



## **Menopause**

Medically speaking the menopause is the last monthly bleed a woman has in her lifetime. This can only be identified 1 year after that bleed, when no further periods have occurred. Any bleeding that occurs after that year is regarded as abnormal and should be reported to your doctor.

Periods may also be stopped by hormonal contraception or surgical procedures in which case it is not easy to identify when the menopause has happened.

The word has come to have a broader meaning and popularly is used to describe an open-ended amount of time around the last period when some women experience symptoms. Other names used include The Change and the Peri-menopause.

In the UK the average age for menopause is 51 but it can happen at any age and as many as 1 % of women are affected under 40.

It is important to say that not every woman has symptoms during this time of her life and in some cultures, it is positively welcomed. I am sure our great grandmothers were very relieved to see the end of their child-bearing days.

There are many symptoms of the menopause some more obvious than others and it can take a while for a woman to register what is happening- especially if she has not read about or spoken to friends, family, or health care professionals about it.

I would like to recommend the following websites for further information about this topic and hope you find the information useful and reassuring.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-48258910>

<https://rockmymenopause.com/>

<https://www.womens-health-concern.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/WHC-UnderstandingRisksofBreastCancer-MARCH2017.pdf>

<https://pcwhf.co.uk/resources/hrt-myths-uncovered/>