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MOVING THROUGH MENOPAUSE

WHAT TO EXPECT AND HOW TO MANAGE IT

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Siena Women's Health



Dr. Bonura Answers Questions about Siena Women's Health

A woman experiences a number of bodily changes throughout her lifetime beginning with the reproductive years, which commence with the first menstrual period around age 12, to the menopausal phase when women stop menstruating for 12 consecutive months. This marks the end of childbearing years and typically occurs between ages 51 and 52.

With menstrual cramping, food cravings and pregnancy behind them, menopausal women begin experiencing a new set of symptoms and health concerns. While these symptoms vary among women, here are some things you may experience, along with advice on how to maintain your well-being.



Why was the menopausal health program established at Siena Women's Health?

Dr. Bonura: Younger generations can no longer afford the rising prices of homes and taxes in our area. So, in the past 10 to 15 years, our population has skewed toward an older demographic. Approximately 385,000 women living in the Suffolk County community are in the menopausal transition or menopause. A menopausal woman's medical needs are different from those of younger women. For the past decade, I have been working to establish a program that addresses the needs of those women.

What types of services do you offer?

Dr. Bonura: In my practice, I offer menopausal and osteoporosis consultation, which includes DXA for osteoporosis screening, gynecological care, ultrasound, urodynamics and pelvic floor muscle exercises with biofeedback therapy.

What role does your team play?

Dr. Bonura: We have specialists in various fields of medicine and surgery in our program who address the medical and surgical complications of menopause. Their areas of expertise include diabetes, cardiovascular disease, gastrointestinal problems, breast cancer, neurological disease, osteoporosis and weight management.

Who would be a good candidate for menopausal and osteoporosis treatments in your practice?

Dr. Bonura: We provide treatment options for women who experience hot flashes and night sweats, which can cause insomnia, irritability and mood swings that affect quality of life. Additionally, we address the genitourinary syndrome of menopause, which consists of anatomical changes of the external genitalia, lower urinary tract and vagina. Symptoms associated with genitourinary syndrome include vaginal dryness, discharge, burning and painful intercourse. These symptoms can cause sexual dysfunction, urinary urgency and frequency, urinary stress incontinence, overactive bladder, and frequent urinary tract infections. We also offer screenings, workup and treatment for women who have osteoporosis.

5 WAYS MENOPAUSE IMPACTS WOMEN When the ovaries stop producing estrogen a number of anatomical changes occur. You may experience:

HOT FLASHES

Expect a rush of heat along with sweating and the appearance of a red, flushed look on face and neck. At bedtime, night sweats are hot flashes that interfere with sleep. Hot flashes last one to five minutes.

INSOMNIA

If you have difficulty falling asleep, night sweats may wake you interfering with a solid night's sleep. This may cause irritability and lack of concentration.

COMPROMISED SEXUAL FUNCTION

As estrogen dwindles, dryness in the vagina, vulva and urinary tract occurs. Tightness and pain during intercourse is common.

GENITOURINARY SYNDROME (GSM)

In later stages of menopause you may experience:

- Urinary frequency - an overactive bladder causes the urge to urinate often.
- Stress incontinence - weak pelvic floor muscles cause loss of urine when coughing, laughing and exercising.

OSTEOPOROSIS

Estrogen is the major hormone that protects women's bones. As production decreases, your risk for bone loss increases. Osteoporosis is a silent disease. As bones weaken and become less dense, the possibility of fractures heightens. Osteoporotic bone breaks typically occur in the hip, wrist or spine. Heredity increases the likelihood of developing osteoporosis. Medical conditions like kidney disease, lupus and gastric bypass surgery may also increase your risk for bone loss.

ABOUT
54 MILLION
AMERICAN WOMEN AND MEN
HAVE OSTEOPOROSIS AND LOW
BONE MASS, WHICH INCREASES
RISK OF OSTEOPOROSIS.
Source: nof.org

IN THE U.S., AN ESTIMATED
6,000
WOMEN
REACH MENOPAUSE
EVERY DAY.
Source: menopause.org

MENPRO
FREE MOBILE APP
TRACKS MENOPAUSE
SYMPTOMS AND OFFERS
HELPFUL ADVICE.
Source: menopause.org/ North American Menopause Society

STUDIES SUGGEST ABOUT
1 IN 2 WOMEN
AND **1 IN 4 MEN,**
AGES 50 AND UP WILL
BREAK A BONE DUE TO
OSTEOPOROSIS.
Source: nof.org

Written by Marie Wolf. Sources: Dr. Frank Bonura, Director Menopausal Health, Director Osteoporosis Program, St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center, Smithtown; North American Menopause Society, U.S. National Library of Medicine, Women's Health Initiative, NIH Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases National Resource Center, and American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

"We are proud to offer a unique blend of expertise and experience to support women during menopause and pre-menopause. We are dedicated to treating symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, insomnia, mood swings, vaginal dryness, painful intercourse, urinary leakage, overactive bladder and osteoporosis."

To Schedule an Appointment:
Call: (631) 870-3444
Visit: sienawomenshealth.org



MANAGING MENOPAUSE

Although bothersome, mild symptoms can be self-managed.

For hot flashes/night sweats, try deep abdominal breathing, wear light clothing and sleep in a cool room with a fan at the bedside.

The gold standard of treatment for severe menopausal symptoms is hormone replacement therapy (estrogen or estrogen and the synthetic hormone progestin).

Another option is bioidentical therapy, in which the identical hormones your ovaries produced during the reproductive stage of life are recreated and administered via a patch, cream or spray.



THE GOOD NEWS
80%
OF WOMEN EXPERIENCING MENOPAUSE
REPORTED NO DECREASE IN QUALITY OF LIFE
Source: menopause.orgs

THREE WAYS TO PREVENT BONE LOSS

- 1** Include dairy (the major source of calcium) in your diet. Choose low-fat milk, yogurt and cheese.
- 2** A vitamin D3 supplement taken daily with food helps absorb calcium.
- 3** Exercise 150 minutes per week.