



Navigating Perimenopause

A Resource Guide



Our Approach to Perimenopause

At Wildflower Center for Emotional Health, we understand that perimenopause is more than a biological transition—it's an emotional and psychological one too. Our compassionate team offers evidence-based therapy to help you navigate mood shifts, anxiety, and other changes with confidence.

Our mission is to help you feel empowered, informed, and supported. You are not alone—resources and care are available so you can thrive through this transition. If you're experiencing challenges related to perimenopause, reach out to us to explore how we can support you.

Save this guide & share it with someone who might need it!

Understanding Perimenopause

Perimenopause is the transitional phase leading up to menopause. It is marked by fluctuating hormone levels that can cause physical, emotional, and cognitive changes. While commonly beginning in the 40s, some women may experience it as early as their late 20s or 30s. This phase can last anywhere from two to fourteen years, culminating in menopause, defined as twelve consecutive months without a menstrual period.

Despite being a natural part of aging, perimenopause is often misunderstood, leaving many women feeling unprepared or isolated. This guide is designed to debunk common myths, provide evidence-based insights, and connect you with trusted resources to help you navigate this transition with confidence and support.

Debunking Common Myths

Myth 1: Perimenopause starts at the same age for everyone

The truth: The timing of perimenopause varies from person to person. Some women may notice changes in their late 30s, while others don't experience symptoms until their mid-40s.

Myth 2: Perimenopause lasts only a few months

The truth: Perimenopause can last anywhere from two to fourteen years, with an average duration of about four years.

Myth 3: Hot flashes are the only symptom

The truth: While hot flashes are common, other symptoms include:

- ❖ Mood changes
- ❖ Sleep disturbances
- ❖ Brain fog
- ❖ Changes in sexual desire
- ❖ Vaginal dryness
- ❖ Anxiety or depression

Myth 4: Perimenopause means you can't get pregnant

The truth: Pregnancy is still possible during perimenopause. Until you've gone a full year without a period, contraception is recommended if you're not trying to conceive.

Myth 5: You just have to "push through" without medical support

The truth: Perimenopause symptoms can be managed with medical guidance, lifestyle changes, and, in some cases, hormone replacement therapy (HRT).

Myth 6: Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is unsafe

The truth: When prescribed appropriately, HRT can be a safe and effective option for managing symptoms such as hot flashes, mood swings, and bone density loss. Speak with your healthcare provider about what's best for you.

Myth 7: Lifestyle changes won't make a difference

The truth: Simple lifestyle shifts can greatly impact symptom management, including:

- ❖ Regular physical activity
- ❖ A nutrient-dense diet
- ❖ Stress management techniques (e.g., mindfulness, yoga)
- ❖ Quality sleep habits

Myth 8: Menopause means "getting old"

The truth: Menopause isn't the end—it's the beginning of a new, empowered phase of life filled with opportunities for self-discovery and growth.

Educational Websites & Medical Organizations

North American Menopause Society (NAMS)

Research-backed information on perimenopause and treatment options.

Office on Women's Health (OWH)

U.S. government resource covering all aspects of women's health, including menopause.

Mayo Clinic

Symptom tracking tools and treatment recommendations.

Cleveland Clinic

Expert advice on managing perimenopause-related symptoms.

Let's Talk Menopause!

A nonprofit organization focused on perimenopause and menopause education.

Harvard Health Publishing

Evidence-based articles and expert insights on perimenopause and aging.



Books

"The Menopause Manifesto" – Dr. Jen Gunter

A science-based, empowering guide on navigating menopause with confidence.

"Perimenopause Power" – Maisie Hill

Focuses on hormonal shifts and practical ways to manage symptoms.

"What Fresh Hell Is This?" – Heather Corinna

A humorous yet deeply informative look at perimenopause and the changes it brings.

"Making Sense of Menopause" – Susan Wilson, CNM

A guide to menopause by a renowned women's health practitioner.

Podcasts

Perimenopause, WTF?

Perimenopause experts and thought leaders weigh in on all things perimenopause.

The Dr. Louise Newson Podcast

Medical insights from menopause specialists.

The Perimenopausal Mamas Podcast

Helping perimenopausal moms navigate perimenopause and parenting.

Online Communities & Support Groups

NAMS Facebook Page

Community discussions and research updates.

Reddit: r/Menopause

A space for sharing experiences and tips.

Perimenopause Hub (Facebook Group)

Peer support and expert Q&As.

Dr Mary Claire Haver, author of The New Menopause

Instagram account with expert information.

Menopause Café

A global initiative where women can meet and share their experiences.

Healthcare & Professional Support

OB/GYN or Certified Menopause Practitioner

A specialist can help tailor a treatment plan based on your specific symptoms.

Functional Medicine Practitioners

For holistic and alternative approaches to managing perimenopause.

Therapists Specializing in Perimenopause

Emotional well-being is just as important as physical health during this transition.



Perimenopause and Mental Health

What are the most common mental health conditions associated with perimenopause?

The most commonly reported mental health symptoms during perimenopause are low mood, irritability, and anxiety. These symptoms don't always meet the criteria for a clinical diagnosis, but they can still significantly impact daily life and well-being.

How can psychotherapy help me cope with perimenopause?

Psychotherapy can be very effective in helping you address mood and anxiety symptoms, advocate for your changing needs during this time of transition, address relationship dynamics, develop healthier lifestyle and self-care habits, address body image and sexual ramifications. The list goes on!

What role does mindfulness play in managing perimenopause symptoms?

Mindfulness practices can help reduce anxiety, improve focus, and promote emotional stability. These techniques can also ease sleep disturbances and increase your sense of control during this transition. At Wildflower, we frequently incorporate mindfulness practice in psychotherapy.

What role does social connection play in easing perimenopause-related stress?

Strong social connections buffer stress and improve mood. Regularly spending time with friends, joining support groups, or engaging in community activities is a key source of resilience. It is important to find people with whom you can openly share your experience without judgment.

When should I seek professional support for my mental health during perimenopause?

If your mood changes, anxiety, or cognitive symptoms are persistent, overwhelming, or interfere with daily life, seeking support from a therapist or healthcare provider can be highly beneficial.

If you are looking to start psychotherapy at Wildflower, please reach out to our intake team by calling 312.809.0298 or completing the inquiry form on our website.

