

# PERCEPTION AND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MENOPAUSE AMONG PAKISTANI WOMAN

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To find perception and knowledge about menopause in Pakistani woman. **Patients and Methods:** The survey for was conducted in various location and clinics all over Pakistan. 1200 numbers of questionnaires were distributed of which 910 numbers responded from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018. Those who agreed to be part of study where ask a self-structured questionnaire related to awareness and symptoms of menopause. Data was analyzed using SPSS Version 23.0. Frequencies were calculated for categorical data. **Results:** Out of 910 woman, 53.2% (n=484) achieved their menopause in between 46 to 50 years. 48.8% (n=444) said they have some awareness regarding menopause. Only 17% of woman who had symptoms of went to doctor to seek professional help. **Conclusion:** Like other developing countries awareness about menopause in Pakistan is less and work need to be done to educate mass population regarding menopause.

**Key words:** Menopause, knowledge, woman health, menstrual cycle, Pakistan awareness

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## INTRODUCTION

The menopause transition is experienced by 1.5 million women each year and often involves troublesome symptoms, including vasomotor symptoms, vaginal dryness, decreased libido, insomnia, fatigue, and joint pain.<sup>1-3</sup> It is clear that there are many other symptoms that are reported by menopausal women. These include joint and muscle aches, changes in body contour, and increased skin wrinkling.<sup>1</sup>

Vasomotor symptoms represent the most bothersome symptoms of menopause and the most common reason women seek medical care at the time of the menopausal transition<sup>4</sup>. Often described by women as hot flushes or night sweats, vasomotor symptoms are associated with a sudden sensation of heat in the face, neck, and chest and persist for several minutes or less. Vasomotor symptoms may include flushing, chills, anxiety, sleep disruption, and palpitations. During a hot flush, skin temperature rises due to peripheral vasodilation, particularly in the fingers

and toes. Along with peripheral vasodilation and sweating, heart rate increases of 7–15 beats per minute occur. It may take 30 minutes or longer for the skin temperature to return to baseline.<sup>5</sup>

Women during the menopause period experience certain physical and psychological changes and face various problems such as Urogenital, psychological–social, cardiovascular and neurological problems, etc.<sup>6-7</sup>

These problems not only cause great distress and disability for the person but also impose a lot of pressure on the limited resources of the countries' health care system.<sup>8</sup> Familiarity with these changes and understanding their reasons are essential in the life of all women, and helps them enter this stage of their life with adequate knowledge and a positive attitude.<sup>6</sup> Studies performed in Iran in the field of investigating the level of women's knowledge and attitude toward menopause indicate inadequate knowledge and negative attitude toward this phenomenon

among Iranian women.<sup>9</sup>

There is severe paucity of data related to awareness and knowledge about menopause in Pakistan. Therefore, this study aimed at investigating the knowledge and attitude of women in Pakistan about menopause phenomenon and based on its results we will be able to design suitable training programs for improving life quality and promoting women's health during menopause.

### PATIENTS AND METHODS

The survey was conducted in various locations and clinics all over Pakistan. 1200 numbers of questionnaires were distributed of which 910 numbers responded from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018. Those who agreed to be part of study where ask a self-structured questionnaire related to awareness and symptoms of menopause. Data was analyzed using SPSS Version 23.0. Frequencies were calculated for categorical data.

### RESULTS

From January 1 2018 to February 28, 2018, total of 910 women that fulfilled the inclusion criteria were included in the study after taking informed consent.

Out of 910 woman, 53.2% (n=484) achieved their menopause in between 46 to 50 years (*table 1*). 48.8% (n=444) said they have some awareness regarding menopause (*table 2*). Only 17% of woman who had symptoms went to doctor to seek professional help (*table 3*).

67.47% (n=614) patient complaint that their quality of life was affected during the first year of menopause (*table 4*). 78% (n=710) patient knew that hot flushes is one of them symptom of menopause (*table 5*). 77.4% woman had hot flushes as their symptom, while 23.7% woman experienced loss of libidio and 45.1% said they were depressed during their first year of menopause (*Table 6-8*).

**Table 1: Age of Menopause**

Age	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
35 to 40 years	100	11
41 to 45 years	154	17.1
46 to 50 years	484	53.2
51 to 55 years	178	18.7

**Table 2: Awareness for menopause**

Awareness	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	286	11.1
Some	180	19.9
No	444	49

**Table 3: Visited Doctor for menopause symptoms**

Awareness	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	154	17
No	756	83

**Table 4: Quality of Life Menopause**

Quality of Life Affected	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	614	67.47%
No	296	62.53%

**Table 5: Knowledge about hot flush**

Knowledge about hot flush	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	710	78%
No	200	22%

**Table 6: Experienced Hot Flushes**

Hot Flushes	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	704	77.4%
No	206	22.6%

**Table 7: Experienced Loss of Libido**

Loss Libido	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	222	22.6%
No	688	76.1%

**Table 8: Experienced Depression**

Depression	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	410	45.1%
No	500	54.9%

### DISCUSSION

In this national survey of attitude and knowledge, we observed that most women achieved their menopause in between 46 to 50 years. This correlates with regional data. In India the mean menopausal age is 46.2 ± 4.9 years.<sup>10</sup> However compared to western countries, woman in Pakistan were achieving their menopause earlier. The age at natural menopause occurred at 51.3

years in USA.<sup>11</sup>

48.8% (n=444) of women said they have some awareness regarding menopause. This was the same case with other developing countries.<sup>12</sup> On the other hand, the results of studies are different in developed countries. In Sharp's study in America (2003), the knowledge level of most of the people (80%) about menopause was reported as good. In Coaster's research in Denmark (1991), the knowledge of half of the subjects about menopause was good. Of course, Donati showed in a study in Italy (2009) that more than half of the samples had no information about menopause.<sup>13-15</sup>

With increasing the proportion of elderly population in worldwide, the number of women who live one-third of their life in a hypo estrogenic status will be increased. Therefore improvement of quality of life in menopause is an important issue. Evidence shows that the quality of life decreases during menopause.<sup>16</sup> In our study 67.47% patient said their quality of life was affected in comparison to before menopause.

In our study 77.4% woman had hot flushes as symptom of menopause. According to Pachman more than 75% of woman suffers from hot flushes.<sup>17</sup> Hot flushes are often described as episodic sensations of heat, intense sweating, and flushing affecting the face and chest, which are often accompanied by palpitations and anxiety. Each particular episode lasts 3–10 minutes and episodes can recur with varying frequency.<sup>18</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In our country there is paucity of data regarding menopause. Providing knowledge will help Pakistani woman to better understand menopause and the phenomena behind it. One of the most effective ways to achieve this is through health education. By training and providing them necessary knowledge about menopause, we will be able to make woman custodians of their health and empowered them over disease. Unfortunately,

so far in our country, policies and programs of women's health promotion are specifically limited to specific issues such as pregnancy and family planning, and enough attention is not paid to other women's health needs, including the problems of menopausal transition period and more attention should be paid towards it.

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**AUTHORSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION DECLARATION**

Sr. #	Author-s Full Name	Contribution to the paper	Author=s Signature
1	Faizan Shaukat	Conception, Data collection and analysis, manuscript writing.	