

Mayo Clinic Minute: Lifestyle changes to manage menopause symptoms

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The average healthy woman begins menopause at 51, though some women will begin in their 40s or in their late 50s. It's a natural biological process that marks the time a woman ends her menstrual cycle.

Mood swings, hot flashes and difficulty sleeping are [common symptoms](#) that can be effectively managed with hormone therapy. Lifestyle changes can also help relieve these temporary symptoms, says Dr. Denise Millstine, a physician from Mayo Clinic's Women's Health Center.

Hormone therapy may help women who struggle with hot flashes, sleep disruptions and other menopausal symptoms. However, this treatment comes with side effects, and it is not for everybody.

"Many women are not candidates to take hormone therapy, like women who have a diagnosis of breast cancer. But in a woman who's taking [hormone therapy](#) and still having symptoms, lifestyle management can also be effective," Millstine says.

"Hit the golf course, for instance. Regular exercise, along with a healthy diet, may help.

Women who exercise regularly are healthier overall, and they might be reducing their hot flash burden, as well."

If you smoke, Millstine says quit.

"Women who smoke have more frequent hot flashes, and they also have more severe [hot flashes](#)."

Consider yoga, deep-breathing exercises and massage to relieve stress.

"I will often refer women for a trial of acupuncture to see if that can reduce their hot flash burden, in addition to simple practices like paced breathing or breathing exercises."

Menopause is a natural stage of aging. See your health care provider if you need help managing your symptoms.

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