



Advocate

How to Speak to Your Doctor

**Your Best Advocate is
YOU!**

Discussing your peri/menopause symptoms with your doctor is an essential part of taking charge of your health. Although this conversation might feel daunting or overwhelming, it's vital to approach it with informed understanding and clarity.

Use this guide to proceed with confidence because you deserve to feel your best at every age!

#1

Track Symptoms & Make a List

Utilize the **Tracking Sheets** in this handout to help you better understand your symptoms and their timing. Then, compile a list of these symptoms in order of importance. When speaking with your doctor, prioritize these concerns first.

#3

Bring a Trusted Friend

We all have that one friend or partner who is our biggest supporter and cheerleader, or perhaps it's that friend who doesn't take sh*t from anyone. Having someone by your side to keep you grounded and offer support can help you stay focused on the goal of the appointment.

#5

Be Pleasantly Assertive

Your doctor has your best interests at heart; however, according to a 2023 survey, 31.3% of obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN) residency programs have a menopause curriculum. "Coming in hot" can set the wrong tone and put both you and the doctor on the defensive. Instead, try to keep an open mind and approach the conversation with curiosity. Use the attached **Coach Approach** sheet for suggestions on how to proceed effectively.

#2

Document Your Family History

The health history of your family can influence your care. Documenting serious ailments such as diabetes and cancer that have affected family members is crucial information to provide to your medical practitioner.

#4

Ask a Lot of Questions

You have the right to ask questions! However, your doctor may have a limited amount of time to spend with you and might seem impatient. To make the most of your appointment, write down your questions in order of importance in advance.

#6

Ask For a Referral to a Specialist

It is likely that the OBGYN you've relied on for years, who delivered your baby, may not have the necessary expertise to address menopause. It is OKAY to request a referral to a qualified specialist. If your doctor is uncooperative and isn't giving you the care you need, it's okay to move on. See [**The Menopause Resource**](#) section for help.

#7

Ruling Out Other Issues

There is no blood test for diagnosing peri/menopause due to fluctuating hormone levels. Diagnosis should be based on symptoms. However, it can be useful for doctors to conduct thyroid panels and basic blood tests to check for autoimmune conditions, provided these are not meant to rule out a peri/menopause diagnosis.

#8

Do Your Research!

"Knowledge is power" may sound like a cliché, but it holds true! Arming yourself with information builds confidence. Researching the facts about menopause and its diagnosis, symptoms, and treatment will better prepare you when discussing these topics with your medical provider. However, there is a lot of misinformation out there, so it's crucial to rely on verified, science-backed information.

While printing out documents may feel outdated, highlighting and making notes on them can be very helpful. Bringing these documents with you—and possibly leaving a copy with your doctor—can help you use your time more effectively. Organize these materials, along with any other necessary paperwork, before your appointment to make the most of your time.

Use [**The Menopause Resource**](#) section to get started.



**The Coach
Approach**

A Guide on How to Respond

Everyone has a Coach within them. Adopting a coach approach when interacting with your doctor can help you stay grounded, enter the conversation with curiosity, and communicate more effectively. Breathe. Listen and be honest but respectful. Below is a list of common responses and suggestions on how to reply.

“You’re too young to be in menopause.”

I see, but it’s my understanding that perimenopause occurs as early as my 30s and can last into my 50s. I love to learn new things; please tell me more about that and how we should proceed.

“Your labs are normal, it’s probably stress.” (AKA it’s all in your head).

I understand, and that’s great news, but given my symptoms and age, I assume this is related to peri/menopause. These symptoms are real and extremely disruptive. I would appreciate some options for treatment.

“It’s a natural part of life; there is no treatment.”

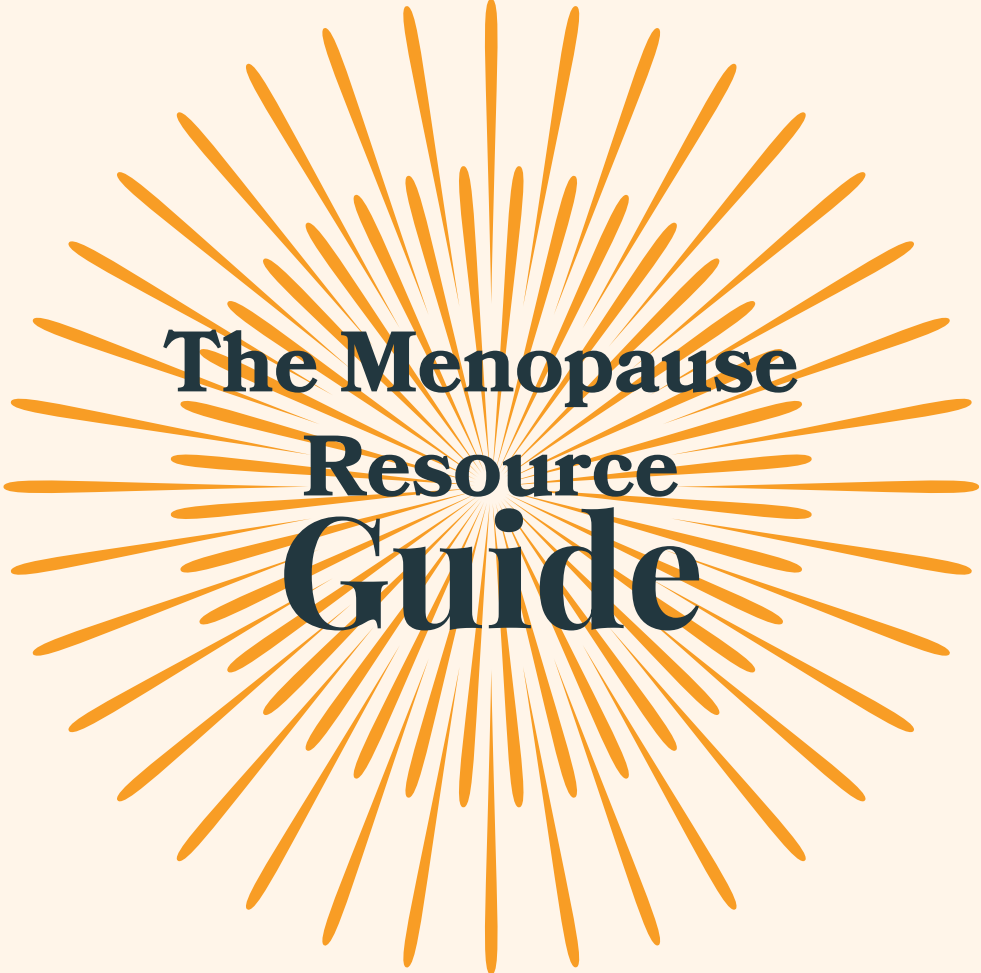
I understand and agree that this is a natural part of life. However, my symptoms are extremely disruptive, and I can’t live like this. While I know I’m not a doctor, I have spent a lot of time researching my options. Would it be alright if I shared some of the things I am exploring?

“I think you need an anti-depressant?”

I appreciate this suggestion, and I’m not opposed, but it’s my understanding that my symptoms are all connected to peri/menopause and that there are many options of treatment. Can we please discuss those other options first?

“HRT causes cancer. I don’t prescribe it.”

I understand your concern. Cancer is very serious. My understanding of the latest research from The Menopause Society is that there is only a slight cancer risk, and since I don’t have any family history of cancer, I’m a good candidate for this treatment. I’ve printed their 2022 repositioning statement. May I show it to you?



**The Menopause
Resource
Guide**

Verified Resources You Can Count On

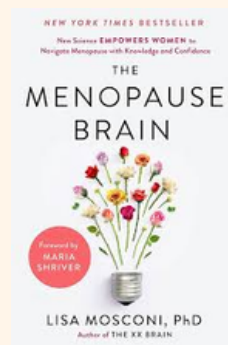
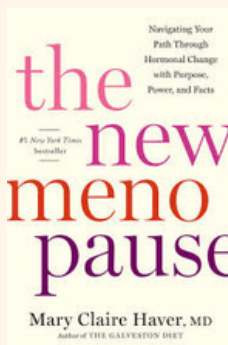
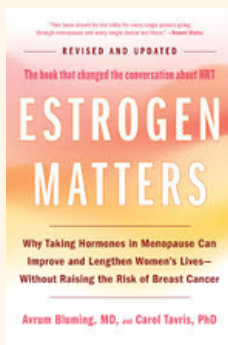
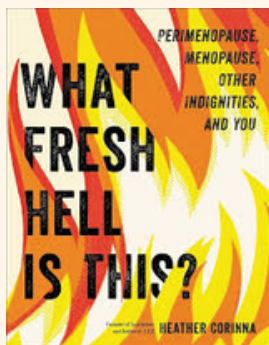
There's a lot of misinformation out there! Here are some suggested resources to help get you started.

The Menopause Society

As the definitive, independent, and evidence-based resource for healthcare professionals, researchers, the media, and the public, the Menopause Society leads the conversation about improving women's health and healthcare experiences during the menopause transition and beyond.

- Patient resources page [here](#).
- How to find a Menopause Society Certified Practitioner (MSCPs) [here](#).
- The HRT guide [here](#).
- Their 2022 repositioning statement [here](#).

Suggested Reading



Breast Cancer Assessment

The National Cancer Institute has an online risk calculator [here](#).

Online Providers

Never be afraid to “quit” your doctor if you’re being gaslit or not receiving the care you need. If you’re unable to find a local provider using the Menopause Society practitioner locator, you can always schedule a tele-health appointment with these online providers!



EVERNOW

- Takes insurance
- Requires a membership of \$29 a month
- RX cost is covered by insurance, or you can buy directly from them
- May not be available in your state



My Alloy

- Does not take insurance, but does take HSA/FSA payment options
- Requires a membership and price varies by plan
- RX not covered by insurance, but prices start at \$24.99 per month
- Available in ALL States



Midi Health

- Takes insurance
- Requires a membership with visits covered by insurance
- RX covered by insurance and filled at your local pharmacy
- Currently available in 50 states



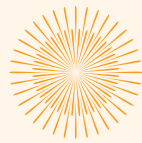
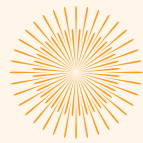
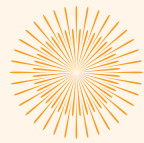
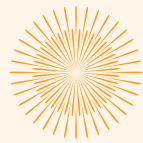
Elektra Health

- Requires a membership with visits covered by insurance
- RX covered by insurance and filled at your local pharmacy
- Only approved for patients in Connecticut, New York, Florida, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania



**Symptom
Trackers**

Common & Uncommon Symptoms



- Hot flashes
- Night sweats
- Irregular periods
- Mood Changes
- Breast Soreness
- Decreased libido
- Vaginal dryness
- Headaches
- Tingling extremities
- Burning Mouth
- Changes in taste
- Fatigue
- Bloating
- Other digestive changes
- Joint pain
- Muscle tension and aches
- Electric shock sensations
- Itchiness
- Sleep disturbance
- Difficulty concentrating
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Memory Lapses
- Thinning hair
- Brittle nails
- Weight gain
- Stress incontinence
- Dizzy spells
- Allergies
- Osteoporosis
- Irregular heartbeat
- Body odor
- Irritability

Menopause Symptoms Tracker

Week No:

Understanding the severity of your menopause symptoms can help you decide which areas to prioritize for management and to better communicate with your doctor. This tracker will help you rate the severity of both your physical and emotional/cognitive symptoms.

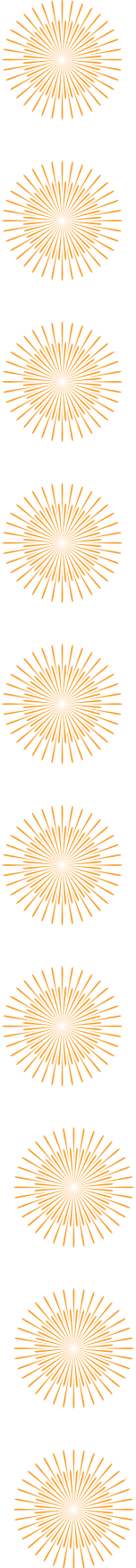


Symptom	Severity					Frequency	Possible Trigger
	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		
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	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		
	1	2	3	4	5		

Document the symptom in the first column and mark an “X” in the corresponding day(s) column whenever you experience that symptom.

Menopausal Symptoms Tracker

Month:



Symptom	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Family Health History



A series of horizontal dotted lines providing a space for writing the family health history.

Questions For My Doctor



A series of horizontal dotted lines providing a space for writing questions.