Ways to Help You Stay Healthy

Eat Right
By eating a calcium rich diet, you can prevent or slow down the development of osteoporosis. Dairy products, beans, broccoli, and calcium enriched foods are recommended sources of calcium.

Protect Your Heart
It is crucial that you eat healthy, low fat, low cholesterol, and low sugar foods. This will help decrease your risk of getting a heart attack and other heart related diseases. It will also help you control your weight.

Avoid Smoking
Smoking has been found to be a risk factor in heart disease, lung cancer, and osteoporosis, not to mention several other diseases. It is never too late to quit smoking.

Exercise Regularly
Physical activity decreases the risk of heart disease and can counter the process of bone loss. Not only will exercise promote your physical health, but it will also improve your mental well-being by serving as a form of stress relief and mood enhancement. You will be amazed at the amount of energy you will have for your daily activities after having exercised in the morning. Be sure to consult your doctor before beginning an exercise program.

Menopause

Knowing What to Expect

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For many, menopause can be a disturbing time in a woman's life. It may be difficult for her to understand and cope with the changes occurring in her body during menopause. Here is a list of common symptoms.

**Menopause**

Menopause is not a disease but rather a natural phase of a woman's biological cycle. It is the permanent cessation of a woman's menstruation cycle due to a decline in estrogen levels. This can lead to various symptoms as the body adjusts to the change in hormone levels.

**Hot Flashes**

Women may experience hot flashes, a sensation of warmth that spreads over the body. It is often associated with perspiration. Hot flashes may vary in intensity, lasting from a few seconds to several minutes. Some women experience hot flashes more severely at night, which can be very disruptive to a normal sleeping pattern.

**Cardiovascular Disease**

Before menopause, high estrogen levels in the body protect a woman from developing heart disease. Once these hormone levels drop due to menopause, her chance of developing heart disease increases greatly if she does not practice healthy living habits.

**Bone loss and osteoporosis**

High estrogen levels help maintain bone thickness and health. However, as hormone levels decrease, women are more susceptible to losing bone mass. Osteoporosis is a painful disease in which the calcium found in bones decreases, causing bones to become weak and easily broken.

**Emotional changes**

Women may experience a decrease in self-esteem, anxiety about aging, and remorse regarding the loss of fertility. Feelings of depression may increase in women who are already depressed.

**Understanding Menopause**

For many, menopause can be a disturbing time in a woman's life. It may be difficult for her to understand and cope with the changes occurring in her body during menopause. Here is a list of common symptoms.

**Changes Due to Menopause**

Because the hormone levels of estrogen and progesterone decrease in the woman's body during menopause, several biological changes occur. Here is a list of common symptoms.

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**Urinary System**

The decrease in hormone levels also affects the urinary system by causing increased irritability of the bladder, which can lead to involuntary loss of urine as well as an increased susceptibility to infection. Women may need to urinate more often and with more urgency in addition to pain during urination.

**Vaginal dryness and pain**

Due to a change in the shape of the vaginal walls as well as a decreased production of natural lubricant, women may feel dryness in the vagina in addition to pain during sexual activity.

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**Treatment Options**

Medical treatment of perimenopausal women is based on the severity of symptoms. Many women choose not to have any medical treatment and simply make lifestyle changes such as decreasing caffeine consumption, quitting smoking, increasing exercise, and eating a balanced diet, in order to stay healthy.

**Hormone therapy**

has been the subject of much controversy, and many of the recent therapies have been taken off the market due to suspected side effects. If you are currently taking hormone treatment, consult with your doctor.

**Alternative medical therapies**

are becoming increasingly popular. Herbal preparations such as black cohosh, kava, soy products, phytoestrogens, and others have been shown in some studies to reduce the symptoms of menopause. However, before taking any herbal treatments, be sure to consult with your doctor.