

# Menopause

- What is the menopause?
- Do men have a menopause ?
- What are the symptoms ?
- HRT ?
- What are the alternatives ?
- Stress!
- Lifestyle - Diet - Exercise
- Post Menopause

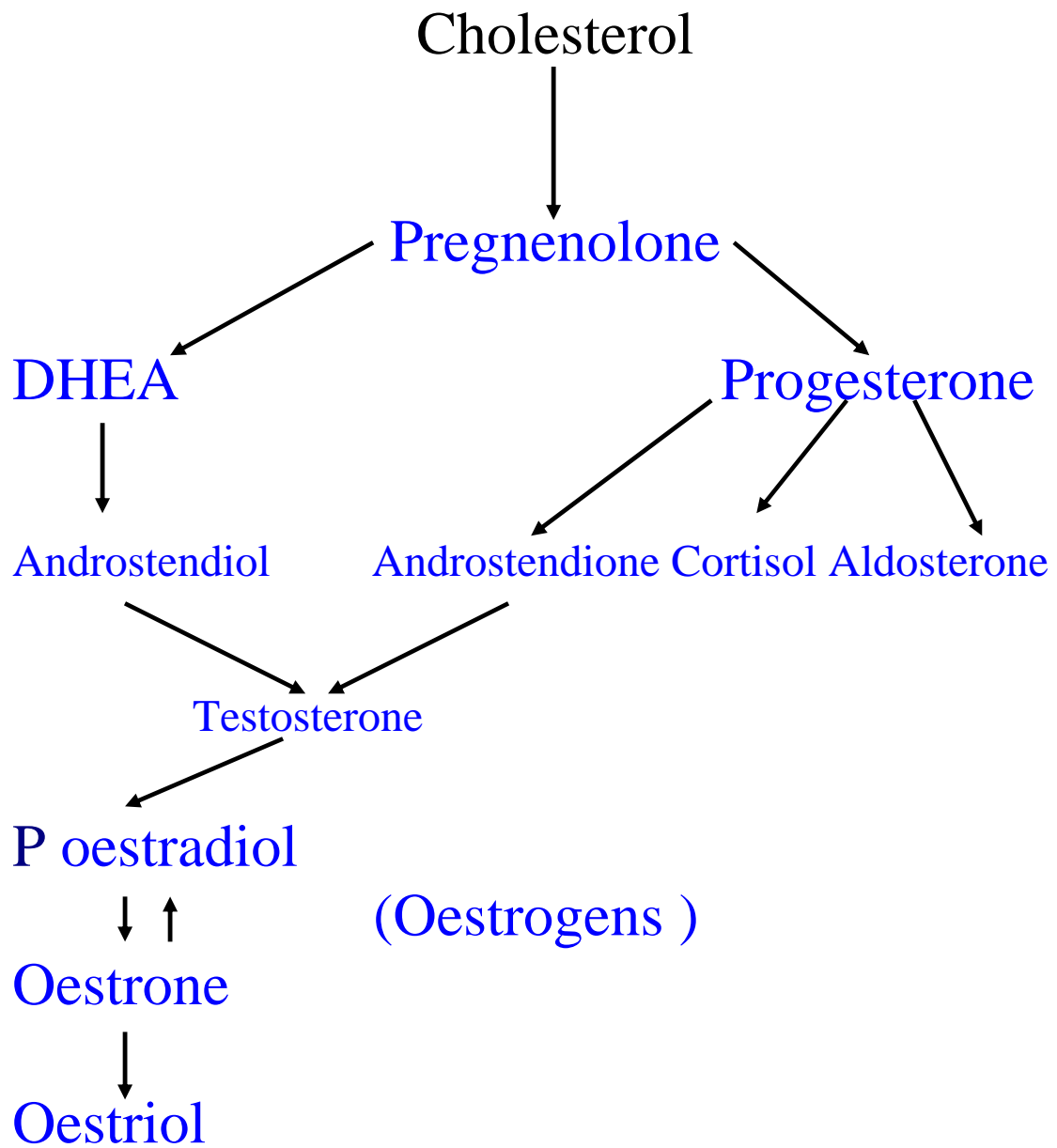
Barbara Lewis Balanced life therapies  
[Barb@b-l-t.co.uk](mailto:Barb@b-l-t.co.uk) 01536 516955  
Treatments and Training

## MENOPAUSE

- Pre-menopause - Regular periods, mood changes, hot flushes ~ up to 10 years prior to menopause
- Peri- menopause - Periods increasingly irregular, symptoms increase ~ 5 years prior to menopause
- Menopause Average age 47 - periods stop
- Post Menopause time after last period -symptoms may increase, change or stop  
~ 4 - 40 years- I have known people in their seventies say they still suffer from the occasional hot flush !
- Surgical menopause
  - fibroids
  - endometriosis
  - cancer
  - poly cystic ovaries

One case I had the client had been advised to have a hysterectomy to cure her migraines – the psychological implications of this were considerable as she was not prepared for the onset of the menopause and what it meant to her !
- Premature menopause-  
before age 40 often associated with other hormonal problems or eating disorders

# Sequence of Hormone production



Pituitary → LH → Corpus Luteum

→ FSH → Ovaries

Follicles

Oestradiol

Egg Progesterone

No pregnancy

Uterus

Pregnancy

Period

## Menopause

- Oestrogen, Testosterone and Progesterone production in ovaries reduced
- Increased production of FSH in response
- Limited Oestrogen production continues in ovaries
- Oestrogen production by
  - adrenals
  - fatty tissue in lower abdomen
  - muscle
  - bone marrow

## Male Menopause

Andropause , Viropause  
Mid - life Crisis

Hormone changes from age 24

FSH production increases

Testosterone levels remain similar but action decreases due to increased levels of SHBG as men age

Signs and symptoms may be noticed from age 35 – 80

<u>Signs and Symptoms:</u>	<u>Signs and Symptoms :</u>
----------------------------	-----------------------------

<u>Menopause</u>	<u>Viropause</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry Skin</li> <li>• Dry hair</li> <li>• Hair loss</li> <li>• Body hair changes</li> <li>• Libido changes</li> <li>• Vaginal dryness</li> <li>• Night Sweats</li> <li>• Hot flushes</li> <li>• Stiffness in Limbs</li> <li>• Fatigue</li> <li>• Loss of Drive</li> <li>• Apathy</li> <li>• Low level Depression</li> <li>• Palpitations</li> <li>• Panic attacks</li> <li>• Irritability Impatience</li> <li>• Short term memory loss</li> <li>• Weight gain</li> <li>• Fat redistribution</li> <li>• Low self esteem</li> <li>• Questions the meaning of life</li> <li>• Dissatisfaction with life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry Skin</li> <li>• Dry hair</li> <li>• Hair loss</li> <li>• Body hair changes</li> <li>• Libido changes</li> <li>• Potency problems</li> <li>• Night Sweats - Hot flushes</li> <li>• Stiffness in Limbs</li> <li>• Fatigue – lack of energy</li> <li>• Loss of Drive</li> <li>• Apathy - Boredom</li> <li>• Low level Depression</li> <li>• Irritability Impatience</li> <li>• Weight gain</li> <li>• Fat redistribution</li> <li>• Questions the meaning of life</li> <li>• Dissatisfaction with life</li> <li>• Reassessment of achievements and aims</li> </ul>

Is it the menopause or something else ?

Stress - Will produce all the above symptoms and more

Inadequate or imbalanced diet will produce the above symptoms and more

Genetic predisposition may produce the above symptoms and more

Previous lifestyle activities, illnesses and accidents may contribute to the above symptoms and more

## Options for reducing effects of menopause

hormone Replacement therapy

Natural progesterone

Herbal products

Supplements

Complementary therapies

Lifestyle changes

Diet

## HRT — combination hormones —

a wide range are available —

Tablets injections patches

check predisposition to the following as some reports indicate  
increased incidents if HRT is taken

breast cancer

endometrial cancer

Liver disease

Fibroids

Thrombosis

Blood pressure

Heart disease

Thyroid disease

Migraine

HRT and introduction of increased amounts of individual hormones  
such as oestrogen can disrupt the natural hormone balance.

It is now thought that many people are not totally hormone deficient  
but that the proteins ( sex hormone binding globulins)made in the liver  
that carry the hormones and regulate access to target cells, are  
depleted. This is made worse by introducing foreign hormones as  
these take up the protein carriers and they are not then available for  
other hormones such as thyroid or growth hormones this leads to  
further problems,. It is also thought that the target sites for the  
hormones in both men and women are less receptive and this leads to  
increases in FSH while the actual amount of hormone such as  
testosterone remains the same. In women oestrogen continues to be  
produced by other organs after the menopause and it is a good reason  
to maintain some fat at this time !

So introducing individual hormones can cause problems such as  
those indicated and a predisposition to any problem should be noted.

## Progesterone

Not on prescription

Usually available as a cream May not be natural apparently it is synthesised chemically Some people indicate great success with progesterone creams however there is concern about the site of application and possible links to cancer and the amount of hormone actually received

The latest alternative hormone preparation is DHEA (dihydroepiandrosterone) which is the precursor for the oestrogen and testosterone and should in theory help maintain suitable levels!

## Herbs

Generally used because they have oestrogenic activity it is impossible to recommend one herb as everyone has different symptoms and different causes but there is much literature about the effects of the herbs. I would advise buying a good quality and I like the liquid formulations Some are blends of several herbs for the menopause and these may be effective for some people

These are the main ones but there are others

[Agnus castus](#) hot flushes

[Black Cohosh](#) hot flushes and vaginal dryness

[DongQuai](#) hot flushes and vaginal dryness

[Ginko Biloba](#) aids memory and concentration

[Ginseng](#) stress and hot flushes

[Milk thistle](#) aids liver function

[Red Clover](#) Mild diuretic

[Sage](#) soothes nerves & night sweats

[Valerian](#) helps insomnia & anxiety

## Supplements

Vitamin C - improves immune system and skin tone and is an antioxidant

Vitamin E - vaginal dryness, hot flushes general circulatory health

B vitamins –Stress vitamins

Evening primrose oil – skin, health, depression, aching joints

Calcium for bones – best taken with magnesium

Magnesium for bones and as tranquilliser

Most people will agree that even with a good diet much of the food we eat is not nutritionally as effective particularly in terms of trace elements as it was 50 years ago it is possible that people at certain times of life or in stressful situations will need supplementation



### Complementary Therapies

I like to divide therapies into the following categories to indicate their main effectiveness.

Although I personally believe all have a vibrational or energetic effect some clients may find this difficult to accept. There is little point suggesting these to such clients as they will not believe they will be effective unless you can convince them !

Physical - massage physical hands on treatments of all types

Medicinal Herbs & supplements you could include her food and diet changes

Vibrational Reiki crystals bach remedies homeopathy ( these last two could be considered medicinal by some clients )

The main point about the therapies are they are holistic and should address all issues associated with menopausal changes physical emotional and spiritual

They will help relax the client distress energise rebalance and re assess

## Lifestyle

### Age related stress Physical and emotional

As we age physically it is not possible to do the same as we did in our teens this often leads to pulled muscles broken bones and other injuries as our bodies reach the end of their endurance of activities Immobility then leads to other problems such as obesity and psychologically frustration and apathy Emotionally we may question our roles and path in life and our spirituality and our relationship with others this in itself can be very stressful

Work stress it is often a time in life when work has reached a peak or a change of career is sought. Pressures at work can be increased as careers progress and thoughts of providing for retirement or for children are added financial worries when facing work changes and challenges

Family stress it is often a time either for children to be entering their teens or finishing school or leaving home for university or to set up home themselves All these add both physical and emotional stresses to parents and financial burdens. Also parents may be more needy and in ill health adding further to responsibilities and demands on time and money

Sex physical problems such as vaginal dryness or lack of libido may lead to changes in attitude to sex by one or both partners as may tiredness and fatigue. It is thought that sexual activity actually may improve headaches and it is important to discuss the physical side of any relationship and make sure it meets the needs of both partners or stress and tension will result. Single people similarly should address their physical needs.

## Exercise

Relaxing Stretching Toning Weight bearing Sex

House work or gardening are rarely enough on their own and are often the cause of physical trauma and problems as we get older It is important that the exercise is regular appropriate and enjoyable seek advice most good classes will let you sit in on the first lesson Try to build up exercise over a few year try dancing Yoga tai chi Pilates

If you already exercise is it still appropriate? try something else but do not start to play squash if you have never done so before !!

## Diet

Wholefood organic

Limited meat

Oily fish

Vegetables and fruit five or more portions a day \*

Limited coffee, tea, alcohol

Eat regular meals

Drink Water

Snack on healthy options

Do not exclude food groups ie eat carbohydrate protein and fat

Do not eat excesses of *any* food

Avoid processed pre packed foods

Avoid additives including aspartame

Cook meals from basic ingredients -

Enjoy food and eating

Sit down to eat

Phyto oestrogens chemicals found in some foods - Soy products ( make sure these are not GM and are whole bean sources of soy )  
attach to oestrogen receptor sites and so prevent some of symptoms

Xeno oestrogens –Chemicals found in plastics pesticides etc which mimic oestrogen activity increasing symptoms - avoid takeaways and prepacked foods

Antioxidants Phytochemicals and carotenoids

found particularly in red orange, green fruit and vegetables – help slow down degenerative processes \*

Polyphenols found in green tea helps antioxidants and reduces cholesterol and helps burn fat

## Post menopause

Risks:  
Osteoporosis  
Heart attack  
Stroke  
Arthritis  
Cancer

\*\*\*\*\*

Ensure health professionals are committed to wellness

\*\*

Chart symptoms – health professionals should be able to suggest triggers or patterns or you may see them for yourself if you keep a diary

Keep a diet diary again there may be food triggers that you are not aware of or you may be eating more of a certain food than you thought – I think before you start any dietary change it is a good idea to keep a food diary it also tells you when and where you eat most and the problems of providing foods

Keep a medication diary you may be taking more than you thought or missing doses and the medication may be causing problems – check the interactions of medicines and foods

Revise diet – having established eating patterns change diet gradually don't decide to go vegetarian if you don't cook or don't like vegetables be realistic especially if you have family too

Exercise gradually increase exercise to a level you can maintain – engage family in this too to ensure success

Have regular treatment – I have found regularity of treatment is more important for most therapies than frequency – you may need several treatments quite quickly if you are just starting treatments and then you will be able to establish a regular pattern that suits you- the frequency will depend on individual lifestyles stresses and strains! The therapy will also depend on individual needs and preferences\_– try several until you find the best one for you  
Treat yourself to facials pedicures and manicures too

Drink water – there is much debate about how much water one should drink – 2-3 litres a day of fluid but the more coffee and tea you drink the more water you will need to balance it. Avoid fizzy drinks as there is some evidence that they can lead to kidney stones if taken in large quantities and also avoid aspartame as it can produce flatulence !!

Join a support group- if you have any medical problems or are caring for parents children or partners who are ill, it can be very empowering and a source of support to join a group of people who have similar experiences

### Enjoy life

A positive attitude, the half full outlook and smiling produce a better mix of chemicals in our brains and lead to a longer healthier old age. Now is the time to do the things you want to do !

➤ **Start now**

➤ **Identify your strengths / weaknesses**

don't buy lots of pills if you don't have a routine and will give up taking them in a few days !

➤ **Keep a diary / chart** know where you are before you start to change things and then chart the changes

➤ **Question your relatives** know your likelihood of symptoms illnesses etc so you can change your lifestyle accordingly – find out where your grandmother was when she gave birth to your mother drastic changes in your grandmothers life may have influenced how you react to foods

➤ **Check food/environmental**

**intolerances** chances are it is something you use or eat

regularly cut it out for a week and chart how you feel there are lists of most likely foods and chemicals available – or visit a allergy specialist or nutritionist – allergy testing is sometimes available on the nhs

➤ **Check your blood group** I have found a good

starting point for dietary changes was the EAT Right diet book which tells you the foods to eat to suit your blood group

## Have a health check – **keep a record** – if you

have a starting point you have something to measure against later on if you develop problems

- Keep your own record ask your doctor for the test results do not just accept everything is normal as an answer – you may vary a lot within the normal range and this could be your problem. Have a bone scan if you think you may be at risk Check your hormone levels, liver function, cholesterol, blood pressure and pulse. Do not agree to medication based on one reading unless the problem is life threatening – sometimes readings can be wrong and most of the above will improve if you change lifestyle diet etc and reduce stress levels
- 
- Eat an organic wholefood diet
- Eat regularly
- Include all food groups
- Eat a wide range of vegetables
- Supplement if necessary
- **Avoid processed pre packed foods**
- **Drink water**
- **Avoid excesses of anything**
- Take up regular exercise
- Take up regular treatments

*Enjoy whatever you do*

Book list :

The Natural Health Handbook Marilyn  
Glenville *Piatkus* 0749921919

Menopause the natural way Deborah  
Gordon *Wiley* 0471379573

Natural Hormone balance Uzzi Reiss  
*Pocket Books* 0743406656

Mens Health Matters Nikki Bradford  
*Vermillion* 0091810310

Double Menopause Nancy Cetel *Wiley*  
0471402621



## **Warning By Jenny Joseph**

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple  
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.  
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves  
And satin sandals, and say we have no money for butter.  
I shall sit down on the pavement when I am tired  
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells  
And run my stick along the public railings  
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.  
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain  
And pick the flowers in other peoples gardens  
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat  
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go  
Or only bread and pickle for a week  
And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and things in  
boxes

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry  
And pay our rent and not swear in the street  
And set a good example for the children.  
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practise a little now?  
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised  
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.