

Menopause After Traumatic Brain Injury

August 2025

<https://msktc.org/tbi/factsheets>

TBI Factsheet

This factsheet gives an overview of menopause. It also describes how menopause may affect women with TBI.

Menopause

Menopause is a normal part of life for women who are in midlife. This factsheet is for women who have had a traumatic brain injury (TBI) and may be dealing with menopause or have questions about the menopause process. During menopause, women have changes in hormone levels. These changes may affect how women age as well as their lifestyle, sexuality, and overall health.



For example, menopause causes a decrease in the hormones that cause monthly periods. These hormonal changes can reduce the ability to get pregnant. These changes in hormones may result in a number of physical symptoms.

Physical symptoms may include the following:

- Hot flashes
- Night sweats
- Body aches
- Headaches
- Problems with urinary control
- Vaginal dryness
- Problems with sleep
- Fatigue
- Changes in sexual interest
- Irritability
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Problems with memory and attention

Menopause and TBI

Some of the symptoms of menopause are the same as those that result from a TBI. For example, both may have changes with thinking and emotions. It can be hard to know which symptoms are due to the TBI and which are due to menopause.

TBI Model Systems studies have found that menopause was similar for women who had a TBI and those who did not. Some symptoms were more frequent and intense in women who had a TBI.

These symptoms include:

- Problems with memory.
- Problems with sleep.
- Changes in emotions. These may include irritability, worry, and moodiness.



The Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center works with Traumatic Brain Injury Model System centers to provide free research-based rehabilitation resources for people living with traumatic brain injury (See <https://msktc.org/tbi> for more information). This factsheet has been approved by experts from the TBIMS centers.



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Women who have changes in their thinking, sleep, and emotions after a TBI may not notice changes when going through menopause. Women without TBI may feel that changes due to menopause are more intense, as they are a bigger change for them. Experience living with a TBI may help women be more resilient when dealing with menopausal changes, as compared to women without TBI who are dealing with these symptoms for the first time. At the same time, some women with TBI may still feel that the symptoms of menopause are intense and disrupt their daily lives.

Summary

All women will go through menopause at some point in their lives. They may have physical symptoms and changes in their emotions and thinking during and after menopause. But not everyone experiences all the symptoms in the same way. For women with TBI, the symptoms of menopause may be less obvious because they overlap with the TBI symptoms. This may help them deal with the changes that come with menopause. On the other hand, menopause could worsen ongoing problems related to TBI. Here are some helpful tips for all women on how to cope with the changes that come with menopause.



Tips for Managing the Symptoms of Menopause

- Talk to your healthcare provider about managing your symptoms with medical treatment such as medicine.
- Think about some lifestyle changes you can make to help improve your mood. These may include exercising more and doing more activities that you enjoy and having a regular sleep schedule.
- Talk to other women about how they dealt with these symptoms to get some support while you are going through the process.

References

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Authorship

Menopause After Traumatic Brain Injury was developed by Robin Hanks, PhD, ABPP; Claire Kalpakjian, PhD; Lisa Rapport, PhD; Angelle Sander, PhD; Tamara Bushnik, PhD; and Anthony Lequerica, PhD, in collaboration with the Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC).

Source: The content in this factsheet is based on research and/or professional consensus. This content has been reviewed and approved by experts from the Traumatic Brain Injury Model System (TBIMS) centers, funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, as well as experts from the Polytrauma Rehabilitation Centers (PRCs), with funding from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The content of the factsheet has also been reviewed by individuals with TBI and/or their family members.

Disclaimer: This information is not meant to replace the advice of a medical professional. You should consult your health care provider about specific medical concerns or treatment. The contents of this factsheet were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant number 90DPKT0009). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this factsheet do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, or HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

Recommended citation: Hanks, R., Kalpakjian, C., Rapport, L., Sander, A., Bushnik, T., & Lequerica, A. (2025). *Menopause after traumatic brain injury*. Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center.

<https://msktc.org/tbi/factsheets/menopause-after-tbi>

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