

Aromatherapy and Menopause

What is the Menopause?

NHS Choices states that,

“The menopause is when a woman stops having periods and is no longer able to get pregnant naturally.

Periods usually start to become less frequent over a few months or years before they stop altogether. Sometimes they can stop suddenly.

The menopause is a natural part of ageing that usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age, as a woman's oestrogen levels decline. In the UK, the average age for a woman to reach the menopause is 51.

However, around 1 in 100 women experience the menopause before 40 years of age. This is known as premature menopause or premature ovarian insufficiency.

Symptoms of the menopause

Most women will experience menopausal symptoms. Some of these can be quite severe and have a significant impact on your everyday activities.

Common symptoms include:

- hot flushes
- night sweats
- vaginal dryness and discomfort during sex
- difficulty sleeping
- low mood or anxiety
- reduced sex drive (libido)
- problems with memory and concentration

Menopausal symptoms can begin months or even years before your periods stop and last around four years after your last period, although some women experience them for much longer.

What causes the menopause?

The menopause is caused by a change in the balance of the body's sex hormones, which occurs as you get older.

It happens when your ovaries stop producing as much of the hormone oestrogen and no longer release an egg each month. Premature or early menopause can occur at any age, and in many cases, there's no clear cause.

Sometimes it's caused by a treatment such as surgery to remove the ovaries (oophorectomy), some breast cancer treatments, chemotherapy or radiotherapy, or it can be brought on by an underlying medical condition, such as Down's syndrome or Addison's disease.”

How Can Aromatherapy Help with Menopause?

Certain essential oils may help to alleviate some of the symptoms associated with the menopause. Potential essential oils include:

- Clary Sage (*Salvia sclarea*)
- Roman Chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*)
- Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*)
- Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*)
- Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)
- Geranium (*Pelargonium graveolens*)
- Neroli (*Citrus aurantium var amara flos*)
- Rose Otto (*Rosa damascena*)

In addition, certain hydrolat sprays can be of help during hot flushes – specifically peppermint and/or rose hydrolats.

Always contact a qualified Aromatherapist who will guide you on the oils that are suitable for your individual needs.

References:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/>
- The Art of Aromatherapy by Robert Tisserand
- Aromatherapy – An A-Z by Patricia Davies
- The Complete Guide to Aromatherapy by Salvatore Battaglia
- The Encyclopedia of Essential Oils by Julia Lawless
- Encyclopedia of Aromatherapy by Chrissie Wildwood
- Essential Oils in Colour by Rosemary Caddy
- Aromatherapy Workbook by Marcel Lavabre
- Aromatherapy for Health Professionals by Shirley and Len Price

To find a practitioner to discuss your needs [click here](#)