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HEALTH FOR WOMEN



7 Myths about the Menopause

You enjoy being a woman, but if you're approaching menopause, you may be worried all the fun is about to end. After all, you've heard the horror stories – the hot flushes, the bad moods, the weight gain, the lack of sexual desire... Don't worry. Yes, there'll be changes, but there are also a lot of myths that need dispelling.

I'll put on weight

Whilst most women do gain a little weight after menopause, perhaps as much as 4 kilos, it isn't inevitable. Watching your diet and exercising will help you to maintain your weight.

I won't feel sexy

Why should your sex life change? Yes, hormonal changes may produce physical changes, such as vaginal dryness or less desire, but most problems can be easily dealt with by your GP. The fact that you're worried you might miss out proves you've still got it!

It's the beginning of the end

Nonsense. Menopause is just another phase of your life to explore. As long as you keep an eye on your weight, exercise regularly, make sure you go for your health screenings and watch out for any sudden changes in your health, you're free to enjoy the new you.

I'll become cranky

Moodiness is all about your changing hormones and chemical reactions in the brain. The good news is not everyone suffers from crankiness and, even if you do, it will settle down over time. It might even be less noticeable than when you suffered from PMS!

My menopause will start when I'm 50

Actually, it can start at any time in your 40s with the perimenopause. This is when you may find yourself skipping the occasional period and it can last from two to eight years! Only when you've missed your period for 12 consecutive months can menopause be said to have arrived.

I'm going to get really depressed

There's no scientific evidence that menopausal women suffer from depression more than at any other age, but it is important to accept what menopause means. It might have its problems, but once it starts it's not going away, so embrace it. It's a part of who you are.

My body's packing up

Rubbish. What is happening is that certain hormone levels are reducing and you're no longer ovulating. These changes can cause problems, but by staying active, giving up smoking, eating healthily (including getting approx 1500mg calcium a day for your bones), limiting your alcoholic intake and watching your weight you can keep healthy. Your GP may also recommend dietary supplements.