

# MENOPAUSE & YOUR HEALTH

For menopausal women who want to achieve better hormone balance naturally while experiencing the comfort, confidence and joy of being in your own skin again!

## WONKY MENSTRUAL CYCLES:

- Your menstrual cycle disappears for three consecutive months! Then, re-appears every two weeks for the next six months until she finally stops altogether!
- For some women, the discontinuation of monthly menstrual cycles is THE ONLY welcome event during menopause.

## HOT FLASHES & INSOMNIA:

- Otherwise, internal fire and external perspiration begin to plague much of your day and night.
- If sleep wasn't a problem before it is a total mess now; hot & cold, toss & turn, waking to the alarm while silently thinking: "I must have been run over by a truck! Really, it's time to get up? You've got to be kidding me!"

## LOWER STRESS TOLERANCE:

- You may feel tired, worn thin, and notice that you are less tolerant of stress when "stupid little things" bother you more than before.
- You may begin to experience a wider and faster cycling range of thoughts and emotions and for no apparent reason start feeling anxious, stressed, overwhelmed, hurried, rushed, irritable (really irritable!), outright enraged, guilty, sad and depressed.
- You might even secretly discover that you feel less happy these days (even though you put on a brilliant face of grins, smiles and "oh ya I'm great!" expressions during your public day).

## ABDOMINAL WEIGHT GAIN:

- And what makes you most unhappy these days is the abdominal weight gain that seemed to appear overnight even though you haven't changed your eating or exercise habits in years!

## NO LIBIDO & VAGINAL DRYNESS:

- Just to top it off, your libido is in the pits and that's not the only thing feeling dry these days!

## FEELING LIKE YOU'VE LOST CONTROL:

- Worst of all, for the first time in your life you may feel like you've lost control of your body & mind.



## NOW WHAT?

In desperation to re-gain control over the situation and resume a sense of normalcy again, you ask for help (good for you...now keep doing that!). In some cases you may have been offered, or are currently using one of these conventional approaches:

- Oral Contraceptive Pill (OCP)
- Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT): Progesterone and Estrogen pills, creams and/or patches.
- Anti-Depressant Medication
- OR, have mistakenly heard, "It's a normal part of aging, so you need to learn to live with it for the next five to ten years!"

These approaches can typically do 1 of 2 things:

1. Be very helpful and relieve all your menopausal symptoms. Hooray!

Unfortunately, the safety record of HRT is undesirable, as they significantly increase the risk of breast, uterine, and ovarian cancers. Although, this information may haunt you somewhat, you relegate it to the back of your mind because life without some kind of treatment felt like hell on wheels!

2. Be slightly helpful, but cause more internal frustration because:

When offered anti-depressant medication, or a mistaken comment like "this is normal," your gut knows these recommendations miss the point, as they do not address the true underlying imbalances in your body. Yet, understandably you take the prescription and/or bad advice anyway, because "what other choices do you have?"

### **It doesn't have to be this way! There is an alternative!**

Naturopathic Doctor's know how to employ proven, natural, safe and highly effective treatments for menopausal symptoms, which restore balance to a woman's body and mind. Through my training and

extensive education, and after helping hundreds of women just like **you** feel better (WAY better!) during the menopausal years I know this to be true:

*What you are currently experiencing IS COMMON. BUT, it is NOT necessarily normal to feel so out of balance during menopause.*

### **With the help of your Naturopathic Doctor you can:**

- Increase your energy
- Balance moods and emotions
- Improve cognitive function & mental focus
- Better manage external and internal stress
- Significantly reduce hot flashes
- Re-establish quality and quantity sleep!
- Manage healthy metabolism and weight
- Regain control of your life again
- Feel great about yourself!

As a Naturopathic Doctor I employ: Nutrition and Lifestyle Counseling, Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture, as well as Herbal and Homeopathic Medicines.

Using a combination of these natural methods geared toward each woman's individual health needs is immensely helpful for achieving better hormone balance during menopause.

Additionally, there are some basic health tips you can follow, even before visiting your ND to get you started on a path to feeling better in your own skin again!

### **Follow these three keys to freedom from aggravating menopausal signs and symptoms and establish better health in your body and mind!**

#### 1) NUTRITION:

Limit: Caffeine, alcohol, sugar, and processed foods.

- These substances cause and perpetuate hot flashes, insomnia, mood alterations and weight gain. These substances congest the liver and stress thyroid and adrenal function.

**Consume: Whole foods such as: A variety of colourful vegetables and fruit, nuts, seeds, beans, legumes, organic and free-range meat, dairy and eggs.**

- The vegetarian foods support healthy liver, adrenal and thyroid function, which is important to maintain hormone balance, energy and efficient metabolism during menopause.
- By consuming organic free-range animal products, women can avoid harmful substances such as additional animal hormones, pesticide, and anti-biotic derivatives contained in conventional animal products.

**Consume: Liver - Hormone Detoxifying Foods**

- Kale, collard greens, swiss chard, brussel sprouts, cabbage, watercress, beats, dandelion greens, garlic, onions, and turmeric (spice). Aim to consume 2 cups of these vegetables and 1/8 tsp of turmeric per day to keep your liver healthy and supported for efficient hormone detoxification.

## **2) EXERCISE:**

**Brisk Walking (20-30 minutes, 3-4 times per week):**

- Research shows that brisk walking for 20 to 30minutes, 3 to 4 times per week significantly reduces hot flashes, promotes better sleep, energy and mood regulation, manages weight, improves muscle mass and maintains healthy bone mass.

**Pilates or Yoga:**

- Pilates and Yoga improve body strength and flexibility while focusing the mind and relaxing the mood, which is particularly helpful for menopausal women!
- As a result of engaging in these practices many women begin to experience a better sense of control over their body and mind again, which leads to increased confidence and self-esteem.
- In addition, these practices are known to significantly improve most menopausal complaints.

## **3) SELF-CARE: ATTENDING TO YOUR NEEDS.**

- By the time the menopausal years arise, many women have become accustomed to setting aside their own needs in order to serve everyone else's first!
- In fact, many women have set aside their own needs for so long, that by the time they are in menopause and ask themselves "what is it I need?" they may be shocked to find they don't even know where to begin!
- The following are some ways women can begin to discern their needs and start delivering some basic self-care during menopause (there is no better time to start than now!).

### **SAVE 25% OF YOUR OWN PRECIOUS TME**

- Instead of filling up all of your time and space with "stuff" – "keeping busy," carve out time in your schedule for rest and rejuvenation.
- Commit to these rejuvenating activities by scheduling them in your day timer. Think of it as a date with yourself!

For example:

- Nap: 20min this afternoon at 2pm
- Epsom Salts Bath: 30min this evening
- Leisure Walk: 30min with Liz at 7:30pm
- Read my novel: Saturday 4 to 5pm

**This is like putting money in the bank!**

**Saving 25% of your energy reserves pays dividends for your health & sanity.**

**Do NOT say yes when you mean NO!**

- Many women are culturally conditioned to say yes in order to; be thought of as "nice," avoid conflict, and prevent disappointing others. But, by now, you may realize that saying yes when you mean no, most often backfires on YOU!
- Speaking of fire, this phenomenon is a great recipe for intense hot flashes! The embers of neglecting your inner needs burn big with anger, resentment, fear, guilt, remorse, and shame below. In menopause, the filters are down and the heat rises like a volcano! You cannot hide from your inner self any longer.

- Instead, practice this mantra: “I love you. But I love me too. NO. Thanks for asking me though.”... Smile. Breathe. Attend to your self-care!

### **Honour Your Niggings:**

- You have a profound source of intelligence residing in your female core that goes beyond cognitive function. Many women refer to this as “gut instinct”. Niggings about your needs come from here.
- Re-learn how to listen and attune more and more to your inner gut feelings.
- Start making some choices in life based on this wealth of intelligence vs. playing the head game, which more often ruminates on a cycle and gets you nowhere (except to an instant hot flash and stressful feelings).

### **Honour your inner intelligence and experience the empowerment of self-mastery!**

Underlying causes and risk factors that increase menopause signs & symptoms can be treated! Your ND can assess, diagnose, and treat using safe, effective, and natural methods including: adrenal & thyroid problems, liver toxicity, and nutrient deficiencies.

**Call your local ND today!**



Heidi McGill is a registered doctor of naturopathic medicine. She has owned and operated Healing Foundations since November 2006. She has helped dozens of families discover their best balance for overall wellness in body and mind, using the principles and practices of

naturopathic medicine. Dr. Heidi regularly appears as “Guelph’s Naturopathic Expert” on Inside Guelph, a local Roger’s T.V. program. She also writes articles on topics that matter to you. Dr. Heidi is focused on educating you about how your body functions in combination with the natural and cultural environment. She is genuinely passionate about guiding you towards optimal health, vitality and more joy in your life.

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