

Introduction: Menopause significantly impacts sexual health by causing vaginal dryness, discomfort during intercourse (dyspareunia), and decreased libido due to declining estrogen levels, which can lead to a reduced quality of life; however, lifestyle changes, communication with a partner, and medical treatments like hormone therapy can help manage these symptoms and improve sexual well-being during menopause.

Key impacts of menopause on sexual health:

•**Vaginal atrophy:** Lower estrogen levels lead to thinning of the vaginal walls, causing dryness and discomfort during intercourse.

•**Decreased lubrication:** Reduced natural lubrication makes arousal and penetration difficult.

•**Lower libido:** Fluctuating hormones can decrease sexual desire.

•**Painful intercourse (dyspareunia):** Vaginal dryness can lead to pain during sexual activity.

•**Difficulty reaching orgasm:** Some women may experience challenges achieving orgasm due to hormonal changes.

•**Others:** quality of marital relations, religiosity, emotional relationship

Discussion:

•**Hormone therapy (HT):** Estrogen therapy, either systemic (pills) or locally applied (vaginal creams or rings), can effectively alleviate vaginal dryness and improve lubrication. Intravaginal DHEA;

•**Non hormonal therapy:** Over-the-counter vaginal lubricants or can provide temporary relief from dryness. selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are also helpful.

•**Pelvic floor exercises (Kegels):** Strengthening pelvic floor muscles can enhance blood flow to the vaginal area and improve sensation.

•**Communication with partner:** Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) has also been shown to be effective. Openly discussing concerns and needs with your partner is crucial for managing sexual changes.

•**Lifestyle modifications:**

•**Regular exercise:** Physical activity can improve overall well-being and sexual function.

•**Healthy diet:** Eating a balanced diet with adequate nutrients can support hormonal balance.

•**Stress management:** Techniques like yoga or meditation can help manage stress that can affect sexual desire.

•**TIME TO CONSULT:** SIGNIFICANT DISCOMFORT; DECREASED LIBIDO; COUNSEL ABOUT HORMONAL THERAPY

Important considerations:

•**Individual experiences vary:** Not all women experience the same severity of sexual changes during menopause.

•**Psychological factors:** Emotional aspects like stress, body image, and relationship dynamics can also influence sexual function.

•**Regular check-ups:** Maintaining open communication with your healthcare provider is key to managing menopause symptoms effectively

Conclusion:

As the menopause transition becomes more widely recognized as a critical time for addressing sexual health, healthcare providers must continue to explore and implement evidence-based strategies that improve the sexual well-being of menopausal women.

Furthermore, ongoing education and awareness about the multifaceted nature of sexual health in menopause can empower women to make informed decisions about their care, leading to better outcomes and enhanced quality of life.

- REFERENCE: Harder H, Starkings RML, Fallowfield LJ, et al. Sexual functioning in 4,418 postmenopausal women participating in UKTOCS: a qualitative free-text analysis. *Menopause*. 2019;26(10):1100-1109. doi:10.1097/GME.0000000000001377
- Shahrahmani N, Babazadeh R, Ebadi A. Sexual satisfaction of postmenopausal women: An integrative review. *PLoS One*. 2024;19(7):e0306207. Published 2024 Jul 30. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0306207