Adaptive Wellness

Anne Wells, ND, FMCP-M

HORMONES • METABOLISM • GUT HEALTH • HEALTHY AGING

Could It Be Perimenopause?

Recognizing the Often-Overlooked Signs of the Menopause Transition

A guide for healthcare providers to help identify possible symptoms and know when to consider a referral for specialized support.

THE MENOPAUSE TRANSITION CAN AFFECT FAR MORE THAN MENSTRUAL CYCLES.

Perimenopause typically begins in the 40s (and can start earlier) and can last several years before the final menstrual period. Fluctuating and declining estrogen, progesterone and testosterone can contribute to a wide range of symptoms affecting mood, cognition, sleep, musculoskeletal health, pelvic health, metabolism and overall well-being. Many of these symptoms may first present in your office, even when the patient does not initially connect them to perimenopause.

It's not just hot flashes.

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

MOOD & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

- Increased anxiety or worry
- Irritability or mood swings
- Low mood or depressive symptoms
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Reduced stress tolerance
- Emotional changes

SLEEP & ENERGY

- Difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Waking early (often 3-4 AM)
- Night sweats
- Nonrestorative sleep
- Daytime fatigue
- Reduced energy or motivation

COGNITIVE CHANGES

- Brain fog
- Difficulty concentrating
- Forgetfulness
- Word-finding difficulties
- Feeling "mentally not as sharp"

MUSCULOSKELETAL HEALTH

- Joint aches and stiffness
- Muscle pain or tension
- Decreased exercise recovery
- Loss of muscle mass or strength
- New or worsening chronic pain

MENSTRUAL & REPRODUCTIVE

- Changes in cycle length (shorter, longer, or irregular)
- Heavier or lighter bleeding
- Skipped periods
- Worsening PMS symptoms
- New or worsening menstrual pain

VASOMOTOR & AUTONOMIC

- Hot flashes
- Night sweats
- Palpitations
- Temperature sensitivity
- Dizziness or lightheadedness

PELVIC & SEXUAL HEALTH

- Vaginal dryness or irritation
- Painful intercourse (dyspareunia)
- Reduced libido
- Urinary urgency or frequency
- Recurrent UTIs
- Pelvic floor changes

METABOLIC & OTHER CHANGES

- Increased abdominal fat
- Changes in body composition
- Reduced insulin sensitivity
- Headaches or migraines
- Breast tenderness
- Dry skin or hair changes

Symptoms vary widely and can be subtle. Many women do not initially connect these changes to perimenopause. If symptoms are persistent, affecting quality of life, or occurring alongside menstrual changes, a menopause-focused medical evaluation may be helpful.

COLLABORATIVE CARE

FOR MIDLIFE WOMEN

ADAPTIVE WELLNESS

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Educate
Empower
Collaborate

WHEN TO CONSIDER A REFERRAL

Consider a referral to Adaptive Wellness when your patient is experiencing:

- Persistent or worsening symptoms that may be related to the menopause transition
- Symptoms impacting quality of life, work, relationships or daily function
- Menstrual changes in a woman in her 40s (or earlier)
- New-onset pelvic, sexual, or urinary symptoms
- Sleep, mood or cognitive changes without another clear cause
- Desire for guidance on hormone therapy or non-hormonal options
- Bone health, metabolic or healthy aging support

IMPORTANT NOTE

These symptoms can have multiple causes. A comprehensive medical evaluation is important to rule out other conditions. Postmenopausal bleeding, unusually heavy bleeding, chest pain, syncope, or significant new neurological symptoms warrant prompt medical assessment and should not be attributed to hormonal changes.

HOW ADAPTIVE WELLNESS CAN SUPPORT YOUR PATIENTS

I provide individualized naturopathic and functional medicine consultations focused on:

- Perimenopause & Menopause Hormone Health
- Metabolic Health & Weight Support
- Gut Health & Digestive Concerns
- Sleep, Fatigue & Stress Resilience
- Bone Health & Healthy Aging
- Cognitive Function & Mood Support
- Cardiovascular & Metabolic Risk Reduction
- Collaborative, Patient-Centered Care

I work collaboratively with other healthcare providers to support your patients with comprehensive. evidence-informed care, including hormone therapy (when appropriate), lifestyle and nutritional strategies, and ongoing coordination of care.

REFER A PATIENT

Visit our provider page for referral information, what to expect, and how we can work together.

adaptive-wellness.com/for-providers

Scan here for provider referrals

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