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Review Article



AYURVEDIC APPROACHES TO ALLEVIATING MENOPAUSAL SYMPTOMS: MANAGING MENOPAUSAL SYNDROME NATURALLY

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ABSTRACT:

The end of the monthly menstrual cycle and ovulation of a woman is known as menopause, a phenomenon exclusive to women and an experience that is different for each and every woman. It also portends a number of other physical and mental changes brought on by a decrease in the body's production of the hormones progesterone and estrogen. Menopause is a socially unwelcome event since it is sometimes perceived as the end of youth and sexuality. When seen correctly, it signals the start of a time when people will have more freedom and be emancipated from the constraints of youth.

Despite the fact that menopause is significant psychological turning points in a woman's, but many women are unaware of what is happening to them or their options. Ayurveda is a way of life and complementary medicine that encompasses a comprehensive, balanced physiological system. Its core beliefs are that the elements of earth, water, fire, air, and other natural substances, along with the human physiology of "vata," "pitta," and "kapha," compose human physiology. The naturopathic lifestyle is the foundation of the Ayurvedic lifestyle, which emphasizes self-control and discipline while using herbal and mineral-rich treatments and employing massages and yoga poses. In general, there are two basic categories of treatment: those intended to preserve the health of individuals in good health and those intended to treat a particular illness. Lifestyle plays a significant part in menopause, and healthy lifestyle modifications can significantly improve immune system and endocrine system problems. Therefore, a woman's approach to reducing menopausal symptoms must include a customized lifestyle change strategy. This way of living incorporates healthy eating, physical activity, managing stress, controlling weight, and using the right herbal supplements. The article goes into great detail on menopause.

KEYWORDS: Hormone, Lifestyle, Menopause, *Panchakarma*

INTRODUCTION:

Menopause is not a disease; rather, it is a natural stage of a woman's life. Menopause is one of the major physical turning periods in a woman's life. Numerous women don't have access to specific information about what's happening, what their alternatives are for eating healthily, taking dietary supplements, exercising, or simply being prepared so that they can accept it and go on gracefully.

Signs and Symptoms of Early Menopause:

When estrogen levels drop quickly, symptoms can manifest more abruptly, intensely, and for a longer period of time. There are several obvious symptoms, including:

- a. Age range: 40 to 45
- b. Irregular periods for 12 months
- c. Having typical symptoms such as headaches, exhaustion, sadness, anxiety, mood changes, hot flashes, weight gain, or sleeplessness^[1].

Early Menopause Causes:

Anxiety about the reasons and potential consequences of early menopause sometimes overwhelms people who discover they are experiencing it early. But menopause involves more than just anxiety. The following are some typical causes of early menopause:

- a. **Genes:** women are 60% more likely to go through an early menopause if there is a family history of it. A woman's reproductive life span may also be shortened by events that take place in utero when her ovaries are maturing. These events may lead to a decrease in the quantity of cells that produce eggs.
- b. **Hormonal Problems:** Throughout life, levels of estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone normally decrease; this is a normal occurrence. However, as aging progresses, these hormones can fluctuate more dramatically and in different ratios. Women may suffer from night sweats, hot flashes, food cravings, and exhaustion as frequent menopause symptoms when these fluctuations in hormone levels are too great for the body to regulate^[2].

Menopause is not a disease; rather, it is a normal stage of life. Hormone replacement therapy has become hormone therapy in its own right because replacing estrogen is not natural and has dangerous adverse effects. Ayurveda has recognized menopause for over 5000 years as a normal transition rather than a mistake caused by Mother Nature requiring hormone replacement medication. Menopause symptoms can be both uncomfortable and beneficial to health. According to Maharshi Ayurveda. Experts now support these optimistic views on menopause, saying that weak bones, heart problems, and early aging are not normal after menopause. Instead, chronic health issues including heart disease, osteoporosis, and others arise. Hormone replacement therapy, which was formerly strongly marketed is no longer recommended as a medical solution to these problems for both treatment and prevention.

The age range of 55 to 65 is considered a key decade in Ayurveda. They offer the cornerstone upon which later health is built. The level of worry in this decade and the ensuing adjustments in lifestyle will affect the quality of life

in the future and the likelihood that chronic health issues won't burden it.

Menopause Diagnostic Evaluation:

Menopause is often diagnosed based on symptoms, age, past menstrual history, and the findings of a pelvic exam. Further examinations and testing may be necessary if the symptoms are severe, other illnesses are suspected, or other problems complicate the diagnosis^[3]. Other testing criteria include her stride, muscle tone, coordination, overall nutritional health (dhatuksaya), flexibility, hearing, vision, and emotional state. A reduction in the number of anterior horn cells in the spinal cord around the age of forty is thought to promote atrophy and a loss of lean muscle mass. One of the significant physical turning points in a woman's life is menopause. The healthy diet, supplements and exercise can all help minimize menopause. A person with the necessary knowledge will be able to accept it and advance gracefully.^[10]

Ayurvedic Menopausal Symptoms:

Menopause and aging are associated in Ayurveda. Growing older is a major source of life experience. Therefore, some women's menopausal symptoms resemble those that occur when the vata dosh increases and disturbs the normal balance of the body^[4].

Treatment of menopause: The treatment plan is determined on the dosha in which a lady is exhibiting menopausal symptoms. It's crucial to remember that health issues associated with menopause are caused by hormonal fluctuations and indicate underlying imbalances in the body^[6].

Menopause due to the Vata dosha:

Symptoms include mood swings, anxiety, pain, constipation, palpitation, bloating, joint discomfort, loss of skin tone, insomnia, mild hot flashes, and irregular periods.

Treatment:

Diet: Eat more warm beverages and meals. Use cumin and fennel in your regular meals.

Reduce: cold drinks with added sugar, cucumbers, organic food, caffeine and other stimulants, and use of spices like fennel and cumin. Steer clear of hot, spicy foods, hot beverages, alcohol, and late-night eating.

Life style: early nights, regular exercise, such as walking, meditation, yoga, and oil massages using almond and olive oils.

Herbs: ginseng, garlic, hawthorn berries, sandalwood, zizphus, ashwagandha, arjuna, astragalus, cardamom, comfrey root, and ginseng are anti-vata herbs.

Menopause symptoms of the Pitta type:

Prone to Anger, excessive bleeding, irritation, heavy menstruation, acne, UTIs, and rashes.

Treatment: Increasing consumption of water and fruit juices like melons, grapes, and cucumbers. You should also eat more organic foods. Steer clear of hot, spicy meals, hot beverages, alcohol, and late-night eating.

Way of life: At ten o'clock at night, give yourself an oil massage with coconut and sesame oil, and practice anger management exercises like meditation. Exercise and sun exposure are restricted.

Utilize the following anti-pitta herbs: shatavari, golden seed, saffron, sandalwood, arjuna, barberry, and aloe vera.

Menopause symptoms associated with the Kapha type:

Include weight gain, fatigue, fluid retention, apathy, depression, lack of drive, and slow digestion.

Treatment: Eat mostly fruits and entire vegetables; utilize spices like ginger, turmeric, and black pepper; prefer light, dry, and warm cuisine.

Avert: Cheese, meat, sweets, and cold meals and beverages.

Lifestyle: Get up early (6 a.m.) and massage with mustard oil. Use Bay Berry, Cayenne, Guggulu, Motormort, Mustard, and Myrs as Anti-Kapha Herbs^[6].

Understanding the difference in various types of Menopause:

Women who simply want to know why they are not feeling like themselves may find it complicated as there are numerous words used to explain the different menopause cycle stages. Despite the physiological differences between each of these phases, the symptoms may seem similar. A transition that can persist for several years, perimenopause is sometimes confused with menopause. Menopause-like symptoms, such as weariness, irritability, mood changes, and weight gain, increasingly worsen throughout this phase. Women who are going through the perimenopause still get periods, albeit they could be irregular. You've reached menopause when you go 12 months without getting your period. Women between the ages of 40 and 45 experience early menopause, which happens spontaneously and is not brought on by medication or surgery. Menopause following surgery is caused by hysterectomy, oophorectomy, and other pelvic surgeries.

Following medical procedures like radiation therapy and chemotherapy, as well as during different medication regimens, medical menopause may occur^[7].

Weight management:

Ayurveda provides a system that integrates particular, personalized constitutional recommendations with broad hygienic living concepts. Understanding overweight and recognizing situations for what they are—a build-up of poison with particular emotional and physical origins—enables these illnesses to be successfully treated. Obesity is primarily caused by a unique combination of bad habits and cumulative emotional experiences, even if the biochemical makeup of human fat deposits varies throughout individuals. The Ayurvedic Approach To Diet and Weight Loss: The Sattva Program, S. Gerson, 2002, Lotus Press, provides a concise presentation of these weight loss techniques.^[8]

Panchakarma Chikitsa:

Physical therapies called panchakarma ("five therapeutic actions") and chikitsa ("treatment") completely cleanse and rid the body and mind of all pollutants, both mental and physical. Body possesses the natural capacity to effectively break down and eliminate these leftovers, which also include the vitiated doshas. But the hormones, co-factors, and digestive enzymes that regulate the body's internal homeostasis get jumbled.

As a result of one's frequent food errors, hormonal fluctuations, bad exercise habits, lifestyle, and genetic predisposition. Disease may develop from the buildup and dissemination of poisons throughout the physiology as a result of this. The overall goal of panchakarma therapies is to use the body's natural processes of elimination to dissolve, loosen, and eliminate doshas and vitiated substances from their aberrant locations in peripheral tissues^[9].

CONCLUSION:

Nutrition is crucial for maintaining hormone balance both before and throughout the menopause. Health issues during the menopause are symptoms of physiological imbalances that were already developing in the body. Consume a diverse diet rich in whole grains, dried beans, fruit, and vegetables. It contains a lot of phytoestrogen. As excess estrogen becomes toxic after menopause, so too may excess phytoestrogen. This is why moderation and variety are crucial. According to Ayurveda, these recalcitrant symptoms are caused by wastes and toxins called "ama" that have accumulated in the body's tissue. To achieve alleviation and clear the body's channels, an Ayurvedic cleansing regimen called "panchakarma" may be necessary in this situation. During the menopausal phase, lifestyle control is very important. The signs of menopause are nature's way of telling us to start taking our health more seriously.

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