

## Mayo Clinic Minute: Perimenopause and menopause

Menopause marks a significant transition for women, yet understanding its precursor, perimenopause, and its symptoms can be complex.

[Dr. Stephanie Faubion](#), director of Mayo Clinic's Center for [Women's Health](#) and medical director of The Menopause Society, says experiencing [perimenopause](#) and [menopause](#) can be confusing for some. She says it is not only patients who may be confused, but medical professionals as well due to lack of training in menopause management.

Video

Audio

	"Menopause is defined by no menstrual cycle for a year."
	Mayo Clinic's Dr. Stephanie Faubion says women won't know they've entered menopause until they've experienced a full year without menstruation.
Stephanie Faubion, M.D. Women's Health Mayo Clinic	"Perimenopause is the time leading up to that, and for many women, it can last a long time — six to 10 years is possible."
	That's when you may experience irregular periods and a host of symptoms, including hot flashes, night sweats, sleep issues and mood changes.
	"Also sexual symptoms, low sexual desire, vaginal dryness, pain with sexual activity."
	She says there's been a lack of education and resources for women regarding menopause. There are some reasons for that.
	"One is that menopause can happen at different ages for women. So anything after age 45 is considered normal for menopause."
	And perimenopause can begin as early as 35.
	"In general, women aren't hearing this from their medical providers, which is problematic because, while some women may have no symptoms going into menopause, many women actually have a laundry list of symptoms, and sometimes they're very confusing to sort out."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm DeeDee Stiepan.