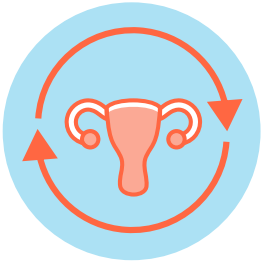
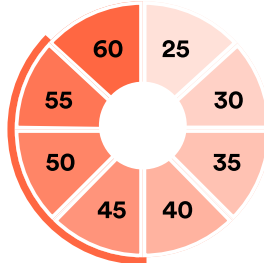


Understanding Menopause

What is Menopause?



Menopause is a natural biological process where a woman's menstrual cycles end, periods stop and they are no longer able to get pregnant naturally.



Menopause usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55 as oestrogen levels decline; with the average age being 51 in the UK.



1 in 100 women will experience menopause before 40 years of age - this is known as premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency.



Certain surgical procedures can trigger menopause to start early; including breast cancer treatments, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and hysterectomies.

Stages of Menopause

Perimenopause	Menopause	Postmenopause
Perimenopause refers to the period of time during which the female body makes its natural transition to menopause. Women can still get pregnant but oestrogen levels are decreasing and therefore fertility is reduced. This is typically when symptoms first start and could last a few months or even years before menopause itself is reached.	Once a woman has had 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period, the perimenopause period is over and menopause is reached. This means the ovaries have stopped producing eggs and oestrogen production is at minimum level. The average age for women to reach menopause in the UK is 51.	This is the period of time after menopause is reached where symptoms may continue to be present. It is expected that with time symptoms will decrease, however some women may continue to experience symptoms for a decade after the menopause transition.

Symptoms of Menopause

Three-quarters of women experience symptoms, whilst 1 in 4 will experience severe debilitating symptoms. Symptoms can vary in frequency and intensity and can be both physical and psychological.

A poster displaying the most commonly experienced symptoms can be found [here](#).