Signs of Perimenopause

Menopause is the stage of life that a woman goes through after she has completed her childbearing years. Once you get to menopause, you no longer need birth control as your menstrual cycle changes and you can’t get pregnant any longer. However, there is a short period before this occurs called perimenopause, where it gives you warning signs that menopause is fast approaching. Here are some signs that you are going through perimenopause.

**Physical Signs**

The majority of signs of perimenopause are going to be physical, so this is a great place to start. You will notice that the signs of perimenopause vary between typical PMS and menstrual cycle signs to those commonly associated with menopause. It makes sense since this is the transitional period to menopause. Some physical signs to be aware of include having hot flashes, breast tenderness, urine leakage, urinary urgency, and discomfort during sex. You might also have vaginal dryness and a lower sex drive. Irregular periods are also common with perimenopause.

**Mental and Behavioral Signs**

There are also a few mental and behavioral changes that are common signs of perimenopause. To start with, you may feel fatigued, but not always in a physical sense. It is simply an overwhelming sense of exhaustion, often linked to high amounts of stress or anxiety during this time. You may notice that you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, that you tend to get more mood swings, and your irritability around the time you would have PMS is much worse.

**Risk Factors for Early Perimenopause**

Perimenopause and menopause are not unusual, and something you should expect to experience as a woman in your 40s, 50s, or possibly even your 60s. This will occur before your periods are gone for good. Typically, perimenopause occurs for about a year before actual menopause starts. While this usually occurs with middle-aged women, it is possible that you have perimenopause symptoms at an earlier age. Women who go through this often have a genetic link, where other women in their family tree also had early menopause. You may also get early perimenopause if you have had a hysterectomy or you have gone through cancer treatments.

While perimenopause is a normal occurrence, there can be complications if you have severe pain or heavy bleeding with clots. Talk to your doctor if these or other worrisome things are occurring and you believe it is related to your gynecological health.