

Perimenopause Symptoms

PAUSE II

CARDIOVASCULAR

- Increased blood pressure fluctuations
- Palpitations
- LDL cholesterol increases
- HDL cholesterol decreases
- Triglyceride levels rise
- Increased vascular inflammation
- Accelerated plaque formation

DIGESTIVE

- Constipation
- Bloating
- Worsening inflammatory bowel conditions
- Increased GI sensitivity
- "leaky gut"
- Increased gallbladder issues
- Bloating or nausea after meals, especially after fatty foods
- Greasy, loose, or pale stools (signs fat isn't being digested well)
- More gas or abdominal pressure
- Right-upper abdominal discomfort (gallbladder), especially after fatty meals
- Pain that radiates to the back or right shoulder blade
- Intermittent sharp or crampy pain that comes and goes (often mistaken for indigestion)
- Feeling hungrier or less satisfied after meals (even when you've eaten enough)
- Different eating habits (snacking more, skipping meals, or craving different foods)

ENDOCRINE

- Hot flashes and night sweats
- Trouble staying sleep
- Increased anxiety or depression
- Fatigue and brain fog
- Sensitivity to cold
- Change in weight (and you aren't doing anything different)
- New or worsening thyroid symptoms despite "normal" labs
- Increased insulin resistance
- Weight gain (especially abdominal)
- Blood sugar swings
- Stronger cravings
- Energy crashes
- Less tolerant of stressful situations
- A "wired-but-tired" feeling
- Exaggerated reactions to stress aka - "flying off the handle", "losing my sh*t", "freaking out."

HAIR/SKIN/NAILS

- Skin that's thinner, drier, and less elastic skin
- More wrinkles
- Slower wound healing
- Dry, itchy, sensitive skin
- Less hair growth
- More hair shedding
- Gradual hair thinning
- Brittle, thin nails
- Slower nail growth
- More nail splitting and breaking
- Skin becomes more sensitive
- More inflammation and puffiness
- New or worsening skin conditions such as acne
- Thinner, duller skin
- Hair growth in new places

IMMUNE

- Increased inflammation (joint, muscle, stomach, skin)
- Get sick easier and recover slower
- Worsening or new autoimmune and inflammatory conditions
- Increased allergic reactions
- More inflammatory flare ups
- Reduced stress resilience (stress amplifies immune activation)

MUSCULAR

- Increased muscle soreness
- Reduced endurance
- Gradual decline in muscle quality, even when activity levels remain unchanged
- Impaired balance and motor control (increasing fall risk over time)
- Impaired muscle recovery
- Feelings of muscle fatigue, heaviness, or weakness
- Reduced muscle mass and strength
- Decreased motivation for physical activity

REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM

- Irregular bleeding
- Abnormal bleeding (heavy periods, lighter periods)
- Vaginal dryness and irritation
- Pain with intercourse
- Increased infection risk
- Reduced libido
- Takes longer to climax

SKELETAL

- Bone loss
- Increased risk of osteopenia and osteoporosis
- Reduced bone mineral density
- Increased fractures

NERVOUS SYSTEM

- Memory issues (trouble remembering words, forgetting why you walked into a room, etc.)
- Taking longer to process information
- Lower pain thresholds
- Worsening migraines
- Exacerbated chronic pain
- Racing or looping thoughts
- Difficulty concentrating or "brain fog"
- Reduced mental flexibility (feeling mentally stuck or overwhelmed)
- Increased sensitivity to noise, stimulation, or multitasking
- Increased anxiety or unease
- Irritability
- Feeling "on edge" or easily startled
- Lower tolerance for stressful situations
- Mood swings
- Heart palpitations
- Hot flashes and night sweats
- Fatigue with wired or jittery energy
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Digestive changes (bloating, urgency, constipation)
- Increased muscle tension or jaw clenching
- Headaches or migraines
- Fragmented sleep, insomnia, and early waking
- Less energy and motivation
- Lower cognitive drive and mental stamina

RESPIRATORY

- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness
- New or worsening asthma symptoms
- Increased airway inflammation
- Greater susceptibility to inflammatory respiratory conditions
- Breathing that feels shallower or less steady, especially at night
- Restless or disrupted sleep from breathing changes
- Breathing problems during sleep, like sleep-disordered breathing

URINARY

- Increased urinary urgency and frequency
- Burning or discomfort with urination
- Urinary incontinence
- Increased susceptibility to recurrent urinary tract infections
- More susceptibility to yeast infections
- Increased bladder sensitivity
- Overactive bladder
- Reduced bladder capacity
- Waking up in the middle of the night to urinate
- Urinary stress incontinence (particularly with coughing, sneezing, laughing, or exercise)
- Weakened pelvic floor
- Sensation of incomplete bladder emptying