



**Menopause NI**

**Empowering Women Together**

# **KNOW YOUR SYMPTOMS**

**It is important to recognise the symptoms of the menopause so you have better understanding of what is happening to you.**

**With understanding you can make better decisions to support the menopause.**

**[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 than normal.

3

### *Mood swings*

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

5

### *Night sweats*

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

7

### *Panic attacks*

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

2

### *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.

4

### *Joint pain/muscle ache*

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

6

### *Anxiety*

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

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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

### *Sleep Disturbances*

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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.

### *Fatigue*

10

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

### *Dry skin*

11

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

12

### *Difficulty Concentrating*

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

### *Forgetfulness*

13

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

14

### *Headaches*

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

### *Hair loss/thinning*

15

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

16

### *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.

**19** *Breast tenderness/soreness*  
Fluctuations in hormone levels can cause breasts to become sore or tender.

**21** *Brittle nails*  
Changes to nails that make them brittle or flaky.

**23** *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.

**18** *Dry eyes*  
Can be uncomfortable and caused by changes in hormone levels

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

**22** *Migranes*  
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*  
Can feel strange and can be caused by a reduction in hormone levels.

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## A QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

**25** *Electric shock-like sensations*  
Feels like shocks through the body.

**27** *Changes in immune system*  
Poor immune system due to hormonal changes can make women prone to more allergies colds and flu.

**29** *Changes to body odour*  
This may occur due to sweating and hormone changes.

**31** *Burning mouth*  
This is a hot sensation that affects the tongue, lips, cheeks, and mouth.

**26** *Dizzy spells*  
Some women can experience episodes of dizziness.

**28** *Facial hair growth*  
Increase in hair on the face which can be thick and dark.

**30** *Gum problems*  
There is loss in bone mass in the jaw but also inflammation in the gums

**32** *Irregular heartbeat/racing heart*  
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.

35

### *Urge incontinence*

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

37

### *Vaginal dryness*

Lack of oestrogen results in reduced blood supply, thinning and dryness of vagina.

39

### *Painful sex*

Pain and discomfort due to drier and thinner vaginal tissue.

34

### *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.

36

### *Nocturia*

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

38

### *Painful urination*

Some women feel urethral pain while urinating.

40

### *Decreased sexual drive*

Decreased oestrogen and testosterone levels can affect a woman's sexual drive. 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
- Incontinence
- Urge incontinence
- 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.