

## Original Article

### Evaluation of Menopausal Symptoms among women attending Tertiary Health Care Centre

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#### ABSTRACT:

**Background:** Menopause is one of the most significant events in a woman's life and brings in a number of physiological changes that affect the life of a woman permanently and can be influenced by various sociodemographic factors and coping activities. The present study was conducted to assess menopausal and associated ailments in women. **Materials & Methods:** The present study was conducted on 1048 women of age range 40- 50 years of age. General information such as name, age etc. was recorded. Information regarding family history, menstrual history, presenting health problem, past history, personal history and dietary history was obtained. **Results:** Age group <40 years had 100 patients, 40-45 years had 648 and 45-50 years had 300 patients. The difference was significant ( $P < 0.05$ ). Common symptoms were hot flushes in 24, heart discomfort in 20, joint and muscular discomfort in 50, anxiety in 60, irritability in 84, sleep disorder in 122, sexual problem in 48 and bladder problem in 34. **Conclusion:** Most common symptoms were hot flushes, heart discomfort, joint and muscular discomfort, anxiety, irritability, sleep disorder, sexual problem and bladder problem.

**Key words:** Menopause, Sexual, Symptoms.

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#### INTRODUCTION

The word "menopause" derives from the Greek "men" (month or monthly cycle) and "pausis" (end, stop), i.e., "the cessation of monthly cycle." The World Health Organization (WHO) describes it as the permanent cessation of menstruation as a result of the loss of ovarian follicular function.<sup>1</sup>

Menopausal symptoms result from depletion of oestrogen level as women approaches menopausal stage and some of these women begin to experience these menopausal symptoms early in the perimenopausal phase. Owing to lack of estrogen more than 80% of women experience decrease physical and mental well-being in the year approaching menopause and hence postmenopausal woman can be considered a risk population. Every woman's experience of the menopause is unique; she may experience all of the symptoms or none of them. Some find the transition barely noticeable, while others find it has life altering.<sup>2</sup> According to WHO, natural menopause takes place between the ages 45 & 55 years for the women worldwide. It is generally accepted that average age at menopause is about 51 years in industrialized countries. But in developing countries it ranges from 43-49 year.<sup>3</sup>

Studies show that the onset age of menopause is affected by the age at the first menstrual period, the use of oral contraceptives, the number of pregnancies experienced,

Body Mass Index (BMI), smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, physical activity, blood lead levels and other factors (26-34). It is believed that in about 50% of women, genetic factors play a role in determining the age of onset of menopause. Women whose mothers entered menopause at an early age are at a high risk of early onset menopause. In many studies, it has been shown that women who smoke enter menopause at earlier ages than non-smokers.<sup>4</sup> Studies on menopausal issues and health demand priority in Indian scenario due to the growing population of menopausal women and due to varying presentation following influence of varied social and cultural pattern. Moreover by such studies, we can make women aware of menopausal symptoms leading to reduction in discomfort and fears. This also helps in its early recognition and seeking appropriate medical care if necessary. The present study was conducted to assess pattern and severity of menopausal symptoms and to find out the factors associated in women.

#### MATERIALS & METHODS

The present cross-sectional study was conducted in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Santosh Medical College, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh from April 2012 to November, 2012. It comprised of 1048 women of age range 40- 50 years of age. All were informed regarding the study and written consent was obtained. Ethical clearance was

obtained prior to the study from institutional ethical committee. General information such as name, age etc. was recorded. Information regarding family history, menstrual history,

presenting health problem, past history, personal history and dietary history was obtained. Results thus obtained were subjected to statistical analysis. P value less than 0.05 was considered significant.

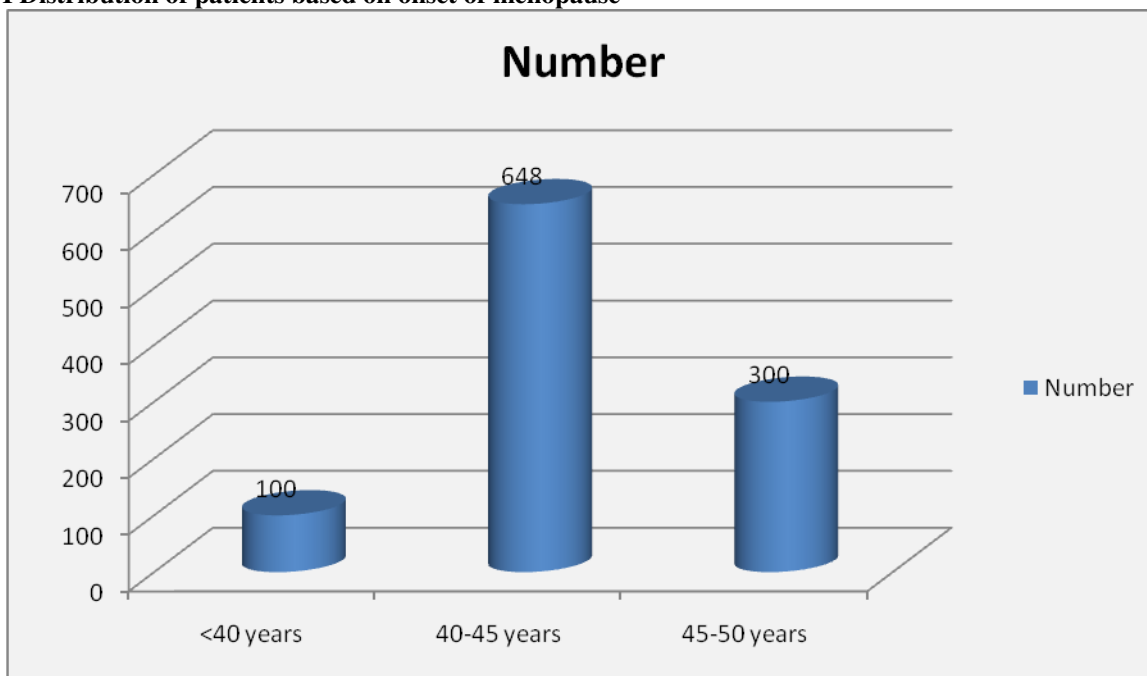
**RESULTS**

**Table I Distribution of patients based on onset of menopause**

Age of menopause	Number	P value
<40 years	100	0.01
40-45 years	648	
45-50 years	300	

Table I, graph I shows that age group <40 years had 100 patients, 40-45 years had 648 and 45-50 years had 300 patients. The difference was significant (P< 0.05).

**Graph I Distribution of patients based on onset of menopause**



**Table II Symptoms in patients**

Symptoms	Number	P value
Hot flushes	24	0.01
Heart discomfort	20	
Joint and muscular discomfort	50	
Anxiety	60	
Irritability	84	
Sleep disorder	122	
Sexual problem	48	
Bladder problem	34	

Table II, shows that common symptoms were hot flushes in 24, heart discomfort in 20, joint and muscular discomfort in 50, anxiety in 60, irritability in 84, sleep disorder in 122, sexual problem in 48 and bladder problem in 34. The difference was significant (P< 0.05).

## DISCUSSION

Menopause though a universal phenomenon has a varied presentation due to influence of different biological, environmental and cultural factors like beliefs and attitudes. Modern medicine has contributed significantly in prolonging human lifespan. All the women who live beyond the age of 45-50 years, experience a period of transition from reproductive to non-reproductive stage of life as a normal physiological change. Natural menopause is recognized after 12 consecutive months of amenorrhoea for which there is no obvious pathological or physiological cause.<sup>5</sup>

Menopause, although not a disease in itself, is associated with many frustrating physiological changes, diverse symptoms and psychological dysfunctions such as anxiety, depression, lack of concentration and decreased self-esteem to the extent of affecting the quality of life of middle aged and elderly women. Hence, to ensure quality life to these women, attention needs to be focused on menopausal problems too to mitigate/manage these problems through appropriate interventions.<sup>6</sup> The present study was conducted to evaluate menopausal and associated illness in women.

In present study, age group <40 years had 100 patients, 40-45 years had 648 and 45-50 years had 300 patients. A et al<sup>7</sup> in their study found that mean age at menopause was found to be 45.32 years. Muscle and joint pain was seen in 39.25%, vasomotor symptoms in 21%, urological symptoms in 20.5%, vulvovaginal symptoms in 19.25%. Hot flashes were experienced more by postmenopausal women (64%) as compared to perimenopausal women (36%).

We found that common symptoms were hot flushes in 24, heart discomfort in 20, joint and muscular discomfort in 50, anxiety in 60, irritability in 84, sleep disorder in 122, sexual problem in 48 and bladder problem in 34.

B et al<sup>8</sup> found that mean age of menopause was 46.2 years, median 46 years with a range from 43 to 50 years. Mean age of menarche was 11.95 years. The most frequent menopausal symptoms were joint and muscular discomfort (77.5%), sleep problems (76.5%), hot flushes (62.0%), irritability (58.5%), and bladder problems (54.5%). Awareness about these problems was inadequate.

The menopausal transition is associated with physical and mental changes in a woman's life that can have an impact on her health. Studies show that the physical, psychological, social and sexual changes observed in the menopausal period have a negative effect on women's quality of life. Ninety-six percent of women have reported to experience menopause-related symptoms and their quality of life is affected not only physically and psychologically but also socially. In particular, women in perimenopause and early postmenopause live through a more negative impact on their quality of life.<sup>9</sup>

Variety of reasons may be responsible for the variations in frequency of menopausal problems/symptoms. The

different sociocultural aspects, economical status, reproductive parameters like number of children and individual perception of menopause and likewise others can be some of the reasons for different frequencies.<sup>10</sup>

Maintaining a healthy diet is another way for postmenopausal women to remain problem free. Similarly such study was conducted by Baksu et al on, "effect on hormonal therapy on postmenopausal women proved that hormonal therapy helps in reducing psychological symptoms of postmenopausal women."<sup>11</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Maximum number of subjects was in age group 45-50 years. Most common symptoms were hot flushes, heart discomfort, joint and muscular discomfort, anxiety, irritability, sleep disorder, sexual problem and bladder problem.

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