

Alternatives, Safe and Effective Ways to Get Through Menopause Easily!



Natural menopause is described as the transitional phase of a woman's life when menstruation cycle stops completely for 12 months. Menopause usually happens around age 50. Premenopause (before menopause) can start at age 45. The time after menopause called post menopause can continue through age 55; the process taking about 10 years or more.

The symptoms of Perimenopause start with irregular periods. The menstruation cycles become erratic and can change from regular 28-30 days to short cycles 20-21 days then extended cycles with more bleeding days or spotting in between periods and very short period.

The menopause symptoms are due to age-related declining ovarian function. A woman's ovaries cease producing estrogen and progesterone despite hormonal stimulation from the pituitary gland. The blood estrogen levels decline caused by less frequent ovulation. When ovulation slows down or stops, the progesterone levels fall and the body fails to build up menstruation cycles. It is these hormonal changes that are responsible for the uncomfortable menopausal symptoms.

Menopause syndrome: Signs and Symptoms

1. Hot Flashes and Night Sweats: This is the most common symptom effecting at least 85% of women going through menopause. Many times it is accompanied with palpitations. The hot flash is from face to neck and chest or it may occur over the whole body, sometimes with sweating. The frequency of hot flashes can occur from a few times a week to several times each hour lasting each time from a few seconds to several minutes. Hot flashes are reported to crop up most frequently at night.

According to Chinese medicine the hot flash is caused by Yin vacuity of the kidneys and Liver Yang to the upper part of the body; Yang being related to fire, brightness, and to upward, swift, hot movement. A hot flash is a Yang event in the body, the rapid upward movement of heat to the head. Night sweating is a classic symptom of what is called Yin vacuity; heat or fire. Defensive Qi must also keep fluids in the body. If it is weak, the surface is not secured and fluids can escape the surface. When Yin and Yang are deficient but in relative balance, night sweating does not occur.

2. Urinary and Reproduction system dysfunction: The urinary and reproductive systems are the sexual hormone's target organs. Those organs and supported tissues start to atrophy when the sexual hormone levels decline. Many women will experience urgency, frequency of urine or lost

bladder control. Vaginal dryness or painful intercourse is also common. If kidney/ liver Yin are vacuous and insufficient, the body fluids in the genital area will be affected.

3. Irritability and Depression: A reported 56% of women experience emotional problems, irritability, nervousness, depression, anxiety, headache or dizziness. They also described being easily agitated, unprovoked crying, difficulty concentrating and memory loss. The symptoms worsen if there is also a life style change. Examples are retirement, empty nest or personal relationship changes. These emotional symptoms are largely due to liver depression/ Qi stagnation transforming into depressive liver fire over a long period of time. Nervousness and anxiety, like insomnia, are related to the heart. The heart must be replete with blood in order for the spirit to rest calmly. When heart blood is vacuous, the spirit has no home or resting place. Our mental state which may improve or get worse, can be affected by diet, work, stress, and even how much love is in our life.

4. Bone density change: Osteoporosis – Whether a man or a woman, all will lose bone every year. It is part of the aging process. But menopausal women are faster to lose bone. About 25% women suffer osteoporosis; averaging about 1% bone loss every year. It is believed that Estrogen decline may be the cause. After the age of 60, women's wrist fractures are 6 to 10 times more than men. According to TCM, the kidneys rule the bones; teeth, hair, ears, and the marrow of the spinal cord and brain. If symptoms of osteoporosis occur, the Chinese medical practitioner always investigates for kidney involvement. Postmenopausal osteoporosis is caused by kidney Yang deficient. In Chinese medicine, joint pain is believed to be ruled by the kidneys and specifically vacuous all the kidney yin. .

5. Heart disease: Women's heart disease rate is lower than men's before menopause but the same rate after menopause. Blood cholesterol levels and Triglyceride level are higher after menopause.

6. Metabolic change: Fatigue, according to Chinese medicine, is always related to Qi vacuity. Blood is the mother of the Qi; blood vacuity can also lead to Qi deficiency, also often associated with blood vacuity as well. Although no longer secreted by the ovaries, estrogen is still being produced in the body, but in a slightly different form called Estrone. Estrone is manufactured by the body's fat cell from a precursor hormone called Androstenedione, which is largely produced by adrenal glands. In the body's attempt to produce enough estrogen, the fat cells are called upon thus a possible reason why some menopausal women put on weight,.

How to Treat Menopause Syndrome

Now a lot of menopausal women worry about hormone replacement of Estrogen and Progesterone with the risks of uterine, ovary and breast cancer. Estrogen can't reduce blood clots and heart attack rate.

Alternative Hormone Replacement Therapy treatments offer many advantages; Chinese herbal medicine: Chinese herbal medicine is one of the most effective natural methods of treating menopausal complaints. Studies on the effectiveness of herbal medicine for treating menopausal women for a variety of symptoms are written in traditional Chinese Medical journals on a regular basis. From last 50 years data collection, there has not been a rise in the breast cancer or ovarian cancer rate.

Chinese medicine has at least 2000 years of recorded clinical history and within that time many styles of medical practice have developed. Many Chinese medicine practitioners have trained to

become gynecology specialists. There are many reasons why Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is a good choice for women with gynecological problems especially menopausal syndrome.

Chinese medicine is one of the most holistic medical systems available today.

Chinese Medicine differs from Western Medicine where the same pill is generally prescribed for everybody, regardless of the type of headache. In those cases, headaches usually will come back every month with each menstruation cycle. Chinese medicine is individualized and is the second reason why one should choose it for relieving symptoms. The treatment plan is specific for each patient's needs. Some diagnosed patients may require a different herbal formula and different acupuncture points. For example, to treat a menstruation headache, Chinese Mediation will differentiate the character of the headache; does it occur before, during or after the periods. Where is the headache located? Based on the information, a precise herbal formula is prescribed as well as the use of specific acupuncture points. With an accurate diagnosis accompanied by a correct treatment protocol, headaches will be cured after only a few treatment cycles.

Chinese Medicine has no side effects to treat menopause

It is the third reason for choosing Chinese Medicine. If Chinese Medicine is prescribed by a well trained and experienced herbalist, there will be no side effects!

Chinese medicine has a long history of clinical success. It has been used for over 2000 thousands years to treat over one quarter of the world's population. And many traditional herbal formulas have been improved over the years by generations of practitioners.

Classically, Chinese medical theory expects specific mental/ emotional conditions to go along with certain disease patterns, and expects these emotional symptoms to respond to treatment as well as any physical symptom. In Chinese medicine each and every sign and symptom is only understood or interpreted in relationship to all the others. TCM practitioners try to put all the symptoms together and look for the roots of problems. They then prescribe singly or a combination of acupuncture, herbs, nutritional modifications or exercise to work effectively with the entire pattern that each patient presents.

How to understand the Chinese Medicine philosophy

If you know some Chinese medicine terminology, it will be a great help. The following information, although brief will give you a better understanding of the theory and practice of Chinese medicine.

The Body/ Mind connection is a core principle of the TCM practitioner: Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) uses different terminology than Western medicine. Chinese medicine has its own complete and self contained description of the body and its functions. Its theories of physiology cannot and should not be compared with Western medicine. It is also hard to accurately describe Chinese medicine because there are some words and concepts for which there are no English translations. For example: It is a difficulty to find right English word to explain "Qi" (pronounced chee). In TCM "Qi" could mean one kind of life force. It is not just energy, however.

Yin and Yang: Chinese medicine philosophy believes that everything has two facets: a Yin aspect and a Yang aspect. Yin and Yang are terms in Chinese philosophy and medicine used to describe

the polarization of all phenomena in the universe. Yin/ Yang theory is a description of one thing in relationship to another. All things are seen as parts of a whole and Yin/Yang is used to explain the continuous process of natural change.

The original meaning of Yang was the sunny side of a slope. Yang is associated with qualities such as heat, stimulation, movement, activity, excitement, vigor, light, exteriority, upward, outward, and increase.

The character for Yin originally meant the shady side of a slope. It is associated with such qualities as cold, rest, responsiveness, passivity, darkness, interiority, downward, inward, decrease, satiation, tranquility, and quiescence.

Yin and Yang control each other. Yin and Yang can transform into each other. Yin and Yang need to be balanced. Problems arise in the body when Yin and Yang are not in balance.

Qi [qi]: The notion of Qi is as fundamental to Chinese culture and medical thought as Yin and Yang. No one English word or phrase can adequately capture Qi's meaning. Qi is the thread connecting all being. Qi is the potential and actualization of transformation. Qi is the fundamental quality of being and becoming. Connection, contact, and compulsion are the intimacy of similar Qi.⁵

Blood [xue]: The Blood of Chinese medical terminology is not the same as what the West calls blood. Although it is sometimes identifiable with the free fluid of biomedicine, its characteristic and functions are not so identifiable. A major activity of the Blood is to circulate continuously through the body, nourishing, maintaining, and to some extent moistening its various parts.

TCM practitioners believe Blood needs Qi to keep it moving. "Qi is the commander of the Blood ...Blood is the mother of Qi."

Essence [jing]: Essence, the translation of Chinese word Jing, is the texture that is specific to organic life. It has two sources, which are also its characteristic aspects. One translated as Congenital Essence and is inherited from the parents. In fact, the fusion of this parental Essence is conception. Postnatal Essence is the second source and aspect of Essence. It is derived from the purified parts of ingested food nutrition. Together, they compose the over all Essence of the person. Continuous physical, emotional, and mental stimulation from the environment will effect a person's Essence. The aging process will deplete those Essences.

Body Fluids [jing]: Although the Chinese pronunciations for the words for Essence and Body Fluids are identical, the words and symbols and meanings are totally different. The functions of the body fluids are to moisten the skin, hair, joints, organs, and tissues of the body, and to facilitate smooth movement of joints and other body parts. Blood and body fluids are derived from a common source and may transfer back and forth with each other. Therefore, an insufficiency of Qi may result in body fluids accumulating somewhere in the body as pathologic dampness.

= 5 * GB4 The Menopause Relationship to Essences, Qi and Blood

When a baby is born, it takes its first breath and suckles its first food. From that moment on it is responsible for the creation of its own Qi and blood, which previously it received from its mother in-utero. This is called the postnatal production of Qi and blood.

When people are young and healthy and their digestion is strong, they typically produce an over-

abundance of Qi and blood or more than their body actually needs to function and maintain health day to day. During sleep each night this surplus is transformed by the body into postnatal or acquired essence. One's wise investments; a good diet and a healthy lifestyle produce plenty of Qi and Blood; (other wish will depletes their body Qi and Jing.

In women surplus or depletion of Qi and Blood which lead to production of postnatal or acquired essence is directly related to the menses. An example: It is common in anorexia for a woman's period to completely stop. The poor diet depletes the body's Jing and there is a lack of Qi and blood.

Around the age of 35-40, this production of postnatal or acquired essences begins to slow down with the natural process of aging. The digestion becomes less efficient, resulting in less Qi and blood production. When blood is lost with the menses each month, some essence is also lost. As the body metabolism slows down and less blood, Qi, and postnatal essence is created. Menopause, while itself a sign of aging, actually slows down the aging process by preventing unnecessary loss of blood and essence!

= 6 * GB4 Chinese medicine diagnosis and the treatment of hormonal dysfunction

Ancient Chinese doctors did not have microscopes. The traditional Chinese diagnostic process does not utilize modern lab tests. The TCM diagnosis is based upon what is referred to as the four examinations methods. These include:

Observation which requires looking at the patient's tongue and appearance,

Listening/ smelling listening a patient talk voice or smelling breath odd.

Questioning ask a patient certain questions.

Take pulse and palpate the abdomen.

Chinese medicine offers a number of therapeutic options for women who need professional support during this transitional time.

Exercise is the first recommendation in the Chinese medical text book. Because lowered levels of blood estrogen are related to an increased risk for cardiovascular disease in women over 50 years of age, exercise is important for stress reduction, weight control, and cardiovascular health.. Also, research has indicated that women who exercise regularly have lower rates of breast and possibly other cancers. Weight bearing exercises, walking; dancing or light weight lifting will reduce the bone loss and prevent osteoporosis.

In classical Chinese theory, nutrition is as important as exercise and medication. Some foods which are specifically good for the kidneys are soups made from marrow bones, walnuts, lotus seeds, grapes, pork and chicken, potatoes and pears. Soy bean milk and soy production are the best protein, calcium and natural estrogens sources. Barley, asparagus, apples, bananas, lettuce, and celery are good for reducing Liver yang syndrome and can lower blood pressure.

If you are a perimenopausal or menopausal woman with symptoms that are more than a slight annoyance, it is probably wise to seek out professional care. Chinese herbal medicine and acupuncture has many advantages. In China, acupuncture is actually a secondary treatment modality. It is only one part of Chinese medicine.

TCM Diagnosis with Herbal Medicine

Herbal medicine is the main part of Tradition Chinese Medicine. Many menopausal complaints respond very well to carefully selected herbal formulas accompanied by acupuncture administered by a well trained Chinese herbalist. The professional Chinese herbalist uses formulas combined from six to twenty herbs and prepares them as a powder, pill, tincture, or tea.

The common Chinese medicine diagnoses are:

Kidney Yin and Kidney Qi Deficient.

Liver Yang rising .

Spleen –Kidney Yang vacuity.

Heart Blood and Spleen Qi vacuity.

Heart Yin & Blood vacuity.

Liver Qi stagnation.

The most classical formula are:

Xiao Yao Wan or Jia Wei Xiao Wan - for Stagnation Liver Qi. and clear heat and resolve depression. Those formulas are relatively drying. The best way can be taken in combination with other, more supplementing and moistening formulas.

Er Chen Wan- This formula is used to transform phlegm and eliminate dampness.

Liu Wei Di Huang Wan - This formula treats symptoms of Yin vacuity. It can be combined with other patent medicines when there is a strong component of yin vacuity.

Jin Gui shen Qi Wan – It is for Kidney Yang vacuity. But this formula contains at least two hot herbs, don't take it if have any signs of heat.

Tian wang Bu Xin Dan, Suan Zao Ren Tang and An Mian Pian: They treat insomnia, restless sleep, fatigue, and heart palpitations due to yin, blood, and Qi deficient or anxiety due to liver blood vacuity.

Mai Da Zao Tang, Bu zhong Yi Qi Tang, Ge Jie Da Bu Wan, est.

Chinese herbal medications are prescribed based on a person's pattern of disharmony. It is always best and safest to get a diagnosis and prescription from a practitioner before you take any herbal formula. Whether you continue with symptoms or are free of original complaint, if you are taking an herbal formula, you should continue with consultations since some formulas may not be OK for long term use. Balancing Yin and Yang and restoring essences through Chinese Herbal Medicine and Acupuncture will result in healing without side effects.

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