

understanding menopause

Your body goes through gradual transitions during menopause—perimenopause, menopause, and postmenopause.

PERIMENOPAUSE

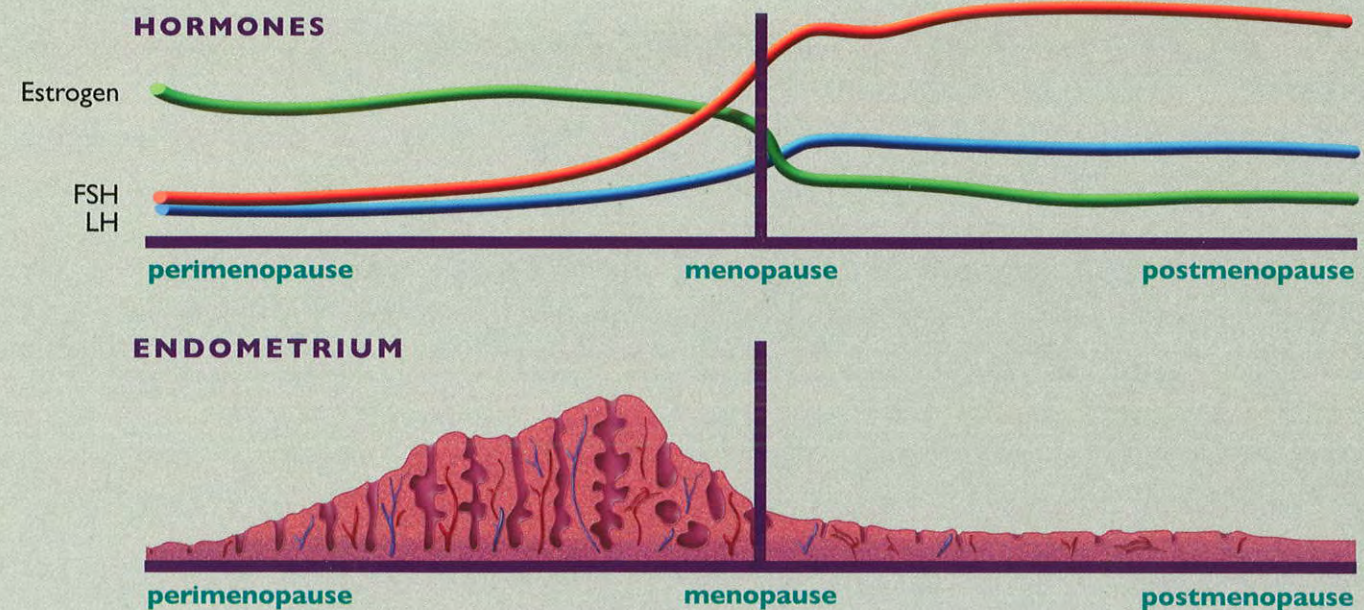
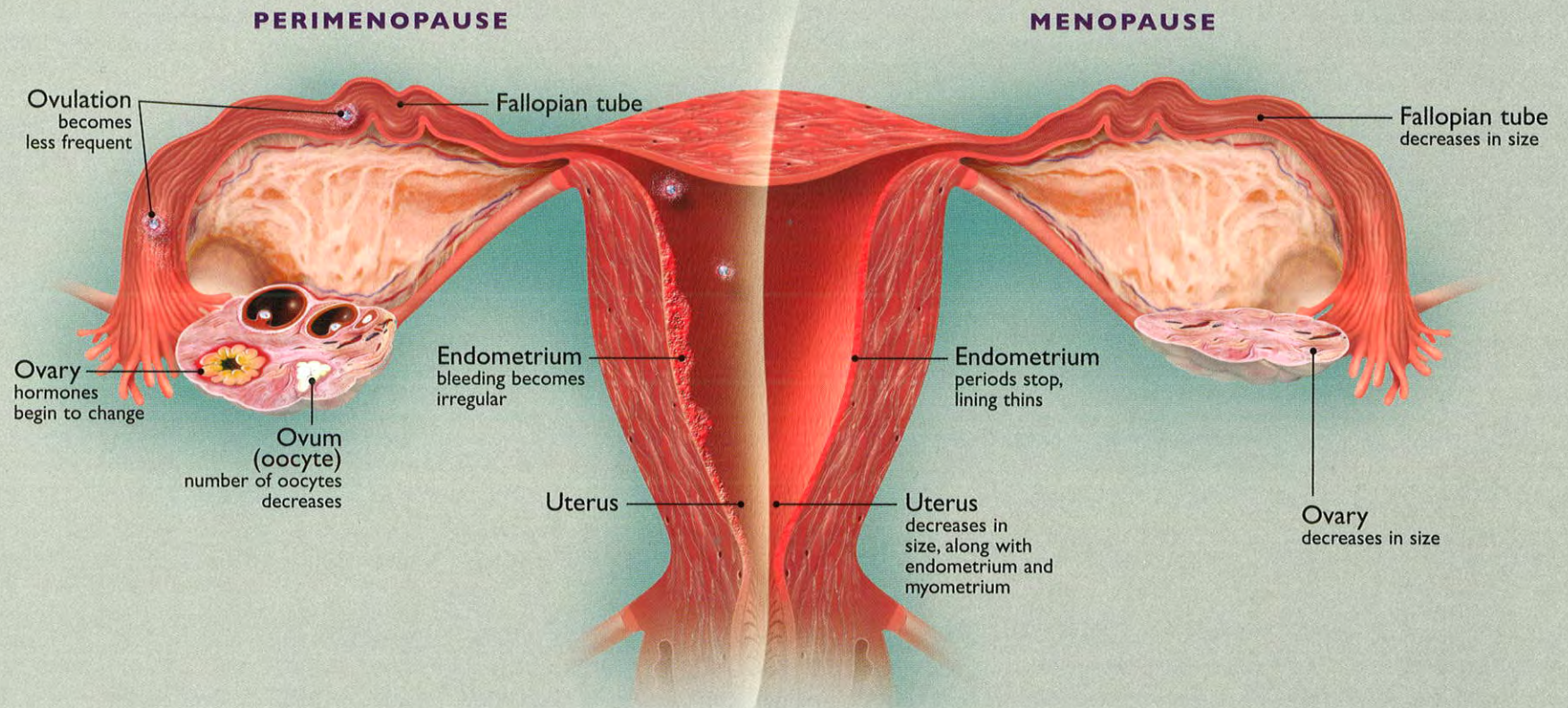
- Your ovaries begin to produce less of the hormone estrogen
- Symptoms occur, such as hot flashes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, and mood swings
- Menstrual cycle may start to become irregular. Flow may increase or decrease

MENOPAUSE

- Usually occurs between the ages of 50 and 55
- It is the point in time when your period finally stops
- Pregnancy may still be possible until 1 year has passed without any menstrual periods

POSTMENOPAUSE

- Conception is no longer possible
- Changes associated with estrogen loss affect bone mass (osteoporosis) and cholesterol levels
- Your healthcare professional may recommend diet modification, exercise, and certain medications to help you protect yourself against thinning bones and rising cholesterol levels



WHAT ABOUT HORMONE THERAPY (HT)?

Many of the symptoms and body changes that occur with menopause can be relieved with hormone therapy. Your healthcare professional can help you decide if hormone therapy is right for you.

For more information, visit www.menopause.org