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## REVIEW ARTICLE

### MANAGING MENOPAUSE – AN AYURVEDIC APPROACH

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#### ABSTRACT

Menopause is but a natural transition in women that occurs at the age of 45-55 years. The menstrual cycle stops and sex hormone levels decrease, including that of estrogen, resulting in the condition called menopause. In Ayurveda, menopause is described as a natural effect of aging and does not reflect any disease. Since menopause is the transition from the *Pitta* phase of life to the *Vata* phase, if a woman already has a significant *Pitta* or *Vata* imbalance in the years before menopause, things are likely to get worse during menopause, which is a period when hormonal and other natural changes take place in the body. Foods that can easily be digested, creating micronutrients that are then assimilated into the tissues to rebuild their strength, will be recommended. Program to improve digestion is an important prerequisite for overcoming menopausal symptoms.

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## INTRODUCTION

The term Menopause is made up of two Greek words viz. 'Meno' and 'Pause'. **Meno** = month = Related to menses Pause = Pausis = Stopping, Cessation. It is a completely natural biological process, and therefore not a problem to solve. And although it concludes the time in a woman's life for fertility, one can stay healthy, vital and sexual through your 50s and well beyond. A woman can start to transition into menopause as early as mid-30s, with most women entering menopause in their 40s or 50s. For some, menopause comes earlier due to health conditions, including a history of eating disorders, cancer treatment or surgical removal of the ovaries. The most significant changes taking place in a woman body during this time are that there's increasing loss of ovarian follicles (called follicular atresia) and, therefore, a decreasing amount of estrogen being produced. Estrogen levels start to drop 6–12 months before menopause (during peri-menopause, usually in the late 30s and 40s) and continue throughout the menopause process. In menopause stage, the entire chain of endocrine glands mainly, the Gonads, Thyroid and Pituitary glands are affected. The prominent one are altered levels of reproductive hormones includes: Gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH), Follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), Luteinizing hormone (LH), Estrogen (three types including Estrone, Estradiol and Estriol), Progesterone and Testosterone. Hormonal changes have different effect on different women. In an ideally healthy

menopause process, a woman will begin skipping menstrual periods. Gradually her flow will become lighter, number of days of menstrual bleeding will diminish, menstrual periods will space out and eventually will cease. Once a woman has not experienced menstrual bleeding for a full year, she is said to have attained menopause. This picture of the menopause process is of health rather than disease. Indeed, the menopause process announces the transition between the *Pitta* and *Vata* phase of life. For some, it may be subtle enough to go unnoticed, while others may have some hard time coping with these fundamental body changes. Some women may experience no change or no symptoms during their menopause, other than just the cessation of the menses. But usually it is a very difficult time for most of the women. In Ayurvedic classics, it has been given the term *Rajo-nivritti*. Almost all the *Acharyas* have mentioned without any controversy, few direct references are available in *Sūtra* and *Śārira sthāna* of *Sushruta Samhita*. Various other references also available in *Astanga Samgraha* and *Astānga Hridaya*. *Bhavaprakasha* had described menopause as *Rajonasa* and placed it under 80 types of *Vata vyadhis*. *Bhaishajya Ratnavali* has described it as *Rajo Vinasha* and is mentioned as the *nidana* (etiological factor) in the context of *Yoshapatantraka* leading to vitiation of the temperament of the body and mind and causing disease. According to Ayurveda, the menstrual cycle not only helps maintain the reproductive system but also acts as an important internal cleansing process for the entire female physiology. When menstruation stops, the body loses a valuable natural cleansing mechanism and the build-up of toxins in the physiology is accelerated and the toxins quickly accumulate in

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greater quantity and start to create many of the negative symptoms of menopause.

Another factor leading to menopausal imbalances is the accumulation of digestive impurities (*ama*) in the physiology. *Ama* blocks the channels that transport nutrition to the cells and remove waste from the body, and thus contributes to menopausal problems. A third factor is the misuse or overuse of the mind, body, emotions, or senses. Basically, this happens when a woman strains her mind too much, is under too much ongoing stress or pressure, or is doing work that is too "heavy" for her body, or is under tremendous emotional stress.

### Factors influencing menopause

- a) General health condition
- b) Nutritional status
- c) Environment
- d) Psychological status
- e) Hormonal condition

### Causative factors

Most of the menopause related disorders can be attributed to hormonal imbalance. Other causes for menopausal disorders may be heredity, viral infections, radiation therapy, autoimmune disorders and chromosomal irregularities. Because it is a natural transition between two phases of a woman's life, menopause is only linked with aging and does not have any significant causative factor. However, cases of Premature Menopause have been noticed in many women below the age of 40. This menopause is more likely to occur in women who smoke excessively, have never been pregnant, or live at high altitudes. Another kind of menopause – surgical menopause – is caused by induced removal of the ovaries. Women who have had surgical menopause often have a sudden and severe onset of the symptoms of menopause.

### Symptoms

Menopause may not be the same for everyone. But some menopause symptoms are very common, some are less common, and some are serious and should not be ignored. Women can experience a variety of symptoms and conditions related to changes in sex hormone levels and aging. Some of the most common menopause symptoms include:

- Morphological changes in the distribution of adipose tissue and associated obesity trend.
- Irregular and less abundant menstruation until their complete disappearance.
- Increasing scarcity of pubic and auxiliary hair
- Decreased volume and tone of the breasts, vaginal dryness, vulvar changes
- Change in mood: anxiety, irritability, depression, tension, palpitations and headache
- Changes in libido with diminished interest in sex
- Changes in the uterus, ovaries and cervix
- Insomnia and partial memory loss
- Other symptoms like fatigue, numbness and backaches.
- Breast discomfort, dry mouth, frequent headaches, frequent urge to urinate, loss of muscle, mental exhaustion, nervousness, or passing excessive amounts of flatus

- For some, a higher risk for certain other age-related diseases (including cardiovascular diseases, dementia and osteoporosis)

S.No.	Common Symptoms	Serious symptoms	Other Symptoms
1.	Cognitive changes	Depression	Asthma
2.	Decreased Libido	Heavy Bleeding	Aching joints & Muscles
3.	Fatigue	Hypertension	Bizarre dreams
4.	Head-ache	Palpitations	Burning sensation Mouth
5.	Hot flashes	---	Change in Body odour
6.	Insomnia	---	Change in breadth odour
7.	Memory disturbances	---	Creepy & crawly feelings in Skin
8.	Menstrual irregularities	---	Dizziness
9.	Mood swings	---	Electric socks
10.	Night Sweats	---	Hair loss
11.	Urinary problems	---	Indigestion
12.	Vaginal dryness	---	Low Blood Pressure
13.	Weight gain	---	Tinnitus
14.	---	---	Unusual Numbness & Tingling
15.	---	---	---

According to Ayurveda, the most common symptoms of menopause are caused by an excess of *Vata* and *Pitta dosha*. Imbalances in *Vata*, *Pitta* or *Kapha* create very different symptoms. Learning where the imbalance is located can help women understand their condition more clearly and treat it more effectively. Though the symptoms of *Vata* and *Pitta* are most common for women around the time of menopause, it is also possible for *Kapha* to increase at this time. Adrenal stress is a typical feature of *Vata*-imbalanced menopause. Clinically significant insomnia impaired short term memory and emotional liability as well as osteoporosis or osteopenia are frequently encountered symptoms. In *Pitta* imbalance, Estrogen dominant pattern is evident.

S.No.	VATA	PITTA	KAPHA
1.	Anxiety	Hot Flashes	Heaviness in the body
2.	Constipation	Hot temper	Depression
3.	Feeling cold	Irritability	Listlessness
4.	Drying Up Of Body Tissues	Digestive Disturbances	Slowing down of Digestion
5.	Joint & Muscle pains	Altered Metabolism	Weight gain
6.	Loss of skin tone	Acne	Lethargy
7.	Mood swings	Night Sweats	Fluid retention
8.	Nervousness	Excessive heat	Yeast infections
9.	Panic	Feeling Hot	Depression
10.	Sleep Disturbances	Excessive Bleeding	Lacking Motivation
11.	Changeable body temp.	Urinary Tract Infection	Dullness
12.	Cramps	Skin rashes	Weak Digestion
13.	Shivering	---	Fluid retention
14.	Bloating	---	Regular but delayed Cycles
15.	Weight loss	---	

*MANASIKA LAKSHANA*  
*Krodha, Smriti hrasa, Utsaha hani, Dhairya hani, Shoka. Shirah shula, Vishada, Chinta, bhaya, Medha hrasa, Alpa harsha, parakrama hani, Preeti and Dwesha.*

As levels of progesterone and then estrogen drop, the relative level of testosterone becomes greater. Hence a Pitta-provoked menopausal woman may experience levels of anger, aggression and fighting spirit that are quite unfamiliar to both her and her partner. In Kapha imbalance, Thyroid function may be affected by the hormonal changes of menopause, resulting in lowered metabolism and an inability to lose weight. Fibrocystic changes may occur in the breasts during peri menopause, while fluid retention may also be an issue

### Symptoms of *Dhatu-kshaya*

Since Menopause also represents the stage of *Dhatu-kshaya*, the following symptoms of *Kshaya lakshna* of different *dhatu* are often observed in Menopausal individuals.

S.No.	DHATU	AYURVEDIC	MODERN
1.	<i>Rasa Dhatu Kshaya</i>	<i>Sabda asahatwa, Hrid dravata, Shrama, Shoola, Sosha, Trishna</i>	Very dry skin Premature graying or wrinkling of the skin, Mild or occasional Vaginal dryness, Excess mucous or respiratory congestion, Feeling of weakness and tiredness, Lack of stamina, Ovarian or Breast cysts either now or in the past
2.	<i>Rakta Dhatu Kshaya</i>	<i>Twak rukshata, Shirah Shaithilya</i>	Iron deficiency anemia Severe hot flashes, Frequent feeling of excessive heat, Very heavy bleeding, Frequent or chronic skin rashes, acne, pustules or hives, Gallstones now or in the past Bleeding hemorrhoids, Constant thirst
3.	<i>Mamsa Dhatu Kshaya</i>	<i>Sphik Gandaadi shushkata, Toda, Rukshata, Glani, Sandhi sphutana, Sandhi vedana, Dhamani shaithilya</i>	Constant muscle aches or Easily fatigued muscles, Chronically swollen tonsils or lymph glands in neck, Itchy ear, Eczema of ear canal or excess ear wax Fibroids of the uterus (now or in the past), Fibrous or glandular lumps in the breasts, Severely dry, cracking lips.
4.	<i>Medo Dhatu Kshaya</i>	<i>Anga rukshata, Shrama, Shosha, Krushata</i>	Weight gain Inability to lose weight, High blood sugar, High cholesterol, Chronic sweat or body odor, Fatty cysts under the skin or scalp or in the breasts, Thyroid disorder, Frequent night sweats Sweats during the day associated with hot flashes.
5.	<i>Asthi Dhatu Kshaya</i>	<i>Asthi toda, Sandhi saithilya</i>	Low bone density, Hair breaking Very dry hair lacking luster, Problems with teeth (breaking easily or many cavities), Nails breaking frequently, Constant joint pains or arthritic conditions, Deep pains in the bones.
6.	<i>Majja Dhatu Kshaya</i>	<i>Asthi soughirya, Asthi toda, Bhrama, Daurbalya, Tamo darshana, Sandhi shunyata</i>	Frequent or recurring infections, Excess secretions of the eyes, Dryness of skin on upper eyelids, Constant spacey and distractible feeling, Inability to focus or concentrate, Pain in the tendons Easily injured tendons or recurrent tendonitis, Frequent feeling of faintness or dizziness.
7.	<i>Artava Dhatu Kshaya</i>	<i>Yoni vedana, Shrama, Durbalata, Pandu</i>	Absence of libido (no sex drive), Severe vaginal dryness, Overall lack of sexual attractiveness, Dull, unclear eyes, History of more than one miscarriage, Infertility.

### *Sadhyasadyata* (Prognosis)

*Rajonivriti* is a naturally occurring condition and is having good number of similarity with the process of aging. It is a *Swabhavika Vyadhi* as that of *Jara* and *Mrityu*. According to *Acharya Charaka swabhavik vyadhis* are incurable and having

no treatment. But *Acharya Chakrapani* while commenting on this mentioned that the word "*Nishpratikriya*" means ordinary treatment and measures have no effect on aging. There is no treatment for *Kalakrita*. But according to *Acharya Dalhana* they may become "*Yapya*" by *Rasayana & pathya-aharavihara* etc. *Rajonivriti* (menopause) and the individual may live with the disorder without being disturbed by the disease. It is also said that in "*Yapya*" stage the disease recurs immediately after the withdrawal of treatment.

### Treatment

Any woman, however healthy, will go through menopause sometime in her mid-forties to mid-fifties. In Modern medicine today, menopause is seen as a deficiency disease and is

typically treated with "*hormone replacement therapy*," indicating the pathologizing of this natural process. Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is prescribed for women with severe menopausal disorders. The therapy is given only after complete cessation of menstruation. The therapy tends to address hormonal gaps and is effective in getting rid of reducing hot flashes and other associated hormonal disorders.

## Diet &amp; life style recommendations

S.NO.	CATEGORY	ADVISED TO ADAPT	ADVISED TO AVOID
1	Foods	Organic Fruits And Vegetables, Cruciferous Vegetables, High-Fiber Foods, Phyto-estrogen Foods, Omega-3 Fats, Healthy Fats And Cold-Pressed Oils, Pro-Biotic Foods, Soya, Oats, Flax Seeds, Water, Whole Milk, Whole Grains, Bananas, Liver, Eggs, Leafy Greens, Beans, Cumin, Fennel, Coriander, Cardamom, Turmeric, Mint, Cinnamon, And Nutmeg, Juices Of Carrot, Beet-Root And Cabbage.	Packaged Foods, Conventional Meat, Added Sugar, Refined Oils And Fried Foods (Sunflower, Corn, Safflower, Soybean Or Canola Oil), Carbonated Drinks, Tea, Coffee, Alcoholic Drinks, Confections And Refined Sugars, Snacking Between Meals, Eating Late Nights, Meat, Cheese (In Kapha Dosha)
2	Life-style	Regular Schedule, Optimal Nutrition, Enough Sleep At Nights, Regular Body Massage, Warm Liquids, Yoga, Meditation, <i>Pranayama</i> , Regular Mild Exercises Like Walking, Keeping Stress Levels Low, Healthy Social Relationships, Positive Thinking	Irregular Meals, Eating On The Run, Reduce And Manage Stress,
3	Herbs	<i>Shatavari, Ashwagandha, Brahmi, Tulasi, Musli, Bala, Dashamoola, Triphala, Jatamansi, Vacha, Tagara, Ardraka, Lasuna, Musta, Twak, Kesara, Kumari, Haridra, Shankhapushpi, Yashtimadhu, Ashoka, Asthi-Srinkhala, Tila, Maricha, Pippali, Methika, Dhanyaka, Ela, Jiraka, Sarshapa, Lavanga, Haritaki, Saliparni, Chitraka, Guggulu</i> Etc. Drugs of <i>Jeevaneeya gana, Vayasthapaka gana, Balya maha Kashaya</i> mentioned in <i>Charaka Samhita</i> play a vital role in the management of Menopause.	
4	Compound Preparations	<i>Ashwagandharishta, Dashamoolarishta, Balarishta, Ashokarishta, Kumaryasava, Brahmi Vati, Brahmi Ghritam, Shatavari Gudam, Satavari Leha, Chyavanaprasha, Chandraprabha Vati, Patrangasav, Powders Of Jatamansi, Vacha, Yashtimadhu, Triphala, Lodhrasav, Lohasav, Bhringarajasav, Dadimadya Ghrita, Pushyanuga Churna, Chandanasav, Mukta Bhasma / Pishiti, Pravala Bhasma / Pishiti, Kukkutanda Twak Bhasma, Avipattikara Churna, Hingwashtaka Churna, Panchatikta Ghrita, Lakshadi Guggulu, Yogaraja Guggulu, Gokshuradi Guggulu, Kshaerabala Tailam, Dhanwantari Taila, Gandha Taila, Kamadudha Ras, Manasamitra Vati</i>	
5	Rasayana Drugs	<i>Haritaki Rasayan, Amalki Rasayan, Pippali Rasayan, Vidanga Rsayan, Shilajatu Rasayan, Bhallataka Rasayana, Triphala Rasayana, Vardhman Pippali Rasayana</i> etc.	
6	Panchakarma	<i>Snehana, Swedana, Vasti, Nasya, Siro-dhara, Pichu (Yoni, Siro)</i>	
7	Yoga	<i>Surya Namaskara, Baddakonasana, Upavistakonasana, Merudandasana, Taadasana, Sarvangasana, Setubandhasana, Kati Chakrasana, Vajrasana, Ustrasana, Brahmari, Naadi Shodhana, Sitali Pranayama, Yoga Nidra</i>	
8	Counseling	To develop positive approach towards menopause adequate counseling regarding Cleanliness of Genital organs, Sexual behavior, Guidance regarding the need for regular Medical checkups.	

## Dosha specific recommendations

S.No.	CATEGORY	VATA	PITTA	KAPHA
1.	Taste	<i>Madhura, Amla, Lavana</i>	<i>Madhura, Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Katu, Tikta, Kashaya</i>
2.	Foods	Eat Plenty Of Cooked, Leafy Greens, Wheat, Rice, Millets, Black Gram, Green Gram, Sesame, Radish, Brinjal, Yellow Pumpkin, Bottle Gourd, Onion, Grey Gourd, Carrot, Beet Root, Ash Gourd, Snake Gourd, Garlic, Ginger,	Increase Cooling Foods, Water Intake, Cucumber, Organic Foods. Old Rice, Millets, Maize, Green Gram, Bengal Gram, Pigeon Pea, Sesame, Drum Stick, Bitter Gourd, Yam, Cabbage, Bottle Gourd, Ribbed Gourd, Lady's Finger, Ash Gourd, Cucumber, Snake Gourd, Spinach, Mushroom, Cauliflower,	Rice, Millets, Corn, Barley, Green Gram, Red Gram, Horse Gram, Pea Nut, Bengal Gram, Pigeon Pea, Sesame, Drum Stick, Bitter Gourd, Potato, Tomato, Bottle Gourd, Grey Gourd, Ribbed Gourd, Carrot, Cucumber, Cauliflower, Garlic, Ginger, Red Chillies, Green Chillies, Whole Grains, Legumes, Vegetables
3.	Fruits	Ripe Mango, Papaya, Orange, Pine Apple, Apple, Banana, Grapes, Coconut, Strawberry, Custard Apple, Gooseberry, Cherry Plum, Lemon, Pomegranate, Guava, Dates, Cashew	Sweet Juicy Fruits, Grapes, Pears, Plums, Melons, Apples, Zucchini, Yellow Squash, Ripe Mango, Banana, Custard Apple, Gooseberry, Pomegranate, Jack Fruit, Dates,	Raw Mango, Pineapple, Grapes, Gooseberry, Lemon, Pomegranate, Jack Fruit, Dates
3.	Dairy Products	Cow Milk, Buffalo Milk, Butter, Ghee, Cream, Cheese, Curd	Cow Milk, Buffalo Milk, Butter, Ghee, Cream	Cow Milk
4.	Meat Products	Sea Food, Mutton, Beef, Chicken, Pork, Egg, Deer Meat Etc.	Mutton, Pork, Deer Meat	Mutton, Chicken, Deer Meat Etc.
5.	Oils & Fats	Sesame Oil, Coconut Oil, Mustard Oil	Sesame Oil,	Sesame Oil, Mustard Oil, Sunflower Oil
6.	Condiments & Spices	Black Pepper, Mustard, Fenugreek, Cinnamon, Coriander, Cumin, Asafoetida	Clove, Coriander, Long Pepper	Black Pepper, Long Pepper, Mustard, Fenugreek, Cinnamon, Cardamom, Coriander, Cumin, Asafoetida, Turmeric and Ginger.
7.	Life Style	Regular Meals, Early Bedtime, Oil Massage, Meditation, Yoga & Walking	Early to Bed Before 10 Pm and try to wind down earlier in the Evening. Avoid excessive Sun exposure and Overheating, Hot Spicy Foods, Hot Drinks and Alcohol. Gentle and not too Overheating Exercises.	Increase Exercise, Waking Up Early
8.	Forbidden Things	Eating foods that are Packaged, Processed, Frozen, Canned or left over. Eat Organic Foods that are Cooked Fresh Each Day. The Bulk Of Your Diet Should Consist of Whole Grains, Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, and Legumes and Light Dairy Products such as Milk, Lassi or Paneer for Protein. This Type of Light but Nourishing Diet will aid Digestion and avoid the build-up of Ama. Avoid Heavy Foods such as Meat, Cheese, Yogurt and Frozen Desserts Like Ice Cream, Especially at Night.	Food that is Spicy, such as Chilies, Cayenne and Black Mustard Seed. Salty Foods and Foods that are Sour, such as Yogurt (unless it is diluted and Sweetened in a drink Called Lassi), And Sour Foods such as Ketchup, Mustard, and Other Salad Dressings And Condiments made with Vinegar should also be avoided	Reduce Meat, Cheese, Sugar, Cold Foods And Drinks

However HRT is recommended only if the imbalance is severe, as HRT has been found to have side effects like breast or cervical cancer. Ayurveda has excellent solutions for a safe and happy menopause. According to Ayurveda, Menopause is not an illness but is usually a hormonal shift that occurs in women. It is normal for hormone levels to fall in middle age. These hormones do not need to be replaced. While menopause is inevitable, the related disorders can be coped up by following some simple home remedies and natural cures. Yet menopause is a more difficult topic to approach because menopause is not an illness. Understanding of this important phenomenon and of how to support women in all stages of menopause is thus an essential aspect of Ayurveda practice today.

The main objective of Ayurvedic therapies for menopause is to:

1. Prevent the build-up of toxins that can manifest years later as symptoms of menopause.
2. Provide cleansing periods for the body after menopause when the important cleansing periods of menstruation have been lost.

Ayurvedic treatment of Menopause focuses on strengthening and rejuvenating the reproductive system, regulate the hormones, calm mental stress, maintain effective digestion, boosting immunity and to provide rejuvenation. *Apana Vata*, which governs the genitourinary tract, elimination, and menstruation, is a key area to attend to when preparing for menopause. It is also important to keep your digestion strong and free of *Ama*. Diet and lifestyle adjustments are advised to maintain health and increase vitality naturally. The entire line is targeted to promote the overall emotional, physical and mental health of women. This also helps in keeping the body free of *ama* and maintains the balance between *soma* (lunar energy) and *agni* (solar energy) — a balance that is vital for health during menopause and beyond. It provides both general support and targets specific imbalances that women experience before, during and after menopause. Ayurvedic detoxification program referred to as "*Panchakarma*," may be needed to clear the body's channels and gain relief. This internal cleansing approach is also the treatment of choice for more serious problems such as osteoporosis and high cholesterol. It can be very transforming, eliminating symptoms while at the same time dramatically reducing stress and fatigue. They feel much better, radiate health and youthfulness and one may experience a profound sense of well-being and inner peace.

## DISCUSSION

Menopause, or more accurately peri-menopause, is the time when the body begins to react to dropping levels of estrogen and other hormones. Every woman will experience this differently. According to Ayurveda, the menstrual cycle not only helps maintain the reproductive system but also acts as an important internal cleansing process for the entire female physiology. When menstruation stops, the body loses a valuable natural cleansing mechanism. If there has been a build-up of toxins in the physiology when menstruation ends, impurities quickly accumulate in greater quantity and start to create many of the negative symptoms of menopause. Diet also plays a key role in balancing hormones during and after menopause. Foods that are rich in certain phyto-estrogens, lignans, found in a variety of whole foods including grains and

cereals, dried beans and lentils, flax-seed, sunflower seeds and peanuts, vegetables such as asparagus, sweet potatoes, carrots, garlic and broccoli and fruits such as pears, plums and strawberries are highly helpful in overcoming the menace of menopause. According to Ayurveda, every individual has unique need for balance. Since diet is one of the most important ayurvedic tools for achieving balance, ayurvedic healers generally design individualized diets for people they see, based on various factors such as age and gender, the *doshic* tendencies that need to be balanced at a given time, the strength of the body tissues and the digestive fires, and the level of *ama* (toxins) in the body. Common herbs and spices such as thyme, nutmeg, turmeric and licorice also have estrogenic properties. It turns out that if one simply eat a varied diet high in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and dried beans, one will be ingesting a rich phyto-estrogen feast in daily cuisine! Variety and moderation are important because just as too much estrogen is unhealthy after menopause, too much phyto-estrogen may also be dangerous. This danger can be avoided by getting your phyto-estrogens naturally from a variety of whole foods. Health problems at menopause represent imbalances in the body that were already growing in the body and are unmasked by the stress of shifting hormones. Menopause symptoms are Nature's wake-up call to start paying more attention to health. Age forty-five to fifty-five is a critical decade, according to Ayurveda. It provides the foundation on which one's later health is laid.

## Conclusion

Menopause happens. It's a natural transition, says Ayurveda, and like all transitions, menopause has to be managed to minimize discomfort. Ayurvedic treatment of Menopause focuses on strengthening and rejuvenating the reproductive system, regulate the hormones, calm mental stress, maintain effective digestion, boosting immunity and to provide rejuvenation. *Apana Vata*, which governs the genitourinary tract, elimination, and menstruation, is a key area to attend to when preparing for menopause. It is also important to keep one's digestion strong and free of *Ama*. Diet and lifestyle adjustments are advised to maintain health and increase vitality naturally. Eating fewer calories, adding fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins will help the body fuel in a healthy way. Eating food with a lower glycemic index may also be helpful to decrease the effect on blood sugar levels. These may seem like small steps but if practiced daily can make a huge difference.

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