What You Should Know About Menopause

As women age, they go through various life phases, including teen years, the childbearing years, and then menopause. During menopause, you can no longer get pregnant and will not have your menstrual period for an extended period of time. Here is more information about what it is like to go through menopause.

**Symptoms of Menopause**

Menopause can often sneak up on you, where you don’t realize what is happening until you see your doctor about odd physical or mental symptoms. Some women do get perimenopause first, where you experience some menopause symptoms prior to actually having menopause. This is actually a good thing because you have this for about a year before menopause, giving you plenty of time to adjust to the changes in your body.

When menopause arrives, you may have any combination of symptoms. Some women have severe hot flashes, while other women don’t have them at all. Aside from the hot flashes, you will have no more period and your PMS symptoms should be much different than they were before. You might have a little weight gain, especially around your midsection. You may also have vaginal dryness as a result of the decreased hormone levels in your body. While you can no longer get pregnant naturally, you may still be able to carry a baby through in-vitro fertilization.

**When You Will Go Through it**

You can go through menopause at different ages, but the majority of women will have it occur between 45 and 55. Some women have it much younger, starting with perimenopause first. Other women luck out and last until 60 or older before going through menopause. The average age for experiencing early stages of menopause is about 51 years of age. It takes a while for your body to adjust fully to menopause, but seeing a doctor early on can make it a lot more comfortable for you.

**Potential Complications**

While menopause is completely normal and something most women will go through, it does have some mild complications. First of all, with the vaginal dryness and changes in your mood and physical health, you might experience a steep decline in your sexual interest. This often goes away once you get used to the changes your body is going through. You are also at a risk for medical conditions like osteoporosis when you go through menopause.