



The benefits of practising gratitude during the perimenopause

If you're like most women, you probably expect the perimenopause transition to be a time of significant change with symptoms like hot flashes, night sweats and mood swings. But what if there was something you could do to make your menopause transition easier?

Believe it or not, practising gratitude may be the key. Gratitude is the emotional response when giving or receiving a benefit from someone. It enhances self-love, which is often low during perimenopause. It reduces stress, anxiety and depression, which are also common. We'll explore the benefits of gratitude and how you can start incorporating it into your life.

The perimenopausal transition and your mental health

The dramatic hormonal changes during perimenopause can affect mental health. Feelings like anxiety, depression and reduced ability to deal with everyday stress. Then there are emotions like anger and irritability, which appear more often than you may be used to.

Mental health issues amongst Perimenopausal women



In a recent survey, 69% of perimenopausal women said their mental health was affected by perimenopause. However, it's a symptom that's not discussed enough. Many women struggle with their mental health without the realisation that it may result from hormonal changes.

There may be many sources of stress during perimenopause, including teenage children, ageing parents, and work commitments. All this whilst trying to understand changes you may be experiencing in yourself.

These stressors may contribute to mood changes, and fortunately, mood changes are temporary and unlikely to last. If you have previously struggled with anxiety and low mood, you may find mental health problems re-emerge. It's unusual for someone with no previous history of mental health problems to develop it during perimenopause.

If you are concerned, speak to your doctor. If your mental health is suffering, you may also like to ask about Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). This can help with low mood, anxiety, hot flushes, sleep problems and stress. CBT provides practical tools to manage perimenopausal problems through strategies that help positively reframe thoughts. There are some helpful facts about CBT and menopause via the British Menopause Society.

The benefits of practising gratitude during perimenopause

Gratitude is an essential aspect of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which we know is good for managing symptoms common during menopause, like insomnia and mood changes.

Gratitude improves health and happiness and encourages feelings of positive emotions helping to balance stress and improve mental and physical health. Expressing gratitude can lead to increased life satisfaction. For example, participants in a study who kept a gratitude diary for two weeks had greater life satisfaction and well-being, better sleep quality and reduced blood pressure.

Perimenopause is also an opportunity to evaluate your health and well-being and begin to put yourself first. Are you getting enough sleep to support good mental health, and is the physical activity you are doing the right type for you? It may be overstimulating. Perimenopause is when adrenal glands work overtime to produce weaker forms of oestrogen whilst responding to stimulants like stress, caffeine, alcohol, and intense exercise. Upon stimulation, the adrenal glands also produce adrenalin and cortisol. Both are good in small amounts but can lead to weight gain and mood changes if overworked.

Practising gratitude helps to reduce cortisol levels, and in one study, participants who wrote about what they were grateful for, what displeased them, and what affected them felt better about life and were more optimistic.

How to get started today, even if you're already going through the menopause

Finding time and space to practice gratitude can be difficult during perimenopause. Try to find a quieter time of day, perhaps before bed. Reflect on the good things, even simple ones. Where you can, practice gratitude daily before you fall asleep. Building gratitude isn't difficult. It just takes practice; the more you practice, the more you'll feel grateful.

You may also like to;

- Focus not on what you lack but on what you have
- Write a thank-you note to yourself each week
- Practice mindfulness to help you be in the present
- Don't forget to appreciate yourself
- Find a gratitude buddy to discuss things you are thankful for
- Keep a journal of things you're grateful for and add one new thing each day

Keeping a gratitude journal helps you consciously focus on good memories. It reminds you of the good things you enjoy or valued people in your life. Write up to three things you feel grateful for. For example, the tasty lunch you had or another driver that let you go first.

Use stress management techniques like time in nature, mindfulness, meditation and small dietary changes like reducing caffeine, sweets and alcohol to further support healthy adrenal glands.

Hence, your mood is more stable, and you have more energy. You may like to support adrenal glands further by including foods with good sources of key nutrients like B vitamins from wholegrains, meat, dairy, fortified foods and magnesium found in spinach, dark chocolate, almonds, avocado, and black beans. Insomnia is common during perimenopause, and when tired, it can be more challenging to practice gratitude to support good mental health.

Have more restorative sleep by going to bed and waking up at consistent times, putting devices away an hour before bed, and having plenty of activity like Pilates, yoga or brisk walks.



Perimenopause is a stage of life that will happen for every woman but acknowledging rather than fearing it can reduce the impact of menopausal symptoms. To help you on your way, here are some quotes from famous women who've embraced this new stage of life:

“So many women I’ve talked to see menopause as an ending. But I’ve discovered this is your moment to reinvent yourself after years of focusing on everyone else’s needs. It’s your opportunity to get clear about what matters to you and then to pursue that with all your energy, time and talent.”

– Oprah Winfrey

“I see menopause as the start of the next fabulous phase as a woman. Now is the time to ‘tune in’ to our bodies and embrace this new chapter.”

– Kim Cattrall

“If you deal with it in a healthy fashion, then I think you come out the other side a better person. I’ve got much more energy now than I ever had in my early 50s before menopause.”

– Julie Walters