Perimenopause and Digestion: Understanding Bloating and Bowel Changes

WHAT IS PERIMENOPAUSE?

Perimenopause is the transition leading up to menopause. It often begins 4 to 8 years before the final period, and for some women it lasts 10 years or longer

HOW PERIMENOPAUSE MAY AFFECT DIGESTION

Changes in gut movement

Hormonal fluctuations may cause constipation and/or diarrhea

A more sensitive gut

Lower estrogen may increase sensitivity to gas & bloating

Shifts in gut bacteria

Hormonal changes may affect the gut microbiome

Poor sleep & stress

Sleep disruptions & stress may worsen gut symptoms

Pelvic floor changes

Changes may make bowel movements more difficult

PERIMENOPAUSE BLOATING AND OTHER COMMON DIGESTIVE SYMPTOMS

Symptom	What it may feel like	What may be contributing
Bloating	Flat in the morning, swollen by evening	Slower gut movement, a more sensitive gut
Constipation	Harder, less frequent stools that take more effort	Slower gut movement, pelvic floor changes
Looser stools or urgency	Unpredictable, sometimes alternating with constipation	Swinging hormone levels, stress
New food reactions	Foods you have always eaten now cause discomfort	A more sensitive gut rather than a true intolerance
Reflux or indigestion	Worse in the evening or when lying down	Slower gut movement, changes in eating patterns

WHAT MAY HELP PERIMENOPAUSE BLOATING

Build fibre slowly

Keep meals regular

Protect your sleep

Keep moving

Make time to unwind

Track instead of guessing

Ask about pelvic floor physiotherapy

Review supplements and medications

Why do foods you have always eaten suddenly bother you ?

- Increased gut sensitivity may affect food tolerance.
- Adjusting portion sizes and eating habits may help without eliminating foods.

For the complete article, visit: https://cdhf.ca/en/perimenopause-and-digestion-understanding-bloating-and-bowel-changes/

This resource was made possible due to an unrestricted educational grant from: ORGANON