



45 Symptoms of Menopause

Most Women Have Never Heard Of

Because oestrogen receptors exist in every cell of your body, its decline can show up in ways that feel completely unrelated to menopause — and most women spend months or even years worrying, Googling and being dismissed before anyone joins the dots for them.

If something in this list makes you think "that is me" — it probably is. And you are absolutely not alone.

How to use this guide:

Read through all 45 symptoms and tick the ones you recognise. Then share this with a woman who has been told her bloods are normal but still does not feel right. Save it. Come back to it. And if you want to talk about what you can do about any of these, Charlotte is one WhatsApp message away at 655 023 656.

CATEGORY 1 Brain and Nervous System

Symptoms that affect how you think, feel and process the world

#1

Brain fog

A persistent cloudiness in thinking, difficulty concentrating and a feeling that your mind is not working at full capacity. Oestrogen directly supports cognitive function.

#2

Memory lapses

Forgetting words mid-sentence, losing your train of thought or walking into a room and having no idea why. This is hormonal, not early dementia.

#3

A feeling of dread or doom

A low-level sense that something is wrong with no identifiable cause. Often worst in the morning. This is hormonal anxiety driven by declining progesterone and GABA activity.

#4

Electric shock sensations

A sudden buzzing or zapping feeling under the skin, often just before a hot flush. Caused by misfiring nerve signals as oestrogen declines.

#5

Heightened anxiety

Feeling anxious, overwhelmed or on edge in situations that would not previously have bothered you. Oestrogen modulates serotonin and GABA — both calming neurotransmitters.

#6

Rage and irritability

Disproportionate anger at small things, a drastically reduced tolerance threshold and feeling like a version of yourself you do not recognise. Deeply hormonal.



#7

Emotional dysregulation

Crying unexpectedly, feeling emotions much more intensely than usual, or swinging between high and low without obvious cause.

#8

Depersonalisation

A strange feeling of watching yourself from outside your body, or feeling detached from reality. Uncommon but documented and hormonal in origin.

CATEGORY 2 Sleep

Symptoms that disrupt rest, recovery and overnight restoration

#9

Waking at 3am

One of the most consistent menopause symptoms. A cortisol spike in the early hours, no longer buffered by progesterone and oestrogen, jolts you awake repeatedly.

#10

Inability to fall back to sleep

Once awake at 3am with cortisol elevated, the brain floods with alertness. Thoughts race. Sleep feels impossible. This is physiological, not psychological.

#11

Vivid or disturbing dreams

REM sleep disruption caused by hormonal changes can produce unusually vivid, intense or distressing dreams that leave you feeling exhausted on waking.

#12

Restless legs at night

An uncomfortable crawling or tingling sensation in the legs that compels movement, particularly at night. Linked to declining oestrogen and dopamine dysregulation.

#13

Night sweats with no hot flush

Waking drenched without a recognisable flush episode. The hypothalamus is misfiring due to oestrogen decline even when you are not consciously aware of a heat event.

#14

Teeth grinding (bruxism)

Clenching or grinding the teeth during sleep, often without awareness. Linked to elevated cortisol and nervous system hyperactivation in menopause.

CATEGORY 3 Ears, Eyes and Mouth

Symptoms in sensory organs that oestrogen helps maintain

#15

Tinnitus

A persistent ringing, buzzing or hissing in the ears. Oestrogen plays a protective role in the auditory system. As it declines, some women experience unexplained ear noise.

#16

Increased sensitivity to sound

Everyday noises feeling unbearably loud or intrusive. Sometimes accompanied by tinnitus, sometimes appearing alone.

#17

Dry, gritty eyes

Oestrogen supports the moisture-producing glands of the eyes. As it declines, eyes become dry, sore, itchy or feel as though something is in them.

#18

Blurred vision

Temporary or fluctuating changes in visual clarity, particularly in perimenopause when oestrogen levels are unstable. Often dismissed as age-related.



#19

Burning mouth syndrome

A persistent burning, tingling or numbness in the mouth, tongue, lips or gums with no dental cause. Oestrogen maintains the mucous membranes — without it, they suffer.

#20

Dry mouth and increased thirst

Reduced saliva production and persistent thirst. Can also affect oral health, increasing sensitivity and susceptibility to gum problems.

CATEGORY 4 Skin, Hair and Body

Physical changes that feel unexplained and are rarely linked to hormones

#21

Itchy or crawling skin (formication)

A maddening creeping, crawling or itching sensation under the skin with no rash. Oestrogen supports skin nerve function and collagen — its decline affects both.

#22

Skin that bruises more easily

Oestrogen supports collagen production which keeps skin resilient. As collagen declines, skin becomes thinner and more fragile.

#23

Body odour changes

The smell of your sweat changes in menopause — not just more of it, but a different quality. Hormonal shifts alter the composition of sweat.

#24

Hair thinning or texture change

Hair may become finer, grow more slowly, shed more heavily or change in texture completely. Oestrogen plays a direct role in hair follicle health.

#25

Facial hair growth

As oestrogen declines and the ratio shifts toward androgens, some women notice new growth on the chin, upper lip or jawline.

#26

Nail changes

Nails that become brittle, peel, break easily or change in texture or appearance. Linked to declining oestrogen and collagen.

#27

Hives and skin reactions

Unexplained hives, rashes or increased skin sensitivity. Oestrogen fluctuation can trigger mast cell activation, increasing histamine response.

#28

Tingling or numbness in hands and feet

A pins-and-needles sensation in extremities, particularly at night. Linked to changes in nerve function and circulation as oestrogen declines.

CATEGORY 5 Digestive and Metabolic

Symptoms related to how your body processes food, energy and weight

#29

Sudden alcohol intolerance

One glass hitting very differently. Oestrogen affects liver enzyme activity and how alcohol is processed. Its decline genuinely changes your tolerance — you are not imagining it.

#30

New food sensitivities

Foods you have eaten without issue for years suddenly causing bloating, discomfort or reaction. Gut microbiome changes in menopause affect digestion significantly.



MENOPAUSE THRIVE HUB

menopausethrivehub.com | charlotte@menopausethrivehub.com | WhatsApp: 655 023 656

FREE GUIDE

Save & Share

#31

Bloating with no dietary change

A persistent, uncomfortable bloating that does not respond to dietary adjustment. Oestrogen affects gut motility and the gut microbiome directly.

#32

Increased appetite and cravings

Particularly for carbohydrates and sugar. Driven by blood sugar dysregulation, insulin resistance and the hormonal disruption of leptin and ghrelin.

#33

Weight gain with no lifestyle change

The most common and most distressing symptom. Driven by cortisol, insulin resistance, declining muscle mass and a slowing metabolism — not simply eating too much.

#34

Weight redistributing to the abdomen

Even women who do not gain overall weight often notice their body shape changing, with more fat accumulating around the middle. Cortisol is the primary driver.

CATEGORY 6 Heart and Circulation

Symptoms that are often mistaken for cardiac or anxiety disorders

#35

Heart palpitations

A racing, fluttering, pounding or irregular heartbeat. Oestrogen influences the electrical system of the heart and cardiovascular function. Often mistaken for a cardiac event or panic attack.

#36

Increased blood pressure

Oestrogen has a vasodilatory and cardioprotective effect. As it declines, blood pressure can rise even without lifestyle changes.

#37

Dizziness and lightheadedness

Particularly on standing up quickly. Related to hormonal effects on blood pressure regulation and inner ear function.

#38

Temperature dysregulation beyond hot flushes

Feeling inexplicably cold, or running hotter than everyone else consistently, even without a flush episode. The hypothalamus thermostat is unstable.

CATEGORY 7 Muscles, Joints and Bones

Physical symptoms that are often attributed to ageing rather than hormones

#39

Joint pain and stiffness

Particularly in the morning or after rest. Oestrogen has a significant anti-inflammatory effect on joints. Its decline can cause widespread aching that is often attributed to arthritis.

#40

Muscle weakness and loss

A gradual reduction in strength and muscle mass (sarcopenia) that accelerates significantly in menopause. Oestrogen plays a direct role in muscle maintenance.

#41

Plantar fasciitis and heel pain

Unexplained foot and heel pain, particularly first thing in the morning. Oestrogen supports the collagen in tendons and ligaments — its decline affects structural foot support.

#42

Frozen shoulder or adhesive capsulitis

An unusually high incidence of frozen shoulder is seen in perimenopausal women. The connection is oestrogen receptors in the shoulder joint tissue.



#43

Increased injury susceptibility

Tendons, ligaments and cartilage all depend on oestrogen for collagen maintenance. As it declines, the risk of strains, sprains and repetitive injuries increases.

CATEGORY 8 Intimate and Urological

Symptoms that affect bladder, pelvic floor and intimate health

#44

Urinary urgency and frequency

A sudden, strong urge to urinate that is difficult to control, or needing to go far more frequently. Oestrogen maintains the tissues of the urethra and bladder — without it, sensitivity increases.

#45

Sports incontinence and leakage

Leaking urine when sneezing, coughing, laughing or exercising. Pelvic floor changes in menopause are directly linked to oestrogen decline and are extremely common — and very treatable.

You are not imagining it. You are not going mad.

Every single symptom on this list has a physiological explanation and oestrogen — the hormone present in every cell of your body — is at the heart of almost all of them. The good news is that there is an enormous amount you can do through lifestyle changes alone: sleep, nutrition, movement, stress management and understanding your hormones.

If you recognise yourself in this list and would like to talk about what to do next, send me a WhatsApp message or visit menopausethrivehub.com. No pressure. No hard sell. Just an honest conversation about how I can help.

Charlotte Birch | PT, Nutritionist and Menopause Coach | 655 023 656 | menopausethrivehub.com

Know a woman who needs to see this?

Send her this guide. Share it in your WhatsApp groups. Post it on social media. The more women who understand what is happening in their bodies, the less time they spend suffering in silence.

Menopause is not the end. It's the beginning. ■