

MENOPAUSE AND CLIMACTERIC

更年期

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簡介

絕經是指卵巢機能開始衰退而引起月經週期停止的階段。女性平均絕經期在 45-52 歲之間。絕經雖然會發生於特定的期間內，但婦女往往在接近絕經期時，可能會有持續性生理及心理上的變化，此階段稱為「停經過渡期」或「更年期」。所以，在此期間，醫護人員所給予婦女的輔導是非常重要的。

為何有些婦女在更年期出現問題？

缺乏雌激素（荷爾蒙）
由於女性在生活或工作上的轉變

更年期引致的症狀/問題：

許多女士在更年期並沒有嚴重的徵狀，但有些女士可能有以下的困擾：

短期徵狀：
潮熱、出汗、心跳、頭暈
焦慮、頭痛、失眠、抑鬱、情緒不穩定等

較長遠的問題：
陰道乾澀引致行房痛楚
小便頻密，失禁
骨質疏鬆症：由於雌激素水平下降，骨質密度逐漸減低
冠心病：更年期間雌激素分泌減少會引致脂肪代謝轉變及血管收窄，冠心病的發病率相應提高

如何應付更年期的變化

保持心境開朗，多與親友或醫護人員坦誠傾訴心中的憂慮，培養多方面興趣以拓闊生活圈子，積極面對更年期所帶來的生理和心理變化
維持健康的生活方式，例如：

多做負重運動（步行、緩步跑、跳舞、太極等）
由年青時開始注意多進食含豐富鈣質的食物，如牛奶、芝士、豆腐、腐竹、黃豆、魚類、芥蘭及西蘭花等
避免煙、酒、咖啡、濃茶等

某些情況下，經醫生指導下服用雌激素可能會有幫助

甚麼情形下需要使用激素治療？

使用激素治療是補充荷爾蒙分泌不足的療法，對部份更年期所引起的症狀有幫助，不過必須在醫生的指導下方可服用。

已接受手術切除子宮的女性，可單一使用雌激素補充藥；有完整子宮的女仕，使用時須同時使用黃體酮藥以避免子宮內膜受雌激素刺激增生。激素補充藥可經口服、經皮膚吸收或在陰道局部使用。

經醫生診斷後，因應個別婦女的情況，在以下情況下或會建議使用激素治療：

用以舒緩因更年期所引起的徵狀如潮熱、出汗、陰道乾澀、情緒不穩等
有陰道乾澀或萎縮性陰道炎的女性，可考慮局部性陰道雌激素藥物以舒緩徵狀
在某些情況，激素補充藥可用於防治骨質疏鬆症，但對於一般女性，預防骨質疏鬆症的最佳方法還是如上述般從生活習慣着手
卵巢早衰患者，一般建議服用激素補充藥直至 51 歲（正常女性平均停經歲數）

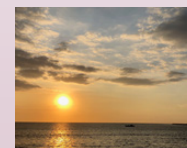
使用激素治療後可能引起的情況：

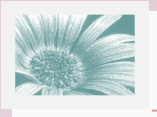
回復月經週期（某些配方）
乳房脹痛，身體積水，噁心；但通常這些反應是輕微和短暫的
長期服用雌激素補充劑，可能增加乳癌，靜脈栓塞或腦血管疾患的風險，故此應在醫護人員指導下服用。一般而言，我們建議使用最低而有效的劑量及最短的時間以治療更年期症狀（卵巢早衰患者除外）

服用雌激素者，需定時覆診，以便：

評估繼續服用雌激素的好處和風險
監察體重、血壓
如普通婦女一般作常規婦科及乳房檢查

有關就診資料，請參閱本部門網頁：
(<http://www.obsgyn.hku.hk>)





MENOPAUSE & CLIMACTERIC

Introduction

Menopause is the time when permanent cessation of menstruation occurs following the loss of ovarian activity. Menopause usually occurs at the age of 45-52. Although menopause occurs at a specific time, the actual changes leading up to this event occur over a much longer period. As a woman approaches menopause, there may be some physiological and psychological changes. This stage is normally referred to as the perimenopause or the "climacteric". Support and information from health care professionals are important to help women in facing this change of life.

Why do some women have problems at menopause?

- oestrogen deficiency
- life or career changes in the middle age

Symptoms and health problems that may occur at menopause

Many women do not face severe symptoms at menopause, but some may encounter the following disturbances:

Short term menopausal symptoms:

- Hot flushes, sweating, palpitation, dizziness
- Anxiety, headache, poor sleep, depression, irritability

Longer term health problems:

- Vaginal dryness and painful intercourse
- Urinary frequency and leakage
- Osteoporosis: the decrease in oestrogen level leads to gradual loss in bone mass
- Cardiovascular diseases: the decrease in oestrogen level may lead to changes in lipid metabolism and arterial narrowing, predisposing to increased risk of coronary heart disease

How to manage these changes?

Adopt a positive attitude towards the physical and psychological changes caused by menopause. Communicate with relatives, friends and health care professionals on problems encountered. Enrich the social life by exploring various interests and activities.

Maintain a healthy lifestyle via:

- More weight-bearing exercises (e.g. walking, jogging, dancing, Tai Chi)
- Taking calcium-rich diet starting from young age, e.g. milk, cheese, beancurd and related products, bony fish, Chinese kale, broccoli, etc. Calcium supplements may be considered.
- Reducing intake of coffee, tea and alcohol; avoid smoking

Hormonal therapy may be indicated for treating some of the symptoms after medical assessment.

When is Hormonal Therapy needed?

Hormonal therapy (also called hormonal replacement therapy, HRT) is the intake of hormonal medications to replenish the oestrogen that the ovaries stop producing after menopause. It can help to alleviate some of the symptoms related to menopause. It must be taken under medical supervision.

Women who have had their womb removed surgically can take oestrogen only replacement, whereas women with an intact uterus should take progestogen together with oestrogen to prevent stimulation of the womb lining by the oestrogen. HRT may be taken orally, transdermally or vaginally.

After appropriate medical assessment based on the conditions of individual women, HRT may be advised in some of the following indications:

- To relieve menopausal symptoms e.g. hot flushes, sweating, mood changes and vaginal dryness
- An estrogen preparation applied locally to the vagina may be considered for treating vaginal dryness or atrophic vaginitis

It may be used for prevention and treatment of osteoporosis in some situations, but generally it is more appropriate to achieve prevention by lifestyle measures.

Women with premature ovarian insufficiency are generally advised to take HRT up till 51 years of age (i.e. the average age at menopause in the general population).

Conditions that may arise from HRT

- Return of "menstrual bleeding" (some formulations)
- Breast tenderness, water retention, nausea – these are usually mild and transient
- Long term use of HRT will increase the risk of developing breast cancer, venous thromboembolism (clots in the veins) and stroke. It is generally advised that the lowest effective dose should be used for the shortest duration for relief of menopausal symptoms (except for women with premature ovarian insufficiency).

Women on HRT should see their doctors regularly to:

- review the benefits and risks of continuing treatment,
- monitor their body weight and blood pressure,
- have routine breast and gynaecological checkup as in usual women

For consultation details, please refer to our departmental website (<http://www.obsgyn.hku.hk>)

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