

Menopause Conversation Guide



Providence
Health Care

BCRenal
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MENO  PAUSE



What is Menopause and Perimenopause?

Menopause occurs when your menstrual periods stop and is a natural part of aging. This usually happens at around age 50, but it can be earlier, particularly in patients with chronic kidney disease. Menopause can be a gradual process with a transition period that begins at around age 40 and can last up to 10 years.

This transition is called perimenopause. During perimenopause, menstrual periods start to change and may be unpredictable. Periods may become lighter, heavier, more frequent, or irregular during this time. People may also experience other menopause symptoms, such as hot flashes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, sleep disturbances, and mood changes. Fertility may be preserved during perimenopause and contraception should be continued if pregnancy is not desired. [Click here](#) for more information on contraception. Perimenopause ends with menopause, which happens when you

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do not have a menstrual period for 12 months. After menopause, you have stopped ovulating and are no longer fertile. Perimenopause symptoms often get better or go away entirely after menopause.

Menopause and Kidney Disease

If you are on dialysis or have kidney disease and your period stops, this does not necessarily mean that you have gone through menopause. Pregnancy is possible during all stages of kidney disease, or you may also have a

temporary loss of your period as your health changes. Your menstrual periods may return after a kidney transplant. Therefore, contraception is still important to prevent unplanned pregnancy. Additionally, both chronic kidney disease and early menopause can increase your risk of heart disease and low bone density (osteoporosis). Talk to your kidney doctor or primary care doctor about how menopause might affect your heart and bone health.

Managing Symptoms and Health Risks

If you are struggling with bothersome menopause symptoms, your health care team is there to support you. Lifestyle changes can help with managing menopause symptoms, including hot flashes, vaginal dryness, urinary tract infections, sleep issues, and weight gain. Additionally, hormone replacement therapy may be an option for you. Talk to your kidney doctor to learn more about symptom management strategies and your primary care doctor to discuss hormone replacement therapy.



[Click here](#) for a printable discussion guide to help discuss with your kidney doctor if you are planning a pregnancy.

Questions You Might Want to Ask Your Healthcare Provider

Use this guide during conversations with your healthcare team.

Menopause Discussion Guide For Kidney Patients

+ Common Questions

- How can I tell if I am experiencing menopause?
- How does menopause affect my kidney health?
- How does my kidney disease affect menopause?
- Do I need to be on contraception?
- What treatments are available to me?
 - Should I be on hormone replacement therapy?
 - What are the side effects and risks of hormone replacement therapy?
 - Is this safe for my kidney health?
- How can I manage my symptoms?
 - Hot flashes
 - Vaginal dryness
 - Sleep issues
 - Mood changes
 - Brain fog



- Canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/health-support/women-diversity-health/health-guide/wdh-menopause-guide.html
- Nature.com/articles/s41581-023-00717-w
- Kidneycareuk.org/kidney-disease-information/living-with-kidney-disease/patient-info-womens-health/patient-info-menopause-and-kidney-disease/

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