

# Can Help You to Live Very Well During and After Menopause

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## ABSTRACT

Yes, menopause can be difficult to manage. It is not a disease, but it still affects your body physically and mentally. Understanding the changes in your body and learning about coping strategies and treatment options can help you to live very well during and after menopause.

Menopause is a natural process and not a disease. It's true that it may cause symptoms that bother or distress you, but most of these are temporary and treatable. Women live longer now than ever before and managing this rite of passage can open the door to a healthy, satisfying and fulfilling chapter in your life.

You can't prevent menopause. But you can take steps to enjoy good health into your later years. To help treat some of the symptoms of menopause and prevent possible complications, practice healthy habits.

Maintain a healthy weight, eat a well-balanced diet, and exercise regularly. Take steps to enjoy high-quality sleep, maintain good bone strength, and monitor your blood pressure levels.

Taking good care of yourself is key to enjoying an active and healthy life in your menopausal and post-menopausal years.

**Key words-** menopause, The takeaway, rajonivrutti, hormonal change.

## INTRODUCTION

Menopause is a generally defined as cessation of menstruation at the end of reproductive life due to loss of ovarian follicular activity.<sup>1</sup> Menopause is a natural phenomenon and a gradual traditional phase. This period is usually associated with

unavoidable manifestation of aging process in women.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the symptoms associated with menopause actually happen during the perimenopause stage. Some women go through menopause without any complications or unpleasant symptoms. But others find menopausal symptoms debilitating, beginning even during perimenopause and lasting for years.

The symptoms that women experience are primarily related to a lowered production of the female sex hormones estrogen and progesterone. Symptoms vary widely because of the many effects that these hormones have on the female body.<sup>3</sup>

In ayurveda rajonivrutti as a diseased condition is not described separately but rajonivrutti kala is mentioned by almost all Acharya without controversy. According to sushruta<sup>4</sup> and other references too<sup>5,6,7</sup> 50 yr. is mentioned as the age of rajonivrutti when the body is fully in grip of senility<sup>8</sup>

In ayurveda menopause deals with 'jarapakva vastha' of body.<sup>4</sup> Rajonivrutti is a representative syndrome of 'proudhavastha' which lies in 'sandhikal' (a mid period of yuvavastha n vridhavastha). During this period there is peak level of pitta for coming kal is 'jarahkal' which is vataj, so we get symptoms pittaj and vataj like hot flush, excessive sweating, sleep disturbance, irritability, and dryness of vagina etc.

## Types of Menopause

There are several types of menopause and each depends on the cause and/or timing of the end of menstruation.

**Natural menopause.** This occurs when your ovaries slowly stop functioning and you stop menstruating as a result. For most women, this happens between the ages of 45 and 55. As your ovaries stop producing hormones like estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone, your body responds and adapts. When you experience troubling symptoms as you adapt.

**Induced menopause.** Sometimes menopause does not come on its own but is brought on by a deliberate action, like surgery or medication that affects your ovaries. A hysterectomy or other surgery that removes or damages the ovaries will cause an abrupt menopause. Usually, you can anticipate this type of menopause and plan ahead for treating the sudden symptoms that can result. A hysterectomy that removes only the uterus may not damage the ovaries and, therefore, will not cause menopause. But if the ovaries are also removed, this is "surgical menopause" Chemotherapy or radiation as a cancer treatment will make your ovaries shut down, and that, too, can cause at least a temporary menopause.

**Premature or early menopause.** This occurs when you stop menstruating before the age of 40. Early menopause is one that occurs before the age of 45. Besides sugar, there are many reasons a woman might go through menopause early, including (if any of these apply to you, you may go through menopause sooner than other women):

- Smoking
- Heavy drinking
- Endocrine disorders
- Chemotherapy
- Chromosome defects
- Autoimmune disease
- Thyroid disease

## Sign and symptoms- Changes in menstrual cycle

Your period may not be as regular as it used to be. You may bleed heavier or lighter than usual, and occasionally spot. Also, your period may be shorter or longer in duration.

If you do miss your period, make sure to rule out pregnancy. If you're not pregnant, a missed period could indicate the onset of menopause. If you do begin spotting after not having your period for 12 consecutive months, make sure to talk to your doctor to rule out any serious conditions, such as cancer.

## Hot flashes

Many women complain of hot flashes as a primary menopause symptom. Hot flashes can be a sudden feeling of heat either in the upper portion of your body or all over. Your face and neck might turn red, and you may feel sweaty or flushed.

## Vaginal dryness and pain with intercourse

The decreased production of estrogen and progesterone can affect the thin layer of moisture that coats the vaginal walls. Women can experience vaginal dryness at any age, but it can be a particular problem for women going through menopause.

Signs can include itching around the vulva and stinging or burning. Vaginal dryness can make intercourse painful and may cause you to feel like you need to urinate frequently. To combat dryness, try a water-based lubricant or a vaginal moisturizer.

## Insomnia or problems sleeping

For optimal health, doctors recommend adults get seven to eight hours of sleep each night. But during menopause it might be hard for you to fall asleep or stay asleep. You might wake up earlier than you wish and have trouble going to back to sleep.

## Frequent urination or urinary incontinence

It's common for women in menopause to lose control of their bladder. You may also feel a constant need to urinate even without a full bladder, or experience painful urination. This is because during

menopause, the tissues in your vagina and urethra lose their elasticity and the lining thins. The surrounding pelvic muscles may also weaken.

### **Urinary tract infections**

During menopause, some women may experience more urinary tract infections (UTIs). Lowered levels of estrogen and changes in the urinary tract make you more susceptible to infection.

If you feel a persistent urge to urinate, are urinating more frequently, or feel a burning sensation when you urinate,

### **Decreased libido**

It's common to feel less interested in sex during menopause. This is caused by physical changes brought on by reduced estrogen. These changes can include a delayed clitoral reaction time, slow or absent orgasmic response, and vaginal dryness.

Some women may have more interest in sex as they age. If your desire is decreased related to another problem, such as painful sex,

### **Vaginal atrophy**

Vaginal atrophy is a condition caused by the decline in estrogen production and characterized by the thinning and inflammation of the vaginal walls. The condition can make sexual intercourse painful for women, which can ultimately decrease their interest in sex.

### **Depression and mood swings**

Changes in hormone production affect the moods of women during menopause. Some women report feelings of irritability, depression, and mood swings, and often go from extreme highs to severe lows in a short period of time. It's important to remember that these hormone fluctuations affect your brain and that "feeling blue" is not unnatural.

### **Skin, hair, and other tissue changes**

As you age, you will experience changes in your skin and hair. Loss of fatty tissue and collagen will make your skin drier and thinner, and will affect the elasticity and lubrication of the skin near your vagina and urinary tract. Reduced estrogen may

contribute to hair loss or cause your hair to feel brittle and dry

### **Tests and Diagnosis**

The symptoms are usually enough to diagnose menopause. If necessary, blood and urine tests can detect hormone level changes. Your gynecologist may be able to diagnose menopause by noting the changes to your vagina.

### **For Prevention**

Some cases of early menopause are unavoidable. Other times there are steps you can take to prevent or delay it. Prevention tips include:

- Stop smoking immediately.
  - Exercise regularly, which can keep you healthy and prevent obesity.
  - Maintain a healthy weight.
  - Use natural skin care products that are free of hormones.
  - Eat natural, healthy foods as much as possible (especially those rich in phytoestrogen), and avoid processed foods.
- In ayurveda also say prevention is better than cure.

Acharya charak described rasayan chikitsa in brief as a life promoter, maintains positive health, preserve life youth and help in balancing tridoshas.<sup>9</sup> produce stability, causes smoothness of muscles stimulates digestion and metabolism and bring about excellence in lustre complexion and voice.<sup>9</sup> So rasayan chikitsa is useful in menopause.

### **Treatment- Mood Changes**

Significant hormonal changes can impact your mood. Irritability, depression, and overall moodiness are the most common effects. The following solutions can help:

- Regular, daily exercise (not too close to bedtime)
- Meditation or yoga
- avoid alcohol
- keep caffeine consumption to mornings only
- eat more fruits and vegetables for a better overall mood

### **Problems Concentrating and Memory Loss-**

- Taking up a mind-exercising hobby such as Sudoku, crosswords, puzzles,

or model building can help keep your mind sharp and active.

- Lifestyle changes, such as decreased alcohol and caffeine intake, eating more fruits and vegetables, and getting regular exercise can also help.

- Get adequate sleep to improve short-term memory.

### **Manage symptoms and avoid complications<sup>3</sup>**

Menopause is a natural part of a woman's life cycle. You can't prevent menopause, but you can manage many common symptoms and prevent possible complications. It's essential to make healthy lifestyle choices. For example:

- eat a healthy diet
- exercise regularly
- get enough sleep
- maintain your bone strength
- manage your blood pressure

### **Eat a healthful diet**

Eating a well-balanced diet and maintaining a healthy weight is key to lowering your risk of heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic health conditions. You may find it takes more effort to maintain a healthy weight when you go through menopause.

During this period of your life, your levels of estrogen drop significantly. This may make you vulnerable to weight gain, especially in your midsection. Increased belly fat is associated with increased risks of heart disease and other life-threatening diseases.

To help prevent weight gain, pay attention to hunger cues. Only eat when you feel physically hungry and choose healthy foods. For example, enjoy a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, choose whole-grain options over refined, and opt for lean sources of protein. Limit saturated fats and trans fats, added sugars, and sodium in your diet.

On top of helping you maintain a healthy weight, avoiding processed and sugar-rich foods may help you reduce mood swings and maintain stable blood glucose levels

### **Exercise regularly**

Getting regular physical activity is important at any age, but it may offer extra perks during menopause. It can help you relieve hot flashes, regulate your mood, and manage your weight.

### **Get enough sleep**

Altered sleep patterns are a common symptom of menopause. Changes in your hormone levels can also leave you more fatigued than usual. That's why it's so important to practice good sleep habits so you can get enough high-quality sleep at night.

Exercising during the day, avoiding caffeine in the evening, and following a regular sleep schedule may help you fall and stay asleep more easily. Practicing relaxation strategies, such as deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, or meditation, may also help.

### **Maintain your bone strength**

Estrogen plays a key role in building new bone. As your estrogen levels drop during menopause, so can your bone density. In fact, bone density often drops at a fast rate during the first few years of menopause. As a result, your risk of bone fractures increases significantly.

- eat foods that are rich in calcium and vitamin D
- practice strength training exercises, such as weight lifting or yoga
- learn to exercise in safe ways to help prevent bone fractures and other injuries
- take steps to prevent falls

### **Watch your blood pressure**

Your risk of cardiovascular diseases, including high blood pressure, increases when your estrogen production declines during menopause. To monitor your blood pressure, get it checked regularly.

If you're diagnosed with high blood pressure, follow your doctor's prescribed treatment plan. They may recommend medications, lifestyle changes, or other therapies. Eating a well-balanced diet and exercising regularly can help you avoid and treat high blood pressure.

### **Symptomatic treatment<sup>1</sup>**

**Hot Flashes**-Phytoestrogens are plant-derived hormones that can partially reverse the hormonal changes that occur due to menopause. Soy-based foods contain high levels of phytoestrogens, so eating lots of tofu and soy sauce can be helpful.

Exercise also eases hot flashes by lowering the amount of circulating follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) and luteinizing hormone (LH). Aim for at least 20 minutes, three times a week. In addition, acupuncture and acupressure have been shown to limit hot flashes for some women.

You should also avoid triggers that can make you hotter. These include hot beverages, spicy foods, and alcohol. Stay as cool as possible by dressing in layers and keeping water on hand.

**Breast Tenderness**- Tenderness and swelling of the breasts are also symptoms of menopause. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (Ibuprofen, naproxen) can help decrease both swelling and pain. Although it has some negative side effects, testosterone replacement can be effective in reducing severe breast pain. Panchakarma shehan can give good relief.

**Vaginal Dryness**-Vaginal dryness can potentially interfere with your sex life. Over-the-counter lubricants such as Jelly can be used prior to sexual intercourse. Others, like Replens, are meant to be applied on a daily basis. Sesame seed oil can also be used as a topical ointment to ease dryness.

Vaginal estrogen cream and sustained-release vaginal estrogen rings both deliver low doses of estrogen to the inside of the vagina. Estrogen can be very effective in treating dryness

**Loss of Libido**-Menopause often causes women's bodies to stop producing testosterone, a hormone that is believed to be important in the formation of sexual desires and drive. Testosterone replacement therapy is sometimes used to treat sexual arousal disorders. However, it can have serious side effects (similar to those of

estrogen therapies), so consult with your doctor.

**The following treatment strategies may also help:**

- lubricants
- massages
- exercises
- Panchakarma therapy

**Urinary Incontinence**-Urinary incontinence can be embarrassing, but it is also a common symptom of menopause. Do exercises to strengthen the pelvic floor muscles. These exercises can greatly improve urethral control.

Avoid alcohol and caffeinated beverages, which can over-stimulate your bladder. Limit spicy foods, which can also cause bladder issues.

A pessary is a ring made of rubber, plastic, or silicone, which you insert inside your vagina, above the bone. Pessaries help keep your organs in proper alignment and decrease leakage. You may also consider asking your doctor about prescription medications to help urinary incontinence.

**Ayurvedic approach** - shilajatu, gokshur, punarnava, karaskar kalpa, suvarna bhasma, mandukaparni, guduchi, yashtimadhu, shankh apushpi, triphala, ashvagandha, shatavari, nagkeshar, goghrut, medhya, jivani ya bruhanaya, balyamahakashay etc. will be use as per symptomatic treatment.<sup>4</sup>

Rasayan therapy simultaneously affects the body and mind and bring out physical and psychical improvement and prevent the effect of aging, as rajonivrutti also manifests as a part of aging it should be treated with the rasayan therapy.

## DISCUSSION

1. Menopause occurs when the body stops producing eggs and the levels of the hormones estrogen and progesterone start to decrease.
2. Muscle mass diminishes, and body fat increases as you age. Eating certain foods and maintaining a healthy diet can help reduce the symptoms of menopause.

3. Certain foods contain phytoestrogens. These mimic the effects of estrogen and can reduce the symptoms of menopause.

### CONCLUSION

You can't prevent menopause. But you can take steps to enjoy good health into your later years. Rasayan therapy simultaneously affects the body and mind and bring out physical and psychical improvement and prevent the effect of aging, as rajonivrutti also manifests as a part of aging it should be treated with the rasayan therapy. Maintain a healthy weight, eat a well-balanced diet, and exercise regularly. Take steps to enjoy high-quality sleep, maintain good bone strength, and monitor your blood pressure levels. Taking good care of yourself is key to enjoying an active and healthy life in your menopausal and post-menopausal years.

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