International Journal of Homoeopathic Sciences

E-ISSN: 2616-4493
P-ISSN: 2616-4485
www.homoeopathicjournal.com
IJHS 2025; 9(2): 644-645
Received: 23-03-2025
Accepted: 29-04-2025

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Menopause and homeopathic management

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DOI: https://www.doi.org/10.33545/26164485.2025.v9.i2.J.1564

Abstract
Menopause is a natural biological transition marking the end of a woman's reproductive years, typically occurring between the ages of 45 and 55. It is defined as the permanent cessation of menstruation for 12 consecutive months due to the decline in ovarian function and decreased estrogen levels. Menopause is associated with a wide range of symptoms, including hot flashes, night sweats, mood swings, vaginal dryness, insomnia, and decreased libido. It may also lead to long-term health risks such as osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease. Diagnosis is primarily clinical but may be supported by hormonal tests. Management involves lifestyle changes, hormone replacement therapy (HRT), alternative treatments, and individualized care plans. Homeopathy offers gentle and holistic options to ease the transition and support overall well-being during this phase.

Keywords: Menopause, homeopathy, hormonal changes, estrogen decline

Introduction
Menopause is a significant physiological milestone in a woman's life, marking the cessation of menstrual periods due to the decline in ovarian follicular activity. It typically occurs between 45 and 55 years of age, with the average age being around 51 years. The perimenopausal phase, which may last several years, is characterized by irregular menstrual cycles and the onset of symptoms. Menopause impacts physical, emotional, and psychological health, and requires a multidisciplinary approach for effective management and improved quality of life.

Causes
Menopause occurs naturally due to:
- **Decline in Ovarian Function:** Reduced estrogen and progesterone production.
- **Surgical Menopause:** Removal of ovaries (oophorectomy) induces sudden menopause.
- **Chemotherapy or Radiation Therapy:** Can damage ovarian function, causing early menopause.
- **Primary Ovarian Insufficiency:** Early menopause (before age 40) due to genetic, autoimmune, or idiopathic factors.

Clinical features
Menopause presents with a variety of symptoms, including:

1. Vasomotor Symptoms
- Hot flashes
- Night sweats

2. Psychological Symptoms
- Mood swings
- Irritability
- Depression
- Anxiety

3. Genitourinary Symptoms
- Vaginal dryness
- Pain during intercourse
- Urinary frequency or urgency

4. **Other Symptoms**
- Sleep disturbances
- Fatigue
- Memory problems
- Joint and muscle aches

Types
1. **Natural Menopause:** Occurs gradually due to natural aging.
2. **Premature Menopause:** Occurs before age 40, often due to genetics or autoimmune disease.
3. **Surgical Menopause:** Induced by removal of ovaries, often accompanied by severe and sudden symptoms.
4. **Induced Menopause:** Resulting from chemotherapy, radiation, or medical treatment**.**
5. **Perimenopause:** Transitional phase leading up to menopause with fluctuating hormone levels and irregular cycles.

Diagnosis

Menopause is diagnosed clinically based on the absence of menstruation for 12 consecutive months. Supportive tests may include:
- **FSH and LH Levels:** Elevated levels due to low estrogen feedback.
- **Estradiol:** Low serum estradiol confirms reduced ovarian function.
- **Thyroid Profile:** To rule out thyroid dysfunction mimicking menopausal symptoms.
- **Bone Density Scan (DEXA):** To assess osteoporosis risk.

General Management

Menopause can be managed through supportive and preventive strategies such as:
- Maintaining a balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D.
- Engaging in regular weight-bearing exercise to maintain bone density.
- Practicing stress-reducing techniques such as yoga, meditation, or deep breathing.
- Avoiding triggers such as spicy foods, alcohol, and caffeine to reduce hot flashes.
- Using lubricants or vaginal moisturizers to relieve dryness.
- Considering hormone replacement therapy (HRT) in severe cases, after evaluating risks and benefits.

Homoeopathic Approach

Homeopathy provides individualized, gentle care by addressing both the physical and emotional symptoms of menopause. Remedies are selected based on the totality of symptoms and patient constitution. Common remedies include:
- **Lachesis:** For hot flashes, irritability, and left-sided complaints.
- **Sepia:** For hormonal imbalance, apathy, and pelvic weakness.
- **Pulsatilla:** For tearfulness, changeable moods, and intolerance to heat.
- **Sulphur:** For hot flushes, night sweats, and burning sensations.
- **Graphites:** For dryness, constipation, and skin issues in menopausal women.

Homeopathy aims at long-term relief and hormonal balance, without side effects or dependency.

Conclusion

Under the homeopathic method of treatment, which offers a safe and natural approach, menopause can be effectively managed by addressing the underlying hormonal imbalances and accompanying symptoms. Unlike conventional hormone therapies that may pose risks, homeopathic remedies are tailored to each individual, offering lasting relief and improved emotional and physical well-being. This holistic and gentle therapy presents a viable alternative for women seeking comfort during the menopausal transition.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

Financial Support

Not available

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How to Cite This Article

Priti, Aggarwal A. Menopause and homeopathic management. International Journal of Homoeopathic Sciences. 2025;9(2):644-645.