Perimenopause Symptoms Overview

Ah, perimenopause. What is really going on here? Well, you're probably aware of some of the symptoms of what's going. The bloating, weight gain, moodiness, irritability, brain fog, sleep problems, the list can go on.

But what really happening with your hormones here causing all of these symptoms?

Normal Menstrual Cycle and Ovulation

To really investigate this, what your hormones have been doing for you in the beneficial ways and your cycles in your 20s and 30s to understand the changes that are happening in 40s, and 50s.

So, a healthy menstrual cycle is usually about a month long. This is what was happening your teens, 20's, 30's and potentially even into your 40's where You would ovulate in the middle of the cycle around day 14, and estrogen would peak around this time.

Then you'd have two blissful weeks of progesterone, which is shown here as the aqua mountain there. This is when you would be feeling great. And then a couple days before your period, the proesteroin would drop.

And that that's important because that is what signals for your body to have a period. But you also might be familiar with the other symptoms that happen in those couple of days before your period, also known as PMS.

So this is a very important time of your cycle.

Progesterone, PMS, and Its Benefits

Those first few days, before you're period when progesterone drops sharply, it can cause many symptoms. When pro testosterone drops, It can caused bloating, water retention, sore breasts, irritability, food cravings, alcohol craving, even affects your gut and can cause constipation.

So this is normally the collection of symptoms that we term PMS or premenstrual syndrome, because you're lacking progesterone for a few days, which is a normal part of your cycle.

But you might be missing progesterone a lot, because progeterrone is what I call the happy girl next door hormone. It's wonderful. it helps us as a diuretic, so it prevents water retention, it helped us metabolize fat, and also improves our mood, promotes a sense of calm and friendliness, It can improve our sleep.

So we're having higher quality sleep and sleeping deeper. And most often we think of projesterones as the pregnancy and breastfeeding hormone, helping us to care for others around us.

In the short term, for a few weeks when you have high progesterone in your cycles, it also reduces inflammation. So that's why you may be feeling good in this part of your cycle.

In the long-term in our brain, it helps to increase our desire for a community and to be around others. It can even increase. Our sense of intuition. So think about that.

When it drops for few days every month, that may be why you want to alone, finding more, you're in a build ability with the people around you and just want.

Hormone Shifts in Perimenopause

Yourself with high carbohydrates and maybe some chocolate and salty foods. So in your twenties and thirties,

when your menstrual cycle is most balanced and you have the highest fertility, you'll see that the part of your month where you estrogen, which is the follicular phase here in purple and the party, your months where have progesterone, the luteal phase in the aqua are pretty much equal.

And this sets up a good month. So everyone gets equal air time and your cycle and body and brain all feel balanced. However, as you enter perimenopause and you're getting closer to your 40s and 50s, the estrogen and progesterone balance becomes off.

Basically, you are losing pro testosterone. You're not ovulating as well each cycle, and so you may only have proesteroin for five days a month or 10 days month.

And remember all those healthy girl next door benefits it gives us. If you start to lose those in your forties and fifties, couple that with estrogen, which is doing its own dance in perimenopause.

It's going up, it's down. The brain and the ovaries are having a little tug of war each month. So your estrogen levels may be drastically outweighing your progesterone, or they might be plummeting.

Meanwhile, your pregesteron levels are going down each cycle.

Stress, Cycle Changes, and Closing Advice

This can lead to a lot of the symptoms of perimentopaus, like consistent waking, bloating, having some depression or anxiety, and trouble sleeping. Couple that with other changes that may be happening in your 40s that amplify perimenopause, such as acute and chronic stress.

Both of these situations affect cortisol levels and deplete progesterone. Put it all together and you have the perfect storm of peri-menopaus, which is sometimes called puberty in reverse because it can last many years and your having drastic hormone fluctuations.

The ovaries are more active and less active month to month. similarly to when you were in your teens and each cycle was a little different from the next.

This time of perimenopause is characterized by hormone imbalances. So you may be having heavier periods, more spotting at the beginning of your period, missing cycles, or even having more PMS or Pms that lasts for many days per month instead of just two or three.

These all leads to those symptoms that we identify with perimetopos such as weight gain, fatigue, headaches, irritability and bloating. To learn more about my practice and how you can balance your hormones with nutrition, download my free hormone balancing recipe guide on my website, drmandatracy.com slash guide.