

Easy Read

Keep healthy in perimenopause and menopause

Booklet 1: What is perimenopause and menopause



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Learning Disability Wales
Anabledd Dysgu Cymru



Hawdd ei Ddeall Cymru
Easy Read Wales



The Menopause
Charity

About this booklet



This is an Easy Read booklet. You may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what all the hard words mean on **page 15**.

There are 4 booklets about keeping healthy in perimenopause and menopause:



- **Booklet 1: What is perimenopause and menopause**
- **Booklet 2: Symptoms**
- **Booklet 3: What you can do to feel better**
- **Booklet 4: Talking to your doctor**

What is in this booklet

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What is the menopause?



The menopause will happen to all women. It is a natural part of getting older.



Some people who have **periods** do not like to be called women. Anyone who has **periods** will one day go through menopause.



A **period** is when you bleed from your vagina, which is between your legs. This happens around once a month. The proper name for **periods** is **menstruation**.



The word menopause means that you do not have any more **periods**. You are in menopause when you have had no **periods** for a year.



You stop getting **periods** and cannot make a baby any more. This happens because your body stops making eggs and some **hormones**.



Your body makes **hormones**. **Hormones** tell different parts of your body what to do and when to do it.



Most women and people with **periods** reach menopause at around 51 years old. It can be earlier or later.

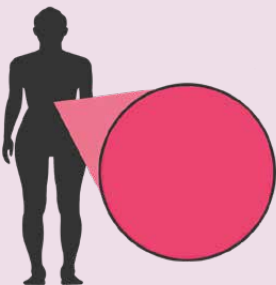
Early menopause



Early menopause is when menopause happens before you are 45.

It can happen because of things like:

- Down's Syndrome
- Addison's disease
- Surgery on your ovaries. Your ovaries are inside your body. Ovaries make and store eggs.
- Cancer treatment
- Or type 1 diabetes



What is perimenopause?



Before menopause, your body makes fewer eggs and **hormones**. This happens slowly, so you might not notice at first. This time is called **perimenopause**.



It usually starts to happen when you are around 45. It can be earlier or later.



It can last for a few months or over 10 years. Perimenopause usually lasts around 7 years.



You can still have a baby if you have sex during perimenopause.



During perimenopause, your **periods** change, and you may have **symptoms**.

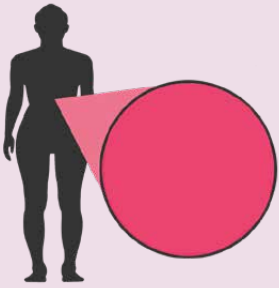


Symptoms are signs that something is going on in your body.

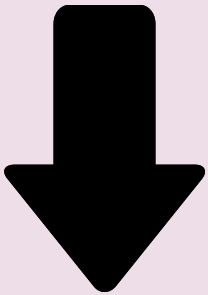


You can learn more about the **symptoms** in **Booklet 2: Symptoms**.

What hormones do

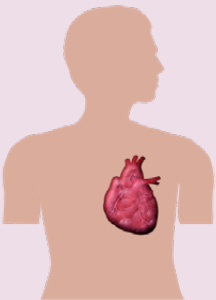


Hormones tell different parts of your body what to do and when to do it. For example, a **hormone** called **insulin** tells your body how to use sugar for energy.



The **hormones** that your body makes less of during perimenopause are:

Oestrogen



This helps your heart and blood stay healthy and your bones stay strong.

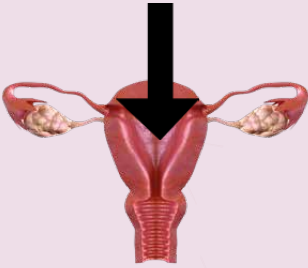


It helps your brain work well and improves your mood.



It stops your eyes and vagina getting dry.

Progesterone



This thickens the lining of your womb. Your womb is the part inside your body where babies grow.



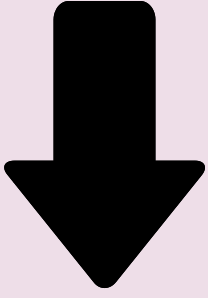
Only people born as females have a womb.



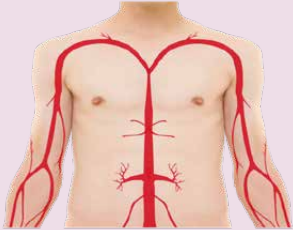
If you do not get pregnant, some of the lining of your womb comes away. This leaks out during your **period**.



Progesterone also helps your sleep and mood.



During perimenopause your body slowly makes less of these **hormones**. This can sometimes cause health problems as you get older, like:



- Osteoporosis - Your bones get weak and break easily.

- Cardiovascular disease - Your heart or blood vessels do not work well.

- Diabetes - Your blood sugar is not normal which makes you sick.



- Dementia - You forget a lot and get confused.

- Depression - You feel very sad for a long time.



Testosterone

This helps your muscles, your memory, your ability to focus on things, and your energy.

Find out more

You can read all 4 easy read booklets about keeping healthy in perimenopause and menopause:



- **Booklet 1: What is perimenopause and menopause**
- **Booklet 2: Symptoms**
- **Booklet 3: What you can do to feel better**
- **Booklet 4: Talking to your doctor**

You can also find out more on these websites:



www.themenopausecharity.org



www.ftww.org.uk/menopause



www.111.wales.nhs.uk/encyclopaedia/m/article/menopause



www.womens-health-concern.org



www.menopausesupport.co.uk



www.rockmymenopause.com

Hard words

Hormones

Your body makes hormones. Hormones tell different parts of your body what to do and when to do it.

Period

A period is when you bleed from your vagina, which is between your legs. This happens around once a month. The proper name for periods is menstruation.

Symptoms

Symptoms are signs that something is going on in your body.

Thank you



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These booklets have been written by [Easy Read Wales](#).



They are based on information by the [The Menopause Charity](#).



With support from the [Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales](#).



Cwm Taf People First

Thank you to [Cwm Taf People First](#) for checking these booklets.



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