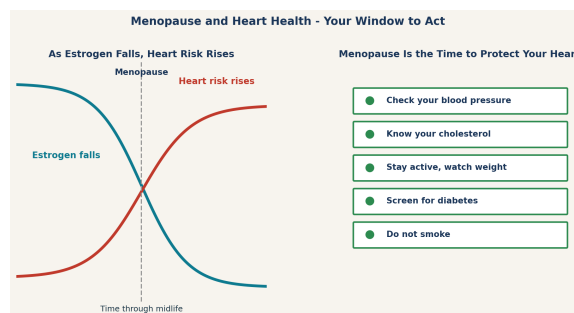


Menopause and Heart Health

How menopause changes your heart risk - and the careful truth about hormone therapy and the heart

As estrogen falls, heart risk rises. The years around menopause are a key window to protect your heart - and a good time to learn the facts about hormone therapy.



Online: <https://go.riasalimd.com/menopause-heart-guide>

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Names & Terms You Will Hear

Term	Meaning
Menopause	The natural end of monthly periods, confirmed after 12 months with no period. The ovaries make much less estrogen.
Perimenopause (the menopause transition)	The years leading up to menopause when hormones swing and symptoms like hot flashes often start. Heart risk factors can begin to shift here.
Estrogen	A hormone that, before menopause, helps keep blood vessels flexible and cholesterol in a healthier pattern. It falls sharply at menopause.
Early or premature menopause	Menopause before about age 45 (early) or 40 (premature), natural or after surgery. It removes estrogen's protection sooner and raises heart risk more.
Surgical menopause	Menopause caused by removing both ovaries. Estrogen drops suddenly rather than gradually.
Hormone therapy (HRT / MHT)	Estrogen, usually with progesterone if you still have a uterus, taken to ease menopause symptoms. Also called menopausal hormone therapy.
Vasomotor symptoms	The medical name for hot flashes and night sweats. Frequent ones may also be a signal of higher heart risk.

This guide is meant to empower, not alarm. Most heart disease is preventable, and menopause is a natural moment to take stock and act. The big idea: as estrogen falls, heart risk rises - so the years around menopause are a key window to protect your heart.



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Menopause and Heart Health?

- Menopause is the natural end of monthly periods. It is confirmed after 12 months with no period, usually in the early 50s. In the years around it (perimenopause), the ovaries make much less estrogen.
- Before menopause, estrogen helps protect the heart. It keeps blood vessels more flexible and helps keep cholesterol in a healthier pattern. As estrogen falls, that early protection fades.
- As estrogen drops, several heart risk factors tend to move the wrong way. LDL ('bad') cholesterol and triglycerides go up. Blood pressure often rises. Weight tends to shift to the middle, and blood sugar can worsen.
- Because of these changes, the years around menopause are a key window to protect your heart. Acting now pays off for decades. The steps that help most are blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, activity, and not smoking.
- Early menopause (before about 45) or surgical menopause raises heart risk more. That is because estrogen's protection is lost sooner and more suddenly.
- Many menopause symptoms can overlap with heart symptoms. These include hot flashes, a racing or skipping heartbeat (palpitations), poor sleep, and anxiety. That overlap can make real heart problems easy to brush off.
- This guide is meant to empower, not alarm. Most heart disease is preventable, and menopause is a natural moment to take stock and act.



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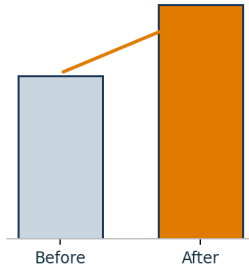
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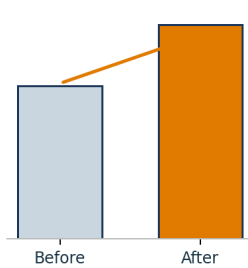
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What Tends to Change as Estrogen Falls at Menopause

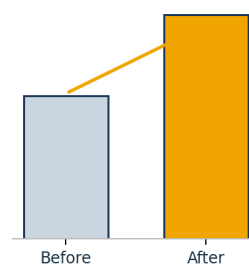
LDL ('bad') cholesterol



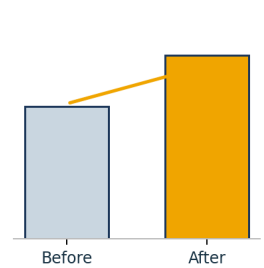
Blood pressure



Weight (around the middle)



Blood sugar



Goes up

Often rises

Shifts to the waist

Can worsen

As estrogen falls at menopause, LDL ('bad') cholesterol and triglycerides tend to go up, blood pressure often rises, weight shifts to the middle, and blood sugar can worsen. This shows the direction of change, not your personal numbers.



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What Changes at Menopause - and What to Do

What changes	Effect on your heart	What to do
LDL ('bad') cholesterol and triglycerides go up	Speeds up buildup in the arteries over the years.	Check your cholesterol; eat heart-healthy; a statin if your risk is high enough.
Blood pressure often rises	A major, usually silent, driver of heart attack, stroke, and heart failure.	Check your blood pressure regularly; treat it with lifestyle and medicine if needed.
Weight shifts to the middle (the waist)	Belly fat is most closely tied to heart and metabolic risk.	Stay active, add some strength training, and eat a heart-friendly pattern.
Blood sugar can worsen	Higher blood sugar and diabetes sharply raise a woman's heart risk.	Get screened for diabetes; treat high blood sugar early.



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Why Heart Risk Rises at Menopause (the Estrogen Shift)

- **Estrogen helps protect the heart before menopause:** it keeps blood vessels more flexible. It also helps hold cholesterol in a healthier pattern. This is part of why women tend to develop heart disease later than men.
- **As estrogen falls, that protection fades:** LDL ('bad') cholesterol and triglycerides tend to rise. Blood pressure often climbs, weight shifts to the waist, and blood sugar can worsen.
- **These add up:** together they speed up artery buildup and raise the risk of heart attack, stroke, and heart failure. See our [cholesterol](#), [triglycerides](#), and [high blood pressure](#) guides.
- **Early or premature menopause matters more:** menopause before about 45, or having both ovaries removed, removes estrogen's protection sooner and is linked to higher heart risk. Tell your doctor your menopause age.
- **The good news:** knowing this lets you act in the window when it helps most. Most of these changes can be measured, watched, and treated.



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Why It Matters

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death in women. Risk climbs after menopause. Women tend to develop heart disease several years later than men, often once estrogen's protection is gone.
- The menopause transition is not just 'getting older.' Studies that followed women through menopause show real changes in cholesterol, body fat, and blood vessels. These changes are tied to the drop in estrogen.
- It helps to catch and treat rising blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar early. Doing this right around menopause prevents far more harm than waiting until a problem appears.
- Hot flashes and night sweats are not only uncomfortable. Frequent ones may also be a signal of higher heart risk. That is one more reason to check your numbers.
- Menopause symptoms can mask heart symptoms. Palpitations, breathlessness, or chest discomfort may be blamed on 'just menopause.' It can be a missed heart problem. Never assume.
- Hormone therapy is one of the most misunderstood topics in women's health. Knowing the modern, careful view helps you and your doctor make a safe choice.
- You have real power here. The same steps that ease this stage of life also protect your heart. These are moving more, eating well, not smoking, and treating blood pressure.



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Symptoms - What's Menopause and What's Your Heart?

- **The overlap is real:** hot flashes, a racing or skipping heartbeat (palpitations), poor sleep, and anxiety are common at menopause - and can look like, or hide, heart symptoms.
- **Hot flashes may be a heart signal too:** frequent hot flashes and night sweats are not only uncomfortable; they may flag a higher cardiovascular risk. One more reason to check your numbers.
- **Do not brush off chest pain or breathlessness:** chest pain, pressure, new or worsening shortness of breath, or a heartbeat that will not settle should be checked - not assumed to be 'just menopause.'
- **Know the broader warning signs in women:** heart-attack signs can include jaw, neck, back, or arm discomfort, nausea, and a cold sweat. See our [heart disease in women guide](#).
- **Speak up:** if you feel dismissed, it is okay to say plainly, "I am worried this is my heart - please check." Trust your body.

Do not dismiss red flags as 'just menopause.' Hot flashes, palpitations, breathlessness, and anxiety are common at menopause and can overlap with heart symptoms. If you have chest pain, new breathlessness, or a heartbeat that will not settle, get it checked. It is always okay to ask, "**Could this be my heart?**"



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Risk Factors

Some patients are more likely to develop this condition. Knowing your risk helps your care team take extra precautions.

Risk Factor	Why It Increases Risk
Falling estrogen at menopause	Estrogen helps keep blood vessels flexible and cholesterol healthier. As it falls, LDL and triglycerides rise and blood vessels stiffen. Heart risk goes up.
Early or premature menopause	Menopause before about 45 (early) or 40 (premature) removes estrogen's protection sooner, and is linked to higher heart-disease risk.
Surgical menopause (both ovaries removed)	Estrogen drops suddenly rather than gradually, which can raise heart risk - especially if it happens at a younger age.
Rising blood pressure	Blood pressure often climbs around and after menopause. High blood pressure is a major, often silent, driver of heart disease and stroke.
Higher LDL cholesterol and triglycerides	Cholesterol numbers commonly worsen after menopause, speeding up artery buildup over the years.
Weight shift to the middle	Body fat tends to move to the waist after menopause. Central (belly) fat is more closely tied to heart and metabolic risk.
Worsening blood sugar / new diabetes	Blood sugar control can slip around menopause, and diabetes raises a woman's heart risk sharply.
Frequent hot flashes and night sweats	Beyond discomfort, frequent vasomotor symptoms may themselves flag a higher cardiovascular risk.
Smoking	Smoking is dangerous for everyone and can also bring on earlier menopause. Quitting is one of the biggest gifts to your heart.



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Treatment Options

- Start with your numbers. Around menopause, have your blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, and weight checked. Ask what yours should be. This is the foundation of protecting your heart.
- Treat high blood pressure. Lifestyle steps help, and many women need medicine. Good control prevents heart attacks, strokes, and heart failure. See our high blood pressure guide.
- Treat high cholesterol. If your risk is high enough, a statin is a proven medicine. It lowers heart-attack and stroke risk. See our cholesterol and triglycerides guides.
- Screen for diabetes. Catching high blood sugar early, and treating it, protects the heart and the rest of the body.
- Hormone therapy is for bothersome menopause SYMPTOMS, not to prevent heart disease. It is not a heart treatment. Used for symptoms in the right woman at the right time, it does not appear to harm the heart.
- Timing matters with hormone therapy. In a healthy woman, started near menopause, it is reasonable for symptoms. Near means under age 60 or within about 10 years. Starting later or older raises clot and stroke risk.
- The form matters too. The patch or gel (transdermal) may carry less clot risk than pills. Your doctor weighs your full history to choose. They also decide if hormone therapy is right for you at all.
- Hormone therapy is generally avoided after a blood clot, stroke, or heart attack. It is also avoided with certain cancers (such as breast cancer) or active liver disease. These choices are always made with your doctor.



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Hormone Therapy and the Heart - Timing Matters

Start near menopause, for bothersome symptoms

In a healthy woman under ~60 or within ~10 years of menopause, hormone therapy is reasonable for symptoms and does not appear to harm the heart.

Start later / older

Starting hormone therapy later raises the risk of blood clots and stroke.

Around menopause

Under age 60 /
within ~10 years

Older / more than
10 years later

Hormone therapy is for menopause SYMPTOMS - not to prevent heart disease.

The patch or gel (transdermal) form may carry less clot risk than pills. Your doctor individualizes the choice.

Hormone therapy is for menopause symptoms, not to prevent heart disease. Started near menopause in a healthy woman it does not appear to harm the heart; started later or older it raises clot and stroke risk. The patch or gel form may carry less clot risk than pills.



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Hormone Therapy and the Heart - Key Points at a Glance

Question	The careful, modern answer
Is hormone therapy a heart treatment?	No. It is for bothersome menopause symptoms (hot flashes, night sweats). It is NOT used to prevent heart disease.
When is it reasonable for the heart?	In a healthy woman started near menopause - generally under age 60 or within about 10 years - it is reasonable for symptoms and does not appear to harm the heart.
What raises the risk?	Starting hormone therapy later or at an older age raises the risk of blood clots and stroke.
Does the form matter?	Yes. The patch or gel (transdermal) form may carry less blood-clot risk than pills.
When is it generally avoided?	After a blood clot, stroke, or heart attack, with certain cancers (such as breast cancer), or with active liver disease. Always individualized with your doctor.



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Hormone Therapy and the Heart - The Timing Hypothesis

- **For symptoms, not prevention:** hormone therapy treats bothersome menopause symptoms like hot flashes and night sweats. It is not used to prevent heart disease, and should never be started just for the heart.
- **Timing is the key idea:** in a healthy woman, hormone therapy started near menopause is reasonable for symptoms. Near means under age 60 or within about 10 years of her last period. Started this way, it does not appear to harm the heart.
- **Starting late is different:** beginning hormone therapy years later, or at an older age, raises the risk of blood clots and stroke. The 'window' matters.
- **The form matters:** the patch or gel (transdermal) form may carry less blood-clot risk than pills. Your doctor weighs your history to choose.
- **When it is generally avoided:** after a blood clot, stroke, or heart attack, with certain cancers (such as breast cancer), or with active liver disease. This is always an individual decision with your doctor.



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Acting on Prevention Now

- **Blood pressure:** have it checked regularly and treat it - lifestyle first, medicine when needed. See our [high blood pressure guide](#).
- **Cholesterol:** know your numbers; a statin is a proven medicine if your risk is high enough. See our [cholesterol](#) and [triglycerides](#) guides.
- **Weight and activity:** stay active most days and add some strength training to fight the menopause weight shift to the middle.
- **Do not smoke:** quitting is one of the biggest gifts to your heart - and it may ease menopause too.
- **Screen for diabetes:** blood sugar can slip around menopause. Catching and treating it early protects the heart.
- **Share your history:** tell your doctor your menopause age and your pregnancy history - both shape your heart plan. See our [pregnancy and heart guide](#).

The hormone-therapy headline: hormone therapy is for menopause SYMPTOMS, not to prevent heart disease. Never start it just for your heart. Started near menopause in a healthy woman it is reasonable for symptoms; started later or older it raises clot and stroke risk. The patch or gel form may carry less clot risk than pills.



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Comfort Measures at Home (No Medication Needed)

These simple steps support healing and ease symptoms. Use them alongside any medication your doctor prescribes.

- Move most days. Aim for regular brisk walking or activity you enjoy. It helps blood pressure, weight, mood, sleep, and even hot flashes.
- Eat a heart-friendly pattern: more vegetables, fruit, whole grains, beans, fish, nuts, and olive oil; less salt, sugar, and processed meat. This helps cholesterol, blood pressure, and weight.
- Watch the waist. A little strength training plus activity helps fight the menopause weight shift to the middle, which matters most for the heart.
- Do not smoke, and avoid secondhand smoke. If you smoke, ask for help quitting - it protects your heart and may ease menopause too.
- Protect your sleep and manage stress. Poor sleep and high stress are common at menopause and are linked to higher heart risk. Cooling the bedroom can ease night sweats.
- Limit alcohol. It can worsen hot flashes, sleep, blood pressure, and weight. Less is better for your heart.
- Bring your questions to appointments. If hot flashes, mood, or sleep are hard, ask about all your options - including whether hormone therapy is right for you.



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Risks, Benefits, and Alternatives

Every choice has trade-offs. Use this table to start the shared decision conversation.

Option	Risks	Benefits	Alternatives
Checking and treating heart numbers at menopause	Tests, time, cost, and sometimes daily medicine started before you feel sick.	Catches rising blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar in the key window, preventing heart attack, stroke, and heart failure.	Waiting until a problem appears (misses the best window to prevent).
Hormone therapy for bothersome symptoms (started near menopause)	Small added risks; not for everyone. Starting later or older raises clot and stroke risk.	Eases hot flashes, night sweats, and related symptoms; in a healthy woman started near menopause it does not appear to harm the heart.	Non-hormone treatments for symptoms; lifestyle steps; or no treatment if symptoms are mild.
Transdermal (patch/gel) instead of pills, when hormone therapy is used	Needs a prescription and a plan; not always preferred for every woman.	May carry less blood-clot risk than the pill form, which can matter for some women.	Oral (pill) hormone therapy, or non-hormone options - decided with your doctor.
Statin therapy when your heart risk is high enough	A daily medicine; some women worry about side effects, most of which are manageable.	Strongly lowers the risk of heart attack and stroke; one of the best-studied heart medicines.	Lifestyle changes alone if risk is low. See our cholesterol guide .
Treating early or surgical menopause closely	Means earlier and closer heart monitoring, and facing risks sooner than expected.	Turns earlier loss of estrogen into an early-warning plan you can act on for decades.	Ignoring the earlier risk. Discuss whether hormone therapy is right for you.



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Common Misconceptions

Myth	Reality
Heart disease is mainly a man's problem.	Heart disease is the leading cause of death in women. Risk rises after menopause, when estrogen's early protection fades. It is just as much a woman's problem.
Hormone therapy is a way to protect my heart.	No. Hormone therapy is for bothersome menopause symptoms, not to prevent heart disease. Used correctly for symptoms, it does not appear to harm a healthy woman's heart. But it should never be started just for the heart.
Hormone therapy is dangerous for every woman.	Not quite. The risk depends on your age, your timing, your health history, and the form used. For many healthy women under 60 or within 10 years of menopause, the benefits for symptoms can outweigh the risks. It is a personal choice.
My palpitations and breathlessness are just menopause.	Maybe - but maybe not. Hot flashes, a racing heart, and breathlessness can overlap with real heart symptoms. Never assume. Get chest pain or breathlessness checked.
If I feel fine, my numbers must be fine.	High blood pressure, high cholesterol, and high blood sugar are usually silent. The only way to know is to check - and menopause is the time to do it.
Early menopause does not change anything for my heart.	It does. Menopause before about 45, or having both ovaries removed, removes estrogen's protection sooner and raises heart risk. Tell your doctor so prevention can start early.
There is nothing I can do about menopause heart risk.	Most heart disease is preventable. Treating blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar, staying active, keeping a healthy weight, and not smoking lower risk a lot - especially started early.



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Possible Complications

Knowing what can go wrong helps you spot problems early. Most complications are uncommon, especially with treatment.

Where / What	What Can Happen
Heart attack and coronary artery disease	As estrogen falls and cholesterol and blood pressure rise, artery buildup can speed up. Risk of heart attack climbs in the years after menopause.
High blood pressure (hypertension)	Blood pressure commonly rises around menopause. Left untreated it quietly damages the heart, brain, kidneys, and arteries over time.
Heart failure (often the stiff-heart type, HFpEF)	Long-standing high blood pressure and aging can leave the heart stiff. This stiff-heart failure is more common in women, especially after menopause.
Stroke	The same rising blood pressure and artery disease that harm the heart also raise stroke risk. Some forms of hormone therapy, especially started late, can add to this.
Blood clots (with some hormone therapy)	Pill-form hormone therapy can raise the risk of clots in the legs or lungs, more so when started at an older age. The patch or gel form may carry less risk.
Worsening metabolic health	Weight gain around the middle, higher triglycerides, and rising blood sugar often cluster after menopause and together raise heart and diabetes risk.



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Points to Know

If you remember nothing else, remember these key points.

- As estrogen falls at menopause, heart risk rises. The years around menopause are a key window to protect your heart.
- What tends to change: LDL ('bad') cholesterol and triglycerides go up, blood pressure often rises, weight shifts to the middle, and blood sugar can worsen.
- Early menopause (before about 45) or surgical menopause raises heart risk more, because estrogen's protection is lost sooner.
- Hormone therapy is for bothersome menopause SYMPTOMS, not to prevent heart disease. Never start it just for your heart.
- Timing matters: started near menopause (under 60 or within about 10 years) in a healthy woman, hormone therapy is reasonable for symptoms and does not appear to harm the heart. Starting later raises clot and stroke risk.
- The patch or gel (transdermal) form may carry less clot risk than pills. Hormone therapy is generally avoided after a clot, stroke, heart attack, certain cancers, or active liver disease.
- Do not dismiss chest pain, breathlessness, or new palpitations as 'just menopause.' Get them checked.
- Act now: check blood pressure and cholesterol (statin if needed), keep a healthy weight, stay active, do not smoke, and screen for diabetes.



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When to Call Us - and When to Call 911

If you are not sure, call. We would rather hear from you twice than miss a real problem.

- Chest pain, pressure, tightness, or squeezing that lasts more than a few minutes or comes and goes - call 911.
- Sudden shortness of breath, with or without chest discomfort - call 911.
- Pain or discomfort in the jaw, neck, back, or one or both arms, especially with sweating or nausea - call 911.
- Fainting, or a racing or pounding heartbeat that will not settle - call 911. Do not assume it is 'just menopause.'
- Sudden weakness, numbness, trouble speaking, or face drooping - this can be a stroke. Call 911.
- Pain, swelling, redness, or warmth in one leg, or sudden shortness of breath, especially on hormone therapy - this can be a blood clot. Get care now.
- New or worsening shortness of breath, swelling in the legs, or trouble breathing while lying flat - call your team today.
- If something feels wrong, call. It is always okay to ask, 'Could this be my heart?' We would rather hear from you twice than miss a real problem.

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Trusted Resources

The links below are the trusted resources Dr. Ali used to write this guide and that he recommends you visit for more information. Each is a clickable link in the digital version and a Short.io tracked URL on the printed version.

- [American Heart Association - Go Red for Women](#) - The AHA's hub on heart disease in women: risk, warning signs, and prevention.
- [Cleveland Clinic - Menopause and Heart Disease](#) - Plain-language guide to why heart risk rises after menopause and how to protect your heart.
- [Mayo Clinic - Menopause Hormone Therapy: Is It Right for You?](#) - Who is and is not a candidate for hormone therapy, the timing window, and the patch versus pill.
- [The Menopause Society - For Women](#) - Patient education from the leading menopause professional society, including hormone-therapy facts.
- [NHLBI - The Heart Truth](#) - The national campaign reminding women that heart disease is their leading health threat.
- [AHA Hands-Only CPR](#) - How to do Hands-Only CPR if someone collapses - push hard and fast in the center of the chest.



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Sources Used to Build This Guide

Every recommendation in this guide is grounded in one or more of the studies, guidelines, or trusted resources below. Short links are tracked so Dr. Ali can see which references patients are reading; nothing personally identifying is captured.

- [AHA Scientific Statement — Menopause Transition and Cardiovascular Disease Risk \(Circulation 2020\)](#) [Scientific Statement]
Landmark AHA statement on how the menopause transition accelerates cardiovascular risk — adverse changes in lipids (LDL, triglycerides), central body fat, blood pressure, and vascular health — and names midlife as a critical window for early prevention.
- [ACC — Cardiovascular Disease and the Menopause Transition \(Expert Analysis\)](#) [Review]
ACC review of menopausal cardiovascular risk, the hormone-therapy timing hypothesis, and midlife prevention strategies.
- [The Menopause Society \(NAMS\) — 2022 Hormone Therapy Position Statement](#) [Guideline]
Authoritative basis for the timing hypothesis: hormone therapy benefits outweigh risks for most healthy symptomatic women under age 60 or within 10 years of menopause; HT is not used for cardiovascular disease prevention; transdermal and lower-dose routes may lower clot and stroke risk.
- [Cardiovascular Risk/Benefit Profile of Menopausal Hormone Therapy — Timing Hypothesis Review](#) [Review]
Synthesizes the Women's Health Initiative re-analyses and the timing hypothesis: starting hormone therapy under age 60 or within 10 years of menopause was associated with reduced coronary heart disease and mortality, and transdermal estrogen carried less venous-thromboembolism risk than oral.
- [ACC/AHA — 2019 Guideline on the Primary Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease \(sex-specific risk enhancers\)](#) [Guideline]
Authoritative basis for early/premature menopause as a sex-specific risk enhancer and for midlife risk-factor control — blood pressure, cholesterol and statins when indicated, and diabetes screening.
- [American Heart Association — Menopause and Heart Disease](#) [Patient Education]
AHA patient-facing material on how falling estrogen at menopause changes heart risk and what women can do to protect the heart.
- [AHA News — Frequent Hot Flashes and Night Sweats May Be Linked to Higher Heart Risk](#) [Patient Education]
Basis for the point that frequent hot flashes and night sweats may themselves flag higher cardiovascular risk, supporting the symptom-overlap section.
- [Cleveland Clinic — Menopause and Heart Disease](#) [Patient Education]
Plain-language overview of why heart risk rises after menopause, symptom overlap (palpitations, sleep, anxiety), and protective steps.
- [Mayo Clinic — Menopause Hormone Therapy: Is It Right for You?](#) [Patient Education]
Plain-language framing of who is and is not a candidate for hormone therapy, the timing window, transdermal versus oral routes, and the conditions where HT is avoided.
- [Mayo Clinic — Heart Disease in Women: Menopause and Estrogen](#) [Patient Education]
Patient-facing explanation of estrogen's role, menopausal risk changes, and prevention for women.
- [NHLBI — The Heart Truth: Heart Disease and Women](#) [Patient Education]
NIH/NHLBI campaign emphasizing that heart disease is the leading cause of death in women and that midlife is the time to act on prevention.



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- [AHA Hands-Only CPR](#) [Patient Education]
How to do Hands-Only CPR if someone collapses — push hard and fast in the center of the chest.



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About This Guide

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Reviewer note: Reviewed: AHA Go Red for Women / Menopause and Heart Disease, Cleveland Clinic, and Mayo Clinic patient pages, plus the AHA 2020 scientific statement on the menopause transition and cardiovascular risk and The Menopause Society (NAMS) 2022 hormone-therapy position statement. This guide adds a plain-words 'what changes at menopause' risk-shift panel, a timing-hypothesis graphic for hormone therapy and the heart, a tinted change-effect-action table, and a clear 'do not dismiss red flags' message - while staying empowering, not alarming.

Disclaimer

This guide is for educational purposes only and does not replace medical advice from your physician. Recommendations may not apply to every patient. Always follow the specific instructions of Dr. Ali and your care team. In an emergency call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.



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