

Menopause

Gynaecology

Most women reach menopause between the ages of 45 and 55. During this period, the body makes fewer female hormones, such as oestrogen and progesterone. This causes changes in the menstrual cycle and can lead to physical and emotional symptoms. Menopause is a normal part of life, but it can affect daily activities. In this leaflet, you can read more about menopause and what you can expect.

The start and duration of menopause

The first symptoms often begin between ages 45 and 50, but this can be earlier or later. It is different for every woman. Women whose mothers entered menopause early have a higher chance of experiencing early menopause themselves.

On average, menopause lasts about four years, starting when periods become irregular and ending at the menopause. Menopause is the moment when a woman has had no period for one year. This moment can only be confirmed afterwards. Menopausal symptoms can continue for five to ten years. For some women this period is shorter. Women who smoke usually enter menopause about two years earlier.

If both ovaries are removed during surgery, menopause starts immediately. If only the uterus is removed, menopause may start a little earlier, but often nothing changes. Using the contraceptive pill can reduce menopausal symptoms, but it does not delay menopause itself.

Periods during menopause

One of the first changes is the menstrual cycle. You may have periods more often and with heavier bleeding. The amount of blood can increase and sometimes blood clots are present. Later, the time between periods becomes longer. Eventually, periods stop completely.

If you have very heavy bleeding, it is wise to ask your GP whether extra examination is needed or to discuss it with the doctor during your consultation.

Typical menopausal symptoms

Menopausal symptoms occur because of changes in the level of oestrogen in the body. Not everyone has the same symptoms. Common symptoms include:

Hot flushes

A hot flush is a sudden feeling of warmth. It usually lasts from a few seconds to a few minutes. Some women have them occasionally; others have them several times a day. Stress and alcohol can trigger a hot flush. Your skin may become red and you may sweat.

Night sweats

Many women have hot flushes at night and sweat a lot. This can make it harder to sleep and cause tiredness during the day.

Mood changes

Many women experience mood swings during menopause. This is caused by hormonal changes and poor sleep. You may feel emotional more quickly, become angry or irritated more easily, or feel low in mood.

Impact of menopause

Menopause can influence your daily life. If your symptoms are severe or if they affect your life too much, contact your GP. Sometimes a referral to a menopause nurse or gynaecologist can help.

Emergency after visiting DC Klinieken

In case of an emergency, call: 088 0100 998.

Insurance

DC Klinieken has contracts with all health insurers. This means that almost all care is reimbursed, just like in the hospital. You do need a referral from your (general) doctor. Please be aware of your own deductible. More information about reimbursements and possible exceptions can be found at: www.dcklinieken.nl/vergoedingen.

Questions

For more information and answers to frequently asked questions, go to: www.dcklinieken.nl/contact or contact our Service and Information Centre at 088 0100 900.