

7 Things Every Woman Should Know About Menopause

Contributed by John Mancini
Monday, 12 December 2005

For women reaching their mid to late 30's, menopause can be a scary thought. No one actually knows what to expect, but all of them have heard at least one horror story about the change of life. The following tips contain helpful information that will help women see menopause as a normal course of life and not as the curse as it is so often portrayed.

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1- The first step to alleviating some of the fear that is associated with menopause is to understand what menopause is. Simply put, it is the time when a woman's ovaries cease to function. The ovaries control such functions as producing eggs and estrogen, when the ovaries stop working, so does the production of these two things. The cease in production of estrogen can lead to a fluctuation in hormone levels and can cause osteoporosis later in life. This is why hormonal replacement therapy (HRT) is the treatment of choice.

2- There are a myriad of symptoms that signal the beginning of menopause. Irregular bleeding, menstrual cycles that are longer or shorter than normal, hot flashes and night sweats are some of the more common signs. It is important to note however, that even with a list that is varied in symptoms that not all women have the same symptoms or experience the same severity of those symptoms. One woman's experience of during this time in her life may vary greatly from the experiences of her friends and family.

3- Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) has been the standard of care for menopausal women since the 1970's. In fact, more than 40 million women every year receive prescriptions for this treatment. However, in recent years this form of treatment has come under attack as it is being thought that it causes an increase in heart disease.

4- For women who are fearful of HRT as a course of treatment for menopause, there are other means of treatment. The most popular forms of alternative treatment involve the use of plants and vitamins to suppress the symptoms of menopause. However, it is best to beware and to fully research these options before a regimen is put into place.

5- The use of soy and vitamin E as a treatment for the symptoms of menopause are gaining momentum among those women who do not want to use hormone replacement therapy. Nevertheless, these options have not been subjected to the same scrutiny as prescription drugs. The reason for this is that vitamins, minerals and other non-traditional methods are classified as food items and not drugs. Therefore, the studies that may have been conducted are not done in accordance with the FDA guidelines. This means that any information gleaned from such studies may not be accurate.

6- It is best to talk to your health care provider if you suspect that you are entering the early stages of menopause. Together, you will be able to decide upon a course of action to alleviate some of the more uncomfortable aspects of this time of your life. Treatment does not need to follow either traditional or non-traditional methods, in fact, for many women a combination of the two works best.

7- One last piece of information, menopause is not considered complete until the absence of a menstrual cycle for 12 consecutive months. During this time, you may experience an occasional cycle. It is important to note that pregnancy may still occur, if menopause is not completed. It would be wise to continue any birth control that you prefer during the menopause phase, if pregnancy is not wanted.

About the Author

John Mancini has been writing about Menopause online and offline for a long time. Visit <http://menopause-solutions.net> or <http://menopause-now.info> to read more about matters like early menopause symptoms and menopause.

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