



# LET'S TALK ABOUT MENOPAUSE

Benesch's Menopause Guide



## Welcome to Benesch's Menopause Guide

Menopause is a natural biological process that marks the end of a person's menstrual cycle and fertility. It affects all people with a uterus and ovaries. However, it can be difficult to find medical support to help cope with the new challenges menopause presents. That's why Benesch offers a host of benefits and resources that will help you manage your symptoms, get the most out of this transitional phase of your life and ride the menopause wave.

Unsure when menopause begins and what it can entail? Read on to learn about the phases of menopause, its symptoms and how Benesch can support you through your menopause journey.

### **START EXPLORING**

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# OVERVIEW OF THE PHASES OF MENOPAUSE

## PERIMENOPAUSE: THE LEAD-UP TO MENOPAUSE

**Typical onset age: 40s**

People don't just switch directly from their menstrual period to menopause: There's a transitional stage, called perimenopause, that typically starts several years before menopause. During perimenopause, the ovaries gradually produce less estrogen, the hormone that regulates menstruation and ovulation. This hormonal shift can lead to various physical and emotional changes.

## MENOPAUSE: COPING WITH CHANGES IN THE BODY

**Typical onset age: 40s to 50s**

Menopause is a natural biological process that marks the end of a person's reproductive years. It is officially diagnosed when someone has gone without a menstrual period for 12 consecutive months.

During menopause, the ovaries gradually decrease their production of estrogen and progesterone, the hormones responsible for regulating the menstrual cycle and supporting fertility. You will continue to experience physical and emotional changes, some of which may have started during perimenopause.

## POSTMENOPAUSE: A NEW PHASE OF LIFE

**Typical onset age: 50s to 60s**

Postmenopause begins after menopause. During postmenopause, many of the symptoms that were experienced during perimenopause and menopause may decrease or disappear altogether. However, some may continue to experience certain symptoms.





# MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS OF MENOPAUSE

All phases of menopause come with symptoms you may or may not experience, and many of these symptoms can persist into postmenopause. In the below table, you'll see when you might expect to notice each symptom:

	PERIMENOPAUSE	MENOPAUSE	POSTMENOPAUSE
<b>Irregular periods</b> Shorter or longer cycles, skipped periods, heavier or lighter flow	●		
<b>Cessation of menstruation</b> Absence of menstrual periods for at least 12 consecutive months		●	●
<b>Hot flashes/night sweats</b> Sudden feelings of warmth with flushing and sweating	●	●	●
<b>Mood swings</b> Irritability, anxiety and depression	●	●	●
<b>Sleep disturbances/insomnia</b> Insomnia or other sleep problems	●	●	●
<b>Vaginal and urinary changes</b> Vaginal dryness, itching and discomfort; increased risk for urinary tract infections	●	●	●
<b>Changes in libido</b> Decreased sex drive	●	●	●
<b>Changes in skin and hair</b> Changes in skin elasticity, moisture and hair texture	●	●	●
<b>Changes in bone health</b> Increased risk for osteoporosis and bone fractures		●	●

# TIPS AND TRICKS FOR DEALING WITH SYMPTOMS

There are simple steps you can take on your own to mitigate the effects of menopause, such as:

- **Cooling down during hot flashes:** By dressing in layers and always having a cold glass of water handy, you can reduce the discomfort you feel during hot flashes.
- **Practicing relaxation techniques:** Meditation, deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation and other practices can help you deal with symptoms.
- **Eating well:** Eat a balanced diet of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Try to limit saturated fats, oils and sugars.
- **Exercising regularly:** Exercise helps protect against heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and other conditions.

## BENESCH RESOURCES TO HELP YOU MANAGE SYMPTOMS OF MENOPAUSE

While facing these symptoms may seem overwhelming, Benesch offers several benefits to help you manage them and get the most out of life during menopause:

NAME	WHAT IT DOES	HOW TO ACCESS
<b>BCBSIL</b>	Access care through your BCBSIL Group Health Plan	<a href="http://www.bcbsil.com">www.bcbsil.com</a> or (800) 458-6024
<b>Ovia Health</b>	Ovia Health apps are included in your health plan benefits, offered through Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL). Ovia Health offers features to help you manage perimenopause, like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health tracking and data feedback</li> <li>• One-on-one support and treatment navigation</li> <li>• Educational content</li> </ul> <a href="#">Click here</a> to view flyer for more information.	Download the Ovia Health app from the <a href="#">Apple App Store</a> and <a href="#">Google Play</a> . <i>During sign-up, make sure to choose “I have Ovia Health as a benefit.” Then select BCBSIL as your health plan and enter your employer’s name (optional).</i>
<b>Well On Target</b>	This benefit is designed to give you tools to support your health and wellness. Activities range from wellness videos, fitness challenges and nutrition habits information. <a href="#">Click here</a> to see flyer.	Visit <a href="http://www.wellontarget.com">www.wellontarget.com</a> to explore our online courses thought BCBSIL or call 888-421-7781 for more information.
<b>Vitality</b>	Benesch’s sponsored wellness program gives you tools to support your physical and mental health through company-wide challenges, a variety of online courses including nutrition and exercise tracking to earn points to exchange for rewards. For more information <a href="#">click here</a> .	<a href="http://www.powerofvitality.com">www.powerofvitality.com</a> or 877-224-7117

# EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

Benesch's confidential employee assistance program (EAP) is available to all employees through ComPsych. ComPsych's Guidance Resources is company-sponsored, confidential and provided at no charge to you and your dependents.

EAP specialists will confidentially discuss challenges you and your family may be facing and provide you with consultation, information, action plans and resources within your community. The EAP offers face-to-face sessions, unlimited access to master's level consults by telephone, and online tools and resources.

## Utilizing the Employee Assistance Program

- Phone consultations: **800.272.7255**; unlimited calls, 24/7
- Your company Web ID: **COM589**
- Online tools and resources: [guidanceresources.com](https://guidanceresources.com)

## Guidance Resources Online

Your one stop for expert information on the issues that matter most to you...relationships, work, school, children, wellness, legal, financial, free time and more.

- Timely articles, help sheets, tutorials, streaming videos and self-assessments.
- "Ask the Expert" personal responses to your questions.
- Childcare, elder care, attorney and financial planner searches.

There is a strict standard of confidentiality in place to protect your privacy. Treatment information is not shared with anyone without your written permission.

## Counseling and Work-Life Services

EAP consultants can help find local solutions and resources on the following topics:

- Stress management
- Work and home relationships
- Depression and grief
- Alcohol and substance abuse
- Child, adult and elder care
- Legal and financial consultations





## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

For even more menopause resources and support, turn to these organizations:

- [The North American Menopause Society \(NAMS\)](#)
- [National Institute on Aging \(NIA\)](#)
- [Office on Women's Health](#)
- [Mayo Clinic](#)





## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Below is contact information for the Benesch Benefits Team and our service providers.

Contact	Email & Web Address	Phone Number
BCBSIL Customer Service	<a href="http://www.bcbsil.com">www.bcbsil.com</a>	(800) 458-6024
Benefits Connection	<a href="http://benesch.eebenefits.info">benesch.eebenefits.info</a>	N/A
Benesch Benefits Mailbox	<a href="mailto:benefits@benesch.com">benefits@benesch.com</a>	N/A
ComPych (Employee Assistance Program)	<a href="http://guidanceresources.com">guidanceresources.com</a>	(800) 272-7255