



Western  
**Health**

# Menopause

September 2012



# Objectives:



You will learn:

- What happens during menopause.
- The risk factors associated with menopause.
- The facts about Hormone Replacement Therapy.

# Menopause:

- Is not a disease.
- It is a natural stage in a woman's life.
- It affects how you feel physically and emotionally, to varying degrees.
- It often coincides and interacts with other aspects of aging.
- Every woman has a unique menopause.



# What Causes Menopause?

- Hormones are winding down, and often create a number of symptoms.
- Your body produces smaller amounts of female hormones (estrogen and progesterone) over several years.
- It happens when the ovaries gradually run out of functioning eggs.
- It is puberty in reverse-hormone shift.



# Menopause:

- It can take years before your periods stop completely.
- Most enter menopause in their mid to late 40's and finish at the age of 51 (some may be 55 or later).
- Menopause is complete when you have not had a period for one year. You are then a postmenopausal woman.
- **REMEMBER:** You can still get pregnant during perimenopause so you will need to use a method of birth control.

# Menopause:

- Premature Menopause
- Surgical Menopause
- Medical Menopause



# Perimenopause:

- Hot flashes/ night sweats
- Mood swings
- Fuzzy thinking
- Insomnia
- Unpredictability
- Increased wrinkling
- Sexual changes
- Bladder control



# Other Effects of Menopause:

- Osteoporosis
- Cardiovascular Disease

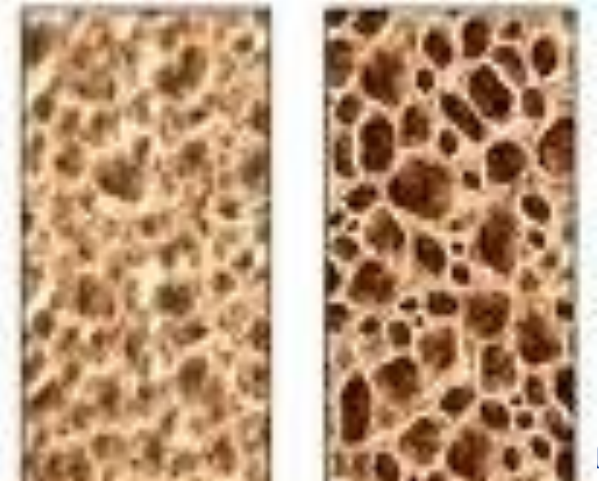




# Osteoporosis:

- Bone mass peaks around age 20.
- At 35 bone density starts to decrease causing thinner bones as we age.
- This process speeds up after menopause because of low estrogen.
- Women can lose 3-5% of bone mass per year for an average of 10 years.
- You may not experience any symptoms until after a fracture.

- Normal bone versus bone with Osteoporosis:



# What can you do?

- Be physically active.
  - Eat a well balanced diet, high in calcium.
  - Limit alcohol intake.
  - Lower caffeine intake.
  - Be smoke free.
- 
- SOGC recommends 1500 mg of elemental calcium from dietary and supplemental sources, and to ensure optimal absorption, supplement with 800 IU/d of vitamin D (for women 50 and over). Jan. 09



# Cardiovascular Disease:

- It is the leading cause of death in women after menopause but the least recognized.
- Prior to menopause, women have fewer cases of heart disease.
- After menopause the risk of heart disease increases. By the ages of 65-70, the risk of heart disease is equal to men.



# What can you do?

- Be smoke free.
  - Be physically active.
  - Eat a well balanced diet.
  - Maintain a healthy weight.
- 
- The intake of omega-3 fatty acids is linked to a reduced risk and it is recommended to limit the amount of saturated fats and have 2-3 servings of fish a week.



# Assess your risk:

- Osteoporosis
- Cardiovascular disease
- Make healthy life style changes



# Hormone Replacement Therapy:

- A treatment that replaces the hormones that the ovaries stop making at menopause.
- Estrogen and progestin.
- Progestin helps protect the uterus from endometrial cancer.
- If you've had a hysterectomy you will only need estrogen.

# HRT- What you should know:

- You need to know the benefits.
- You need to know the side effects and dangers.
- You need information to make an informed decision.
- Discuss with your health care provider.

# HRT choices:

- HRT contains different estrogens and progestin's.
- Available in a number of forms and can be combined in different ways.





# Hormone Replacement Therapy:

Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists:

- States it is safe for most women to use HRT up to 5 consecutive years to manage menopausal symptoms.
- Symptoms - usually controlled with short term use.

# Alternative approaches:

Recognized products:

- *Black Cohosh*: improves hot flashes and mood.
- *St. John's Wart*: depression.
- *Ginkgo Biloba*: treatment of memory loss.
- *Valerian*: short term of sleep disturbances.



# Maintaining Your Health:

- See your health care provider 3-6 months after you begin HRT.
- Blood test: fasting lipid profile.
- If at risk for osteoporosis consider having a bone density test.
- Regular health practices as recommended:
  - Breast exams
  - Mammograms
  - Pap Smears
- Make healthy lifestyle changes.



# Healthy Lifestyle Choices:

- Eat a well balanced diet
- Regular physical activity
- Be smoking free



# 8 Secrets for Inner Health

- Get lots of sleep
- Laugh a lot
- Hug more
- Walk in the country
- Clean your closets
- Write a love poem (share it)
- Be nice to your knee caps
- Create your own inner joy

