



# Menopause

**Easy Read fact sheet**

## About this fact sheet



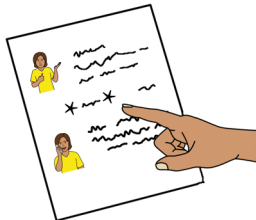
This fact sheet is from  
Jean Hailes for Women's Health.



You can read more information about this topic on  
the [Jean Hailes menopause web page](#).



This fact sheet is written in a way that is easy  
to understand.



We add a star before and after **\*hard words\***.  
Then we explain what the words mean.

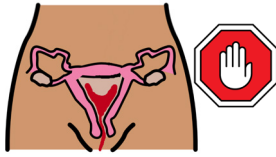


You can ask someone to help you read and  
understand this fact sheet.

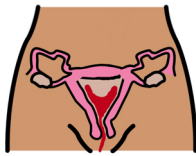


Contact information is at the end of this  
fact sheet.

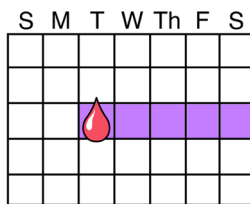
# What is **\*menopause\***?



Menopause is when your **\*periods\*** stop.



Periods are when you bleed from your vagina every month.

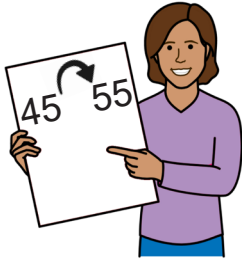


Periods are part of your **\*menstrual cycle\***.



Your menstrual cycle gets your body ready for pregnancy.

# When does menopause happen?



Most women reach menopause between the ages of 45 and 55.



In Australia most women reach menopause at about the age of 51.

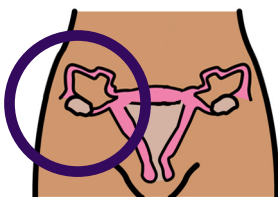


Some women reach menopause as late as 60.

Menopause can happen early.

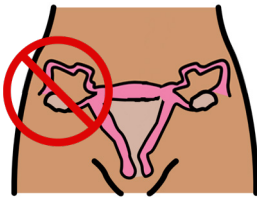
For example, because of

- a medical condition
- treatment for cancer
- an operation to take out your **\*ovaries\***.



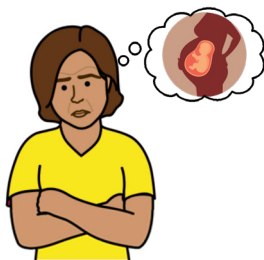
Ovaries are organs in your body that store eggs.

## What causes menopause?



Menopause usually happens because you have no eggs left and your **\*hormones\*** change.

Hormones are messengers in your body that help everything work well.



When you have no eggs you **cannot** get pregnant.

## Menopausal **\*symptoms\***



Symptoms are things you notice when you have a health problem.



You might have menopausal symptoms that stop you from doing things you want to do.

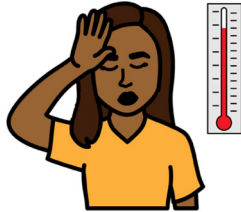


You might **not** have any menopausal symptoms.

## Common menopausal symptoms

You might have symptoms that affect your body.

For example, you might



- get **\*hot flushes\***
  - hot flushes are when you get hot all of a sudden



- get hot and sweaty at night
- feel tired and find it hard to sleep



- have headaches

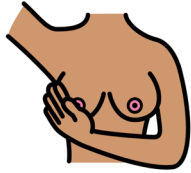


- put on weight around your tummy.

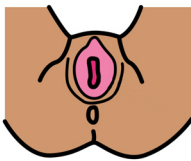


You might also

- feel pain in some parts of your body



- have sore breasts



- have a **\*dry vagina\***.

Dry vagina means your private parts feel dry and sore.

You can also have symptoms that affect how you feel.

For example, you might

- feel sad or angry all of a sudden



- forget things



- worry about things more.

# What you can do about menopausal symptoms



There are lots of things you can do to feel better.

For example

- eat healthy food



- drink lots of water



- exercise or move your body if you can

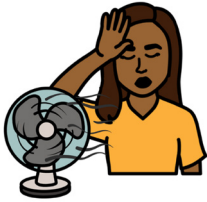


- learn how to relax
  - you can try to do stretches and **\*meditate\***.



Meditate means you focus on 1 thing like your breathing.



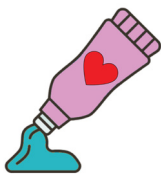


You can also

- use a fan or water spray if you feel hot



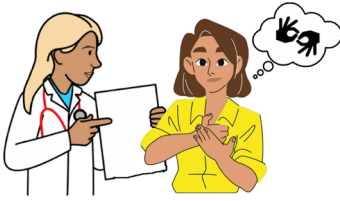
- wear 2 tops so you can take a top off if you feel hot



- use **\*lube\*** if you have sex.

Lube is a slippery liquid that makes sex feel better if you have a dry vagina.

## Medicines and therapies



You can ask your doctor about other ways to feel better.

You can try **\*menopausal hormone therapy\*** or **\*MHT\***.

MHT is medicine that helps with symptoms.



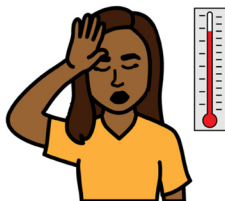
There are different ways to have MHT.

For example, you can

- put MHT patches or cream on your body



- take tablets.

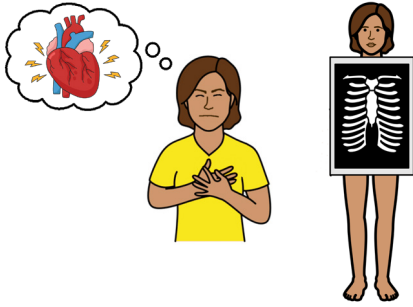


You can also try

- other medicines that help with symptoms like hot flushes



- therapy where you talk to someone and learn how to feel calm.



MHT can also help to keep some health problems away.  
For example, heart problems and weak bones.



Ask your doctor if MHT would be good for you.



You can try **\*natural therapies\*** for menopausal symptoms.

Natural therapies include things like herbs, vitamins and different ways to look after yourself.



There is not enough **\*research\*** to say all natural therapies work well.

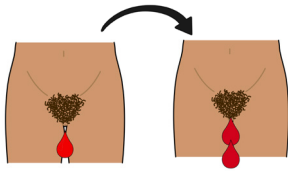


Research means studies to find more information about something.



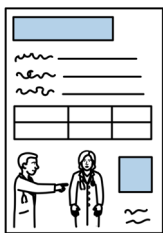
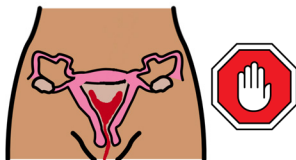
Ask your doctor about natural therapies that might help you.

## When to see your doctor



You should see your doctor if

- you are worried about your periods changing
- your symptoms stop you from doing things you want to do
- you are not eating or sleeping well
- you often feel sad or worried
- you are under the age of 45 and your periods have stopped.



Your doctor might write a **\*referral\*** to other doctors who know more about your health problem.



Referral means a letter asking another doctor to see you.



## More information

For more information contact  
Jean Hailes for Women's Health.



**Call** 03 9453 8999



**Website** [jeanhailes.org.au](http://jeanhailes.org.au)



**Email** [education@jeanhailes.org.au](mailto:education@jeanhailes.org.au)



### Help to speak and listen

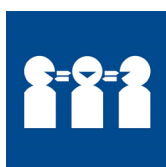
If you need help to hear or speak, the  
National Relay Service can help you make a call.



**Call** 1800 555 660



**Website** [NRS Helpdesk](http://NRS Helpdesk)



### Help in your language

If you need help with other languages, contact  
the Translating and Interpreting Service.



**Call** 131 450



**Website** [TIS National](http://TIS National)



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