## Menopause Is More Than Hot Flashes

So when many women think about menopause, they think of hot flashes and night sweats. But there are lots of hidden signs of menOPause. And not everyone's menOpause is the same.

It's not the time for comparisons, like trying to compare apples and oranges. Some women begin the process in their late 30s, some women in the in process around age 50. Some woman have severe symptoms, and some have mild symptoms.

So it's important to know what menopause looks like for your sisters and friends and what it looks for you mother to a little bit of what to expect, but really your road may be very different from theirs.

And this is because of the hormone changes that are going on leading up to menopause. So in our 30s, in 40s we start to have changes in hormones that lead to a host of symptoms like trouble sleeping, bloating, mood changes, energy level changes.

And sometimes some of the classic symptoms like hot flashes and night sweats. But this can last five years or seven or 10 years. So it can be different for every woman.

## Hormone Changes in the 30s and 40s

This is because a lot is happening in these years, estrogen can spiking and then it could be dropping, progesterone in general is on a gradual decline which affects our mood and our sleep.

Testosterone can be increasing, which can make us more irritable and quick to anger. And then depending on your stress levels, you could have cortisol spikes that are affecting your mood, energy, and blood sugar.

Or your cortisol could be declining and you may be having trouble with exercise tolerance or lack of appetite or even winding down at night. So there's a lot of factors that go into this road to menopause.

But menopause is actually a year after you've had your last period. So it's a very distinct period of time where all of this hormone roller coaster calms down, mostly because you're not going through cycles any longer.

Your ovaries aren't producing hormones. The brain isn't yelling at them to produce hormones anymore. Things are in general calmer. the hormones that you do have are coming from your fat cells and your adrenal glands.

so if you have a good amount of adrenal reserve and your weight is steadily maintained. Usually you have a gradual mellowing out of hormones and menopause.

And a lot of women do feel better during this phase. But then you can start to have some of the classic symptoms of lack of estrogen, such as hot flashes, night sweats, changes in your skin, like the skin getting thinner and drier, and vaginal dryness.

Usually the hot flushes and night's sweats are coming closer to that menoppause transition. Vaginal driness and skin changes are years later.

## What Happens at Menopause

And why is this happening? Mostly because of less estrogen in our systems and menopause. Estrogen is the hormone that I call the diva. It gives us shapely breasts and shaply hips and glowing skin and shiny hair.

it protects our heart, it gives a strong bones and in general keeps things fluid, keeps our brain fluid and multitasking

and keeps out joints fluid. and helps all those good feeling juices down there too.

So when our estrogen levels are changing, we can have changes in these areas of our body as well. It's not just all about hot flashes. This is a quote from a friend of mine who says, menopause can sneak up on you.

Because she was in her mid 40s, all of a sudden having sweating, periods and hot flashes, and she was yelling at her husband for changing the thermostat on her, even though he wasn't.

And he just said, oh, you're probably in menopause. She was shocked, thinking she's too young for menOPause, but it was menOpause and it snuck up on here because she didn't realize those other signs along the way.

So what are those hidden signs? One can be brain fog and memory changes. So brainfog and memories changes happen because as we're starting to have less estrogen, our brain overreacts to this and starts to create more estrogen receptors.

## Hidden Signs of the Transition

This may be playing a role in brain-fogg and-memory changes that we experience around the menopause transition that then clear up post-menopaus. Because our brains starts get the idea that, we have lost estrogen and isn't trying to overcompensate anymore.

Insomnia or trouble having a deep sleep can be a hidden sign. This one may be difficult to pick up on if you're already not a good sleeper, but the changes in progesterone happening in our 40s leading up to menopause make us lighter sleepers.

And then we may have many hot flashes or night sweats overnight and not realizing it. If they're not that severe that we're waking up drenched, they might just be causing us to wake up a little bit overnight or toss and turn.

Now I have just the third sign, feeling anxious, not necessarily anxiety in a clinical sense, but a little bit more fearful and anxious like maybe not wanting to go on carnival rides anymore or thinking of like the bad things that could happen in the danger, making any situation seem a bit like a dangerous situation.

having like more apprehension around new things or not wanting to drive on the highway or go on an airplane, like that general anxiousness and feeling that if that's a new thing for you, it may be a sign of the menopause transition.

And remember estrogen keeps a lot of things juicy and sometimes this lower estrogen can start affecting our hair and nails before it starts affecting your skin.

## When to Seek Support

So if you're not noticing that your fingernails are splitting more easily or peeling or seem drier in general and more brittle, or if your hair's breaking off more easily and feels a little more coarse, that can be a sign that estrogen levels are changing in menopause.

And then, of course, itchy skin. So not only because the skin can dry in Menopausal, but also changing levels of estrogen affect our histamine levels and inflammation, and we can more prone to itchiness and rashes and those types of reactions on the way to Menopus.

So if you're noticing these signs now and you want to get ahead of the situation and work with a naturopathic doctor to balance your hormones, head over to my website and click book a call and we can have a 30 minute session to discuss what's going on with you and see where to start.