What's Changed, and What Do I Need?

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A reflection and appointment guide for the menopause transition

If you haven't felt like yourself lately, you don't have to figure out why before you ask for help. Start with two or three things you've actually noticed.

What's different from your usual?

Think about sleep, mood, focus, or what you have energy for. When did it start? How often does it happen? Pick one moment that shows what it's like in daily life.

What else was happening around the same time?

If relevant, note changes in your periods, feeling hot or sweaty at night, or other things you've noticed in your body. Include changes in work, caregiving, or other pressures, too. They're clues to discuss, not proof of a cause.

EXAMPLE / A FEW DETAILS ARE ENOUGH

"For a month I've been waking at 3 a.m. a few nights a week, sometimes sweaty. The next morning I have to reread emails. I skipped my usual walk twice. My periods have been less predictable, and I'm also coordinating my dad's move."

You can bring a few notes. You don't need to track every day.

What would help now?

Ask for one specific kind of support.

What could someone take off your plate while you figure this out? For example: “Could you handle Dad’s moving calls through Friday, including following up with the movers?”

Start the appointment with what’s affecting you.

Bring these notes and, if available, relevant period dates and your list of medicines and supplements. Try: “Here’s what’s changed, when it started, and how it’s getting in the way. Sleep is what I most want help with.”

Write the questions you don’t want to forget.

“Could this be related to the menopause transition? What else might explain it?” You could also ask, “What should I bring or track next, and when should we check back?”

You don’t have to wait until your notes are complete to get support. This guide is for noticing and preparing, not for diagnosing what’s changed.

Office on Women’s Health: Menopause basics

ACOG: The Menopause Years