tongue, lips, cheeks, and mouth.

- 29 Dizzy spells**  
Some women can experience episodes of dizziness, feeling unsteady or experiencing loss of balance.
- 30 Facial hair growth**  
Increase in hair on the face which can be thick and dark.
- 31 Gum problems**  
There is loss in bone mass in the jaw but also inflammation in the gums
- 32 Irregular heartbeat/racing heart**  
Heart rhythm disturbances, palpitations, or increased heart rate can be caused by a reduction in hormone levels.

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## A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

**33 Lack of motivation**  
Menopause is a time when we can feel tired, have low mood and a general lack of energy, it can be very difficult to be motivated to do things you normally would.

**34 Urge incontinence**  
Urge incontinence, a sudden and frequent urge to urinate, is due to an overactive bladder.

**35 Vaginal dryness**  
Lack of oestrogen results in reduced blood supply, thinning and dryness of vagina causing discomfort.

**36 Painful sex**  
Pain and discomfort due to drier and thinner vaginal tissue.

**37 Incontinence**  
There are lots of factors that increase both stress and urge incontinence and it is considered that menopause will make pre-existing symptoms worse rather than being the cause of the problems, especially with stress incontinence.

**38 Nocturia**  
Women with menopausal bladder control problems may have to get up in the middle of the night due to the urge to urinate.

**39 Painful urination**  
Some women feel urethral pain while urinating.

**40 Loss of Libido**  
Decreased oestrogen and testosterone levels can affect a woman's sexual desire. This is worsened by accompanying disturbances in sleep and mood swings.

# MENOPAUSE CHECKLIST

TICK THE SYMPTOMS YOU'RE  
EXPERIENCING



- Irregular periods
- Mood swings
- Night sweats
- Panic attacks
- Sleep disturbances
- Dry skin
- Forgetfulness
- Hair loss / thinning
- Dryness of the mouth
- Breast tenderness
- Brittle nails
- Osteoporosis
- Hot flushes
- Joint pain / muscle ache
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating
- Headaches
- Weight gain
- Dry eyes
- Digestive problems
- Migrane
- Tingling sensations

# MENOPAUSE CHECKLIST

TICK THE SYMPTOMS YOU'RE  
EXPERIENCING



- Electric shock-like sensations
- Changes to the immune system
- Body odour
- Burning mouth
- Lack of motivation
- Incontinence
- Urge incontinence
- Nocturia
- Painful urination
- Painful sex
- Decreased sexual desire
- Dizzy spells
- Facial hair growth
- Gum problems
- Irregular heartbeat

**Use this section to note the frequency of symptoms, and how disruptive they are to your life. It can be a useful reminder when speaking to your GP.**