



Menopause - a lived experience

By Lytisha Tunbridge



Do you talk about it?

8 in 10 women will experience symptoms before and after menopause

- Source: [Menopause - Symptoms - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

NHS says:

These can have a

significant

impact on daily life for some women.





“

On average, most symptoms last around 4 years from your last period.
However, around 1 in every 10 women experience them for up to 12 years.

”

SOURCE: [MENOPAUSE - SYMPTOMS - NHS \(WWW.NHS.UK\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

These can have a significant impact on daily life for some women.

Text Book by Lytisha





“No wonder
they call it
the Men-O-
Pause!”

Vanessa
Osbourne

How can you tell when you reach menopause?

There can be many false starts – I had gaps of 8 months, 7 months, then 11 months then restarted periods before I finally stopped.

R believed they had stopped. 14 months after they stopped bleeding they discovered they were 5 months pregnant.

V had one huge last period that “ felt like a miscarriage” & had her bedridden for several days and never bled again

S had longer and longer gaps then they just tailed off.

V's experience

V when questioned said her menopause was straightforward – the one huge period then everything was fine.

And for a few years before, and continuing now albeit less frequently, had huge “power surges”. During these flushes she would get very flustered, irritable and have to discard clothing instantly.

And the final year of menstruation she was highly emotionally volatile, was quite mean and nasty to those closest to her, often felt unheard & that everyone was against her. This is very out of character.

Sex was struck off the menu. Men – o – Paws – dogs not sex!

3 years later she is unrecognisable to the snarling whirlwind of that year.

S's experience

S says she had a very early menopause, that she believes was brought on by stress, poverty and grief.

Her periods stopped when caring for her bed ridden father after a life changing accident, whilst maintaining a full time job in another country to cover costs, living with an emotionally supportive but financially unstable partner at 37.

She lost a lot of weight at the time. Her periods never restarted after she returned to normal body-weight.

She is beleives the osteoarthritis symptoms she began displaying at a young age could be linked.

My experience

My periods became even more erratic

I would have 3 in a month, none for several months, then regular ones for a few months.

Twice I thought I had reached menopause after 9 & 11 month gaps, only to be caught out by sudden heavy periods followed by regular bleeds.

This is often cited as relating to significant emotional events. 'Mother of the bride syndrome' is common, or as in my case, unexpected sexual and emotion connection. Though the sexual bit was definitely thwarted by the huge flood.

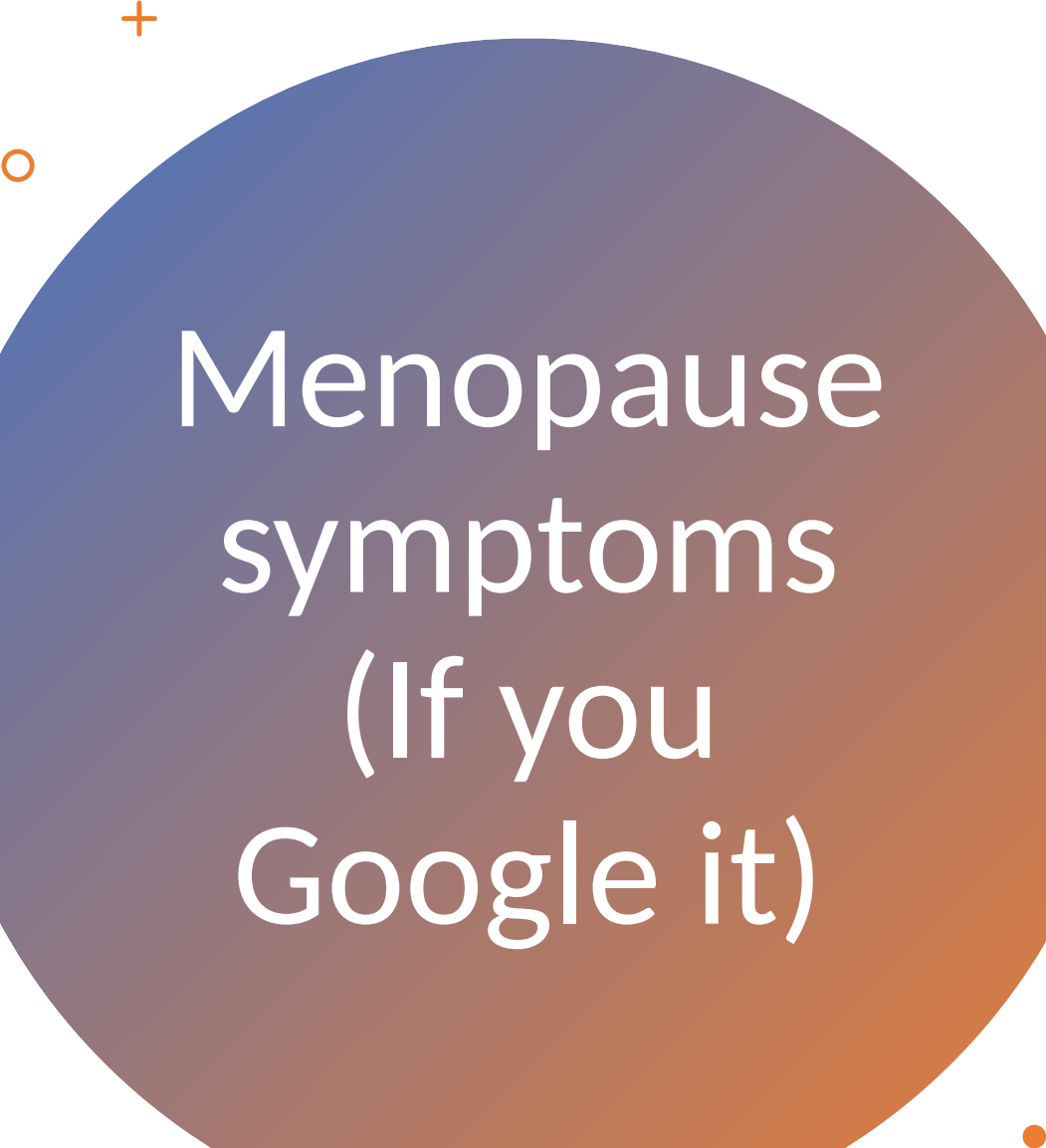
Around menopause in the balance

Pros

- Unpredictable highs
- Horniness
- No more bleeding
- Can choose underwear
- No unexpected pregnancies
- Less concerned about societies opinions
- No more periods

Cons

- Unpredictable lows
- Lack of sex drive
- Huge changes in perceptions of own attractiveness
- End of natural child bearing opportunities
- Menopausal weight gain
- Bone density issues



Menopause symptoms (If you Google it)

- Symptoms vary from person to person:
 - Irregular menstrual cycles
 - Heavy bleeding might occur for a day or two
 - Excessive sweating during night
 - Hot flashes
 - Vaginal dryness, itching and pain during sexual intercourse
 - Frequent urinary tract infections
 - Mood swings
 - Fatigue
 - Weight gain due to uneven fat distribution
-

Talk about
menopause

With family

With friends

With men

With children

Talk to everyone!

Life is great on the other side!





Menopause – a lived experience

By Lytisha Tunbridge

Lytishapoet.co.uk