



Understanding Perimenopause

In the years leading up to menopause, many women experience changes in their menstrual cycle, such as skipped periods or unpredictable cycles. This transitional phase, called perimenopause, lasts typically between two to eight years and occurs before menopause officially begins.

Understanding Perimenopause Perimenopause is a natural phase when a person's ovaries produce less of the hormones estrogen and progesterone. The changes that happen in the body often impact mental health.

Mental Health During Perimenopause It is estimated that 25% of people in perimenopause experience symptoms of anxiety, depression and experience mood changes. The symptoms are often the result of hormonal shifts, which can affect both mood.

Recent research highlights a surprising trend: a growing number of women in their 30s and 40s - previously considered too young for perimenopause - are reporting perimenopausal symptoms. This shift in the age range points to a crucial gap in the understanding of perimenopause and the importance of raising awareness about this often misunderstood phase.

Common Symptoms

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| • Irregular menstrual cycles | • Depression |
| • Hot Flashes | • Weight Gain |
| • Trouble Sleeping | • Low Libido |
| • Night Sweats | • Bladder Control Issues |
| • Mood Fluctuation | • Heart Palpitations |

How is Perimenopause Diagnosed? A physical exam and blood test can assist in diagnosis, but perimenopausal symptoms can occur even if hormone levels are within normal ranges.

How is Perimenopause Treated? The symptoms of perimenopause do not need to be treated unless they are bothersome. Treatment options include hormone therapy, antidepressants, cognitive behavioral therapy, plant based therapies, and lifestyle changes such healthy eating and exercise. Feel free to discuss your symptoms with your healthcare provider to find a suitable treatment plan for you.

Finding Support Perimenopause is a natural part of aging, but it can be a challenging time for many women, especially when it comes to mental health. Symptoms like mood swings, anxiety, and depression can make this transition more difficult. Advocacy for further research and improved support for women going through perimenopause is vital to ensure they receive the care and resources they need.

Join local menopause support groups to connect with others and hear real stories. These personal accounts offer valuable insights and emotional support. Always contact your healthcare provider if you're concerned about your mental health during this phase. Addressing worries early ensures you receive the care and guidance needed for a healthier, more positive experience.

Your (EAP) provides free and confidential counseling resources. Visit www.behavioralhealthsystems.com or call your designated care coordinator at 800-245-1150 to get started.



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