

Is My Husband in Male Menopause?

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Research indicates that mid-life men have significant hormonal and physiological changes. More people are recognizing the reality of these changes as men move from the first half of life to the second.

Male menopause begins with hormonal, physiological and chemical changes that occur in all men generally between ages 40 and 55. These changes affect all aspects of a man's life. It is a physical condition with psychological, interpersonal, social and spiritual dimensions. Male menopause does similar things to men as menopause does to women.

Some common physical symptoms of male menopause include:

- Taking longer to recover from injuries
- Less endurance for physical activity
- Feeling fat or gaining weight
- Difficulty reading small print
- Loss or thinning of hair

The psychological symptoms include:

- Irritability
- Indecisiveness
- Anxiety and fear
- Depression
- Loss of self-confidence
- Loss of purpose and direction in life
- Forgetfulness and difficulty concentrating

There are things you can do to help your husband go through this transition in his life. Encourage him to share his feelings, even when his feelings make you feel uncomfortable.

A man often feels a temporary loss of power, passion, purpose and potency during this time of life. Sometimes, he may feel it is the beginning of the end for him. Let him know that you love and appreciate him just the way he is and that he will come through this period of life stronger and more compassionate.

The most fearful change for a man involves his sexuality. Many feel they are losing the very basis of their manhood. Let him know that you will stand by him and help him talk about his fears.

As a couple, this is a very important time to talk together and support each other. However, recognize that there are limits to how much you can help him and encourage him to seek support from other men going through similar changes. Joining a men's

group may help, along with the possibility of seeking professional counseling if problems persist.

There are additional things men can do to help themselves. They include:

- Eat right
- Stay physically fit
- Get regular health checkups
- Check hormone levels with age
- Reduce stress and worry
- Become a mentor to young men
- Learn to love the one you are with

Male menopause is the passage to the most passionate, powerful, productive and purposeful time of a man's life. Baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, are changing the way everyone views mid-life and aging. They are the first to recognize the importance of male menopause.

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