

# MENSTRUAL CYCLE CHANGES & PERIMENOPAUSE

When we look at menstrual health with a lifetime filter we know that periods start at menarche (aka puberty) and end at the climacteric (aka menopause day).

The cyclical infradian rhythm starts to change around the late 30's. Remember this is all pre-programmed into the hormone blueprint, we just don't know exactly when the pattern we have been so diligently tracking, will start to change. BUT if you already have an idea of your personal rhythms and have become a hormone detective, then these subtle changes will be easier to spot and you can adjust your menstrual health tool kit accordingly.

The cycles may become longer, shorter or both all at the same time!

The lifetime levels start to go down over age (even though each cycle they are still going up and down - which is confusing to say the least)

THE OVARIAN ESTRADIOL IS THE DRIVER OF THE CHANGES AND CAN LEAD TO ADDITIONAL MENSTRUAL HEALTH SYMPTOMS. OF COURSE STRESS AND OTHER CO-FACTORS THAT IMPACT HORMONE HEALTH ALSO PLAY A ROLE.

The signs, symptoms and side-effects of menstrual cycle changes during perimenopause include the following:

- Depression/anxiety
- Palpitations, panic attacks, loss of confidence
- Mood changes/irritability
- Period changes, irregular, painful & heavy
- Hot flushes, Night sweats
- Changes in your skin - dry/itchy
- Vaginal dryness
- Allergies
- Brittle nails
- Loss of sex drive
- Breast tenderness
- Joint aches & pains
- Headaches/Migraines
- Burning tongue, electric shocks, tingling extremities
- Digestive issues/Bloating
- Gum problems
- Muscle tension/weakness
- Sleep problems/insomnia
- Fatigue and tiredness
- Hair loss/thinning hair
- Brain fog/difficulty concentrating
- Dizziness
- Bladder irritation/incontinence
- Tinnitus
- Unexplained /sudden weight gain
- Change in body odour

THE LIST IS FAIRLY COMPREHENSIVE BUT NOT FINAL. WHILST NOT SYMPTOMS THEMSELVES, RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH MENOPAUSE ARE OSTEOPOROSIS AND CARDIO VASCULAR DISEASE, PLUS POST MENOPAUSE AN INCREASED RISK OF TYPE 2 DIABETES AND DEMENTIA