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THE MENOPAUSE: PEAKEST TRANSITION OF WOMEN

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Introduction

Menopause is the period of time during which a woman passes from reproductive to non reproductive stage. Menopause means permanent cessation of menstruation at the end of reproductive life due to loss of ovarian follicular activity. The age of menopause is not related to age of menarche, race poverty, weight or height.

Stages

Perimenopause: The transition period leading up to menopause, often lasting 2-10 years, characterized by hormonal fluctuations and symptoms like irregular periods, hot flashes, and mood changes.

Menopause: The point when a woman has not had a menstrual period for 12 consecutive months, marking the end of her reproductive period.

Postmenopause: The stage after menopause, where symptoms may persist or subside, and health risks like osteoporosis and heart disease may increase.

Symptoms

Vasomotor: hot flashes that occur few months before menopause and continue for 3-4 years after it

Cardiovascular : Increasing blood pressure and palpitation are the symptoms associated with menopause

Psychological : Anxiety, depression, mood swings, alzemiars are the symptoms

General symptoms : Fatigue, headache, vertigo, breast tenderness, Atrophy of secondary sexual characteristics and the reproductive functions

Management of Menopause

Identification Of Menopause

- Cessation of menstruation for consecutive 12 months during climacteric.
- Appearance of menopausal symptoms ' hot flush ' and ' night sweats '.
- Vaginal cytology - showing maturation index of at least 10/85/5(features of low estrogen).
- Serum estradiol: < 20 pg/ ml
- Serum FSH and LH: > 40 mIU/ ml(three values at week interval required).

Prevention

Spontaneous menopause is unavoidable . However artificial menopause induced by surgery (bilateral oophorectomy) or by radiation (gonadal) during reproductive period can to some extent be preventable or delayed.

Counselling

Every women with postmenopausal symptoms should be adequately explained about the physiological events. This will remove her fears, and minimise or dipel the symptoms of anxiety, depression and insomnia, Reassurance is essential

Management of Symptoms

Osteoporosis

Hormonal replacement therapy along with diet is the cornerstone in the prophylaxis and treatment of osteoporosis.

Hormone Replacement Therapy

The HRT is indicated in menopausal women to overcome the short-term and long-term consequences of oestrogen deficiency.

Indication of HRT

- Relief of menopausal symptoms
- Prevention of osteoporosis
- To maintain the quality of life in menopausal years

Benefits of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

- Improvement of vasomotor symptoms (70-80%)
- Improvement urogenital atrophy
- Increase in bone mineral density (2-5%).
- Decreased risk in vertebral and hip fractures (25-50%).
- Reduction in colorectal cancer (20%).
- Possibly cardio protection.

Risks of HRT

- ❖ Vaginal bleeding with continuous HRT (period-free HRT is more common if the therapy is started within 1 year menopause, and may last up to 6 months. After the fire year of menopause, there is less risk of vaginal bleeding. Persistent vaginal bleeding requires endometrial biopsy. The bleeding can however be avoided by decreasing oestrogen dose or increasing the dose of progestogen.
- ❖ Thromboembolism.
- ❖ Endometrial cancer
- ❖ Breast cancer is due to progestogen if HRT is taken over 5 years.
- ❖ The possibility of coronary heart disease in a women with cardiovascular disease
- ❖ Increased risk of ovarian cancer

Conclusion

Menopause is a natural biological process in women, typically occurring between the ages of 45 and 55, marked by the cessation of menstruation. During this transition, hormonal fluctuations, particularly the decline in estrogen levels, lead to various physiological changes in different organs and systems.

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