

- **What is menopause (and perimenopause)?**

- Menopause is a natural biological transition when the ovaries stop releasing eggs and menstrual periods end—usually around age 45–55, though the timing and symptoms vary. [Cleveland Clinic+1](#) Perimenopause is the phase leading into menopause, during which hormone (especially estrogen and progesterone) levels fluctuate significantly. [Cleveland Clinic+1](#)

- **Common symptoms and why they occur**

- Because hormone levels change (especially declining estrogen), a wide range of symptoms can signal this transition. Some of the most common include:
- **Hot flashes / night sweats** — These “vasomotor” symptoms happen when the body’s temperature regulation is disrupted. [Office on Women's Health+1](#)
- **Sleep disturbances** — Night sweats, mood changes, and hormone shifts all contribute to insomnia or poorer sleep. [Office on Women's Health+1](#)
- **Vaginal dryness / discomfort during sex** — Lower estrogen can thin vaginal tissue and reduce lubrication.
- **Mood changes, brain-fog, irritability** — Memory or focus issues, low mood, or even anxiety can emerge. [Office on Women's Health+1](#)
- **Bone and cardiovascular changes** — [Office on Women's Health+1](#) With less estrogen, the risk for osteoporosis and heart disease increases, and lifestyle changes become more important. [Healthline+1](#)