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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### MENOPAUSE AND ITS TREATMENT IN HOMOEOPATHY

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#### Abstract

Menopause is a natural process in women life. It is not a disease. It is a natural part of aging. It marks the end of menstrual cycle. Menopause is also known as climacteric. Some women don't have any trouble. For other women, the menopausal transition can bring symptoms like hot flashes, trouble sleeping, and pain during sex, depression, moodiness, irritability, and low energy. There are many effective treatments available from lifestyle adjustments to hormone therapy. As new data shows that the commonly prescribed combination drug containing estrogen and progestin may cause more harm than good. Homoeopathy is effective alternative to HRT. Homoeopathic medicines have no side effects and can be safely given. Homoeopathic remedies serve as a catalyst. They kick start the body's own appropriate production of hormones. Medicines strengthen the immune system to restore the health balance and sense of well being.

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#### Introduction:-

Menopause defines as a permanent cessation of menstruation at the end of reproductive life due to loss of ovarian follicular activity<sup>(1)</sup>. It marks the end of a woman's reproductive years. Menopause refers to a point in time that follows 1 year after the complete cessation of menstruation.

Menopause means the "end of monthly cycles" (the end of monthly periods or menstruation), from the Greek word pausis ("pause") and mēn ("month").

The word "menopause" was coined specifically for human females, where the end of fertility is traditionally indicated by the permanent stopping of monthly menstruations. The average age of women experiencing their final menstrual period (FMP) is 51.5 years<sup>2</sup>. Estrone (E1)-is predominant hormone during menopause while Estradiol(E2) level falls and FSH, LH level increases, antral follicular count and ovarian volume decreases at menopause<sup>3</sup>. Perimenopause/ Menopause transition<sup>4</sup> - MT begins on an average 4 years before the FMP and extends to 1yr after permanent cessation of menses. Typically it spans 4 to 7 years<sup>2</sup>. It is characterized by irregular menstrual cycles, Abnormal uterine bleeding, endocrine changes, and symptoms such as hot flushes that may affect a woman's quality of life (QOL)<sup>2</sup>. Premature ovarian failure (POF)/ Premature menopause/ Premature ovarian insufficiency (POI)<sup>2</sup>: Cessation of menses before the age of 40 years. The European Society of Human Reproduction and

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Embryology (ESHRE 2015) laid the following diagnostic criteria for POI- oligomenorrhea /amenorrhea for at least 4 months and an elevated FSH level >25 IU/l on two occasions >4 weeks apart. . The estimated average age of menopause in India is reported to be 46 years. From the available Indian data, it is hypothesized that an early age of menopause predisposes a women to chronic health disorders like osteoporotic fractures, Myocardial infarction, type 2 diabetes mellitus, breast cancer. It is related to lactation, use of oral pills, socioeconomic condition, race, height. Thinner women, cigarette smoking, severe malnutrition, chemotherapy, pelvic radiation, and ovarian surgery may lead to earlier menopause<sup>2</sup>. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in Indian women, and the incidence peaks before the age of 50 years<sup>11</sup>. Postmenopause<sup>3</sup> - It is the span of time dating from the final menstrual period (FMP). It describes years following that point. Postmenopausal endometrium is thin and uniform. Induced menopause<sup>3</sup>: It is cessation of menstruation that follows bilateral oophorectomy or iatrogenic ablation of ovarian function .According to the latest World Health Organization (WHO) data published in 2018, the life expectancy in India for a female is 70.3 years, expected to increase to 77 years by 2050. The first classification of stages of female reproductive aging were developed in 2001 and updated in 2012 at the Stages of Reproductive Aging workshop (STRAW). STRAW (2001) aimed to classify the woman's life in three phases<sup>2</sup>. (1) Reproductive, (2) Menopause transition and (3) Post menopause based on the menstrual cycle, endocrine parameters, and ovarian reserve markers. This was applicable only to healthy women. The 2012 STRAW + 10 provides a greater clarity for menstrual pattern and is applicable to most women except for those with POI.

**Table 1:-** Showing three phases of woman's life<sup>2</sup>:

Final Menstrual Period (FMP)								
Stages:	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Terminology:	Reproductive			Menopausal Transition		Postmenopause		
	Early	Peak	Late	Early	Late*	Early*	Late	
				Perimenopause				
Duration of Stage:	Variable			Variable		a 1 yr	b 4 yrs	Until demise
Menstrual Cycles:	Variable to regular	Regular		Variable cycle length (>7 days different from normal)	≥2 Skipped cycles and an interval of amenorrhea (≥60 days)	None		
Endocrine:	Normal FSH		↑ FSH	↑ FSH		↑ FSH		

\*Stages most likely to be characterized by vasomotor symptoms    

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↑ = elevated

### Aetiology –

Hormonal imbalance is due to ovarian atrophy. Which leads to estradiol fall, progesterone fall, DHEA decreases as the age advances, prolactin fall. After menopause only adrenal gland synthesizes hormones.

### Clinical symptoms<sup>1,2</sup> –

- Menstrual pattern –short cycle, long cycle, irregular bleeding.
- Vasomotor symptoms –hot flushes, night seat, sleep disturbances
- Psychological symptoms- worsening PMS, irritability, mood swings, poor memory.
- Sexual dysfunction –vaginal dryness, decrease libido, dyspareunia.
- Somatic symptoms – headache, dizziness, palpitation, breast pain, joint pain, back pain.
- Others- dry, itchy skin, weight gain, urinary incontinence.

Symptoms that come due to estrogen deficiency<sup>2</sup> –

- Hot flashes- 75% of menopausal women complain of hot flushes, 20% seek therapy, Self limited to 1-5 years.
- Sleep disturbance
- Urogenital Atrophy
- Osteoporosis- A bone thinning disease. Osteoporosis is associated with fracture (A major proportion of bone strength is determined by bone mineral density (BMD))

- e. Skin Dryness- Estrogen deficiency can lead to reduced collagen content of the skin and bones, increased aging and wrinkling of the skin.
- f. Risk of cardiovascular disease is more.

<b>TABLE 21-3. WHO Criteria for Bone Disease Based on Bone Mineral Density (BMD)</b>
Normal BMD : T-score between + 2.5 and – 1.0
Osteopenia: T-score between – 1.0 and – 2.5
Osteoporosis : T-score at or below – 2.5
Severe or established osteoporosis: T-score at or below – 2.5 with one or more fractures
Data from National Osteoporosis Foundation: Clinician guide to prevention and treatment of osteoporosis. Washington, National Osteoporosis Foundation, 2014.

#### Diagnosis<sup>2,3</sup> –

Cessation of menses for consecutive 12 months, Appearance of menopausal symptoms, serum FSH > 40IU/L done at least 4 weeks apart is a reliable marker for menopause and associated with serum estradiol <20pg/ml and LH > 40mIU/ml.

#### Treatments:

##### Lifestyle modification -

1. Follow biological clock. Mind diet is more important than body diet. In the famous journal 'The Wall Street Journal' the doctor's advice 20 min of meditation twice a day because stress causes hormonal imbalances. By just doing meditation for 7 days decrease in level of stress hormone has been seen.
2. Brisk walking 5 times a week for 30min is must.
3. Best foods for menopause that support healthy estrogen levels are flax seeds (rich in antioxidants and lignans), sesame seeds, millets, leafy greens, legumes, dark fruits, oats, whole grains (are high in fibre), lean protein (important for making muscles mass, and bone density), healthy fats (omega 3 fatty acids found in nuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds walnuts). Avoid processed foods and limit added sugar and lastly safe sun exposure.
4. Exercise – Kegel exercises strengthens the pelvic floor muscles to help the urinary incontinence.
5. Supplementary calcium- much better to take from plant based diet like sesame seeds, lotus seeds, poppy seeds, Ragi etc
6. Vit D- take 60k unit/monthly.
7. Stop taking alcohol and smoking.
8. Take Vit E (Reduces hot flashes 25%)
9. Drink plenty of water.

##### Homoeopathy Treatment –

The most effective way of treating menopause is with constitutional treatment. Homoeopath select a remedy as an individual, based on the totality of presenting symptoms. This remedy strengthens the immune system to restore a healthy balance and sense of well – being.

Homeopathy addresses the issue rather than just symptom. It is the powerful, gentle, effective, safe and natural way of treatment. It is very effective in replacing HRT. You don't need to suffer with mood swings and hot flushes. Homoeopathic medicine has no side effect because only the small amount of the original substance is used. Minute amount of these healing substances cannot act to replace the body's hormones but instead serve as catalyst, that kick start the body's own appropriate production of hormones. Some important homeopathic remedies are given below to treat menopause symptoms:

1. **Glonoinum**<sup>5</sup>

- Headache, headache instead of menses, from recent exposure to sun.
- Hot flushes during climacteric and also with catamenia.
- Pressure on the vertex.
- 2. **Graphites**<sup>5,6</sup>
  - For climacteric age women.
  - Women who inclined to obesity, habitual constipation and delayed menstruation.
  - Burning heat of foot soles, uncovers them.
  - Obstinate dryness of skin and absence of sweat.
  - Cracks, fissures, keloids, dryness, bleeding of skin.
- 3. **Lachesis mutus**<sup>5</sup>
  - Never well since climacteric.
  - Many complaints connected with menopause: hot flushes, hot sweats, burning vertex headaches, haemorrhoids, haemorrhages.
  - Complaints aggravate during climacteric, touch, pressure, sun- heat, after sleeping.
  - Broken down constitution of climacteric age.
- 4. **Sanguinaria Canadensis**<sup>7</sup>
  - It has marked vaso-motor disturbances, as seen in the circumscribed redness of the cheeks, flushes of heat, burning in palms and soles, chest and leucorrhoea during climacteric.
  - Headaches during climacteric; begin in the morning, increases during the day, and last until evening, spread upwards and forwards, and settle over right eye; >> by sleep; urination.
  - Painful enlargement of breasts at climaxis
- 5. **Sepia officinalis**<sup>8</sup>
  - Wonderful remedy for women with hormonal imbalances.
  - Hot flashles at menopause with weakness and perspiration and great tendency to faint
  - Metrorrhagia during the climacteric or during pregnancy, tendency to abort especially at the fifth and seventh months
  - Hair falls out; after chronic headache, at climaxis.
- 6. **Sulphur**<sup>5</sup>
  - Congestions to single parts: eye; nose; chest; abdomen; ovaries; arms; legs; or any organ of the body, marking the onset of tumours or malignant growths, especially at climacteric.
  - Hot flushes at climaxis, with hot head, hands, and feet, and great goneness in stomach.
- 7. **Amylenum nitrosum**<sup>8</sup>
  - For nervou, sensitive women during or after menopause.
  - Palpitation of the heart and similar conditions are readily cured by it, especially the flushings and other discomforts at climacteric.
  - Flushings, followed by sweat at climacteric.
  - Climacteric headache and flushes of heat, with anxiety and palpitation .
- 8. **Sulphuricum acidum**<sup>7,8</sup>
  - Suited to topers; old persons esp. women; in climacteric years
  - Pains at climacteric .
    - Climacteric age with constant hot flushes, and a feeling of tremor all over body, with great debility, and as if everything must be done in a hurry; spitting of blood; constipation; symptoms are agg. by smelling (not drinking) coffee.

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