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HEALTH BYTES

Take charge of your hormones

From your first period to menopause, hormones affect your body, mood, energy, sleep, and weight. By understanding what's happening, you can feel more in control.

Puberty and periods (ages 8-18)

Hormones like oestrogen and progesterone start rising. You may get periods, mood changes, acne, and sore breasts.

What can help

- Use a period app to track your cycle.
- Do light exercise every day to ease cramps and feel better.
- Eat more fibre, omega-3s, magnesium and iron (if your periods are heavy).
- Talk to a nurse or doctor if your periods are very painful or you are feeling sad often.

Pregnancy

Hormones like hCG and relaxin increase. You may feel tired, sore, emotional, or have food cravings.

What can help

- Go for regular check-ups and ask your doctor about your symptoms.
- Ask about supplements like folic acid, B12, calcium, iron, and omega oils.
- Stay active if it's safe, and get plenty of rest.
- Don't be shy to speak about how you're feeling – support is important.

After giving birth

Hormone levels drop quickly. You may feel tired, stressed, or sad – this is very common.

What can help

- Ask for help from family, friends or professionals.
- Go for gentle walks to lift your mood and help your body recover.
- Eat regular healthy meals to regain strength.
- If you feel very low for more than two weeks, speak to a health worker.



Perimenopause (around age 40+)

Hormone levels slowly drop. You may get irregular periods, hot flushes, weight gain, sleep problems, or mood swings.

What can help

- Keep a symptom diary to understand the changes.
- Eat about 1,000mg of calcium a day (milk, yoghurt, spinach) for bone health.
- Eat more protein (chicken, lentils, eggs) and fibre (fruit, oats, nuts).
- Speak to your doctor about treatment or supplements if needed.

Menopause (around age 45-50)

Menopause starts when you haven't had a period for 12 months. You may feel tired, sad, or have weak bones or dry skin.

What can help

- Do weight-bearing exercises such as walking or dancing to keep bones strong.
- Stay social and try new hobbies to keep your mind active.
- Get vitamin D from 15 minutes of sunshine or a supplement.
- Ask your doctor about hormone replacement therapy (HRT) or other support.



Reference: Hormonall

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