

## Knowledge on menopause and it's corelates among middle age women in India: A narrative review.

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### **Abstract:**

*This article is part of a wider study of the knowledge on menopause and it's corelates among middle aged women and contains the literature search from electronic databases. Key words for the search included 'menopause', 'knowledge on menopause', 'middle aged women's crisis, climacteric and 'menopausal symptoms. The review aims to analysis the existing literature on knowledge regarding perimenopausal symptoms, and related interventions among middle aged women (40-55 yrs) in India. This review also tries to identify the gaps of current knowledge and acknowledges for evidence-based practices.*

*18 primary reports written in English between 2010 and 2025 were identified. The findings highlight the knowledge regarding menopause and its related factors among middle aged women in India.*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Menopause is an unspoken, unattended, reality of life which is faced by every woman during their midlife. It is such a middle age crisis which might be overcome easily or make a lady miserable depending upon her luck. According to WHO, post-menopausal women are those women who have stopped menstrual bleeding, one year ago or more. The prevalence of menopausal symptom varies in geographical region and ethnicity of the population. Only limited studies are conducted among Asian women to analyze the severity of menopausal symptoms. According to The Study of women's health Across Nation (SWAN), studies report shows that Japanese and Chinese women manifested less symptoms than Caucasian women.

According to the reports provided by Pan Asian Menopause society (PAM) study, the menopausal symptoms prevalence varies with ethnicity of population. According to PAM, the Asian women were more likely to get menopause related body aches and is about (76-93%) and the western women are more prone to get vasomotor symptoms.

According to Stacy B German in the United States about 1.3 million women attain menopause per year. Majority of the women in the menopausal transition experience some psychological disturbances. The 20% of the women passing through this phase diagnosed with depression. According to the report of the investigators of Harvard Study the onset of depression is seen at the beginning of menopause among women aged between 36-44 years of age. With the advancement in modern medicine, life expectancy also increased. So, the population of women in the perimenopausal phase is increases year by year. The women population increasing among aged over 60 years may increase by 4.7 million per year.

### **AIMS**

1. To conduct a narrative review analysis of existing literature on the knowledge, perimenopausal symptoms, and related interventions among middle aged (40-55 yrs) in India.
2. To identify gaps in current knowledge and informing evidence-based interventions.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To assess the knowledge on menopause among middle aged (40-55 yrs) in India, including variations by age and geographic region.
2. To identify the pre disposing factors affecting middle aged women's life during perimenopausal duration.
3. To explore the practices or interventions adopted during menopausal symptoms.
4. To identify gaps in current knowledge and practice and propose recommendations for future research, policy, and programmatic initiatives aimed to increase awareness regarding perimenopausal symptoms.

**Inclusion criteria:**

- Studies published from 2014-2025
- Studies that are published in English only.
- Descriptive studies
- Randomized control trials.
- Cross-sectional studies.
- Quasi experimental research studies.
- Qualitative research studies.

**Exclusion criteria:**

- Studies conducted outside India.
- Menopausal studies having population other than middle aged women.

## **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Samreen Khan, Mahesh K Shukla et al. (2016) conducted a cross-sectional study on health seeking behavior among post-menopausal women: a knowledge, attitude and practices study at Jawahar Lal Nehru Medical College and Hospital, Aligarh using pre-tested and semi-structured proforma and standard Menopausal Rating scale (MRS) questionnaire. The study revealed that psychological symptoms were reported by 34.3%, somatological symptoms by 60.1% and urogenital symptoms by 59.6% of the study population. To deal with these problems, majority in urban areas said that a doctor should be consulted whereas majority in rural areas either said that they did not know what could be done or traditional or home-based measures should be resorted to. A large majority suffered from ill-health. Most rural women had no access to health services. Lack of knowledge and traditional practices were barriers to utilization of services.<sup>1</sup>

**Varuna Pathak et al** (2017) conducted an analytical study on knowledge, attitude and practice regarding menopause in postmenopausal women attending outdoor in department of Gandhi Medical College, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India. The instrument used in this study was structured questionnaire. The study revealed that, 32.72% of menopausal women had knowledge of menopausal symptoms. 39.09%, 52.72% and 22.72% knew that menopause increases risk of cardiovascular, osteoporosis and breast cancer respectively. 28.18% think menopausal women should consult a physician, only 4.54% of menopausal women are aware of HT. 64.55% of menopausal women perceive menopause as loss of youth. 67.28% think menopausal psychological symptoms affect quality of life. 57.28% think that menopause means end of sexual life. Study concluded that majority of women have a negative outlook towards menopause considering as a loss of youth and higher susceptibility towards health problems. This shows that the awareness towards menopause should be increased by IEC (information, education, and counseling), so as to help these women to live their postmenopausal years healthier and more active.<sup>2</sup>

Akoijam Mamata Devi et al (2021) conducted a descriptive study to assess the level of knowledge and attitude regarding menopause among menopausal Women in Selected Rural Areas in Faridabad. The finding reveals that 5% of the total subjects had good knowledge, 94% had average knowledge, 1% had poor knowledge. 98% of the total subjects had positive attitude, 2% had neutral attitude, 0% had negative attitude. There were found association significant between Attitude and occupation.<sup>3</sup>

Marie E Pinto (2010) conducted a Study on knowledge and attitude regarding menopause among 100 rural and urban married women in Mangalore. The sampling technique used for the study was purposive. Most of the women in rural area (78%) had average knowledge and a majority of women in urban area (62%) had satisfactory knowledge regarding menopause. Most of the women in rural area (84%) and urban area (98%) had favorable attitude towards menopause. There was significant difference between knowledge scores ( $t_{100} = 5.77$ ,  $p < 0.05$  tabled value 1.98) and attitude scores ( $t_{100} = 8$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , tabled value 1.98) of rural and urban married women regarding menopause. Menopausal health is important since this stage of life is not to be avoided. Nurses as health personnel can assess knowledge and identify attitudes towards menopause and help them to select coping strategies to overcome the menopausal problems.<sup>4</sup>

Shabana Sultan et al (2017) conducted a study on knowledge, attitude and practices about menopause and menopausal symptoms among midlife school teachers in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. The population of interest consisted of 150 qualified teachers of age group 40 to 60 years and above from different colleges and schools of Bhopal city. The study revealed that, mean age of menopause is 48.4 years and 92% of women had knowledge about menopause out of them 84% of women consider it to be a natural process. Working capacity of 66% of the women was affected while sexual life is affected in 56% of the women. 88% of the women were aware of hormonal replacement therapy but only 4.6% of women were taking HRT due to concerns regarding side effects. Most of the women in this study were aware of menopause and its symptoms but they are not following healthy life style modifications. Increased awareness is required to prepare women for menopause.<sup>5</sup>

Nimmy N. John et al (2020) conducted an epidemiological study on knowledge, attitude and practice of married women about menopause and hormone replacement therapy. This cross-sectional study was carried out in May 2020 to July 2020 in a rural area of Ernakulam district of Kerala, India, among 150 women using a predesigned, pretested questionnaire. The study revealed that, 42.6% of menopausal women had knowledge of menopausal symptoms. 31.3% of women knew about osteoporosis and breast cancer respectively during this phase. 16.6% think menopausal women should consult a physician, only 42% of menopausal women are aware of HRT. 60.6% think menopausal symptoms affect quality of life. 50.6% think that menopause means end of sexual life. 42.6% think that absence of menstruation is a relief. 48.6% think physical changes of menopause are inevitable, hence acceptable. 76% and 86% think that HRT has many complications and side effects hence should be avoided respectively. The study concluded that the knowledge and attitude of the participants towards menopause and HRT was poor in the study population.<sup>6</sup>

Priyal Gada et al (2023) conducted a qualitative study aimed to explore the knowledge and attitude toward menopause among women. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 20 women aged 40-60 years who were experiencing or had experienced menopause. Thematic analysis was used to identify key themes and patterns in the data. The results revealed that women had limited knowledge about menopause and most of their knowledge came from their own experiences or the experiences of family members and friends. Women also reported negative attitudes towards menopause, viewing it as a time of loss and decline. However, some women also reported positive attitudes towards menopause, viewing it as a natural transition and an opportunity for personal growth. The findings of this study highlight the need for education and support to improve women's knowledge and attitudes toward menopause and suggest the need for continued research to better understand the experiences of women during this transition.<sup>7</sup>

Vijaya S Dandannavar et al (2020) conducted a cross-sectional study on knowledge, attitude, symptoms, and management practices among middle-aged menopausal women. 196 naturally menopausal women aged between 40 and 55 years residing of Ashok Nagar, Belagavi, Karnataka, were collected data using a pretested questionnaire that included information on socio-demographic profiles, Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) towards menopause. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0. Of the study participants, 109 (55.6%) were found to have average knowledge regarding menopause, 176 (89.8%) had a neutral attitude towards menopause, and approximately 173 (88.3%) had average practices towards managing menopausal symptoms. The study participants exhibited average knowledge and neutral attitudes towards menopause. Their management practices for menopausal symptoms were also found to be average. There is an urgent need to raise awareness among women regarding knowledge about menopause.<sup>8</sup>

Bisma Tariq et al (2023) conducted an online survey on women's knowledge and attitudes to the menopause. 35 questions online survey was advertised on social media to evaluate women's attitudes and knowledge of the menopause. Three groups of women were compared: perimenopause, post menopause and those women not in either the peri or post menopause (other). The result revealed that most women were completely uninformed or only had some knowledge of the menopause before the age of 40. Most women thought that the menopause should be taught at school, but over 80% had received no menopause education at school themselves and received information by their family or friends. Perimenopausal women were significantly more likely than postmenopausal women to use online resources for menopause information. 57.5% of postmenopausal women found the menopause difficult or very difficult. Therefore, the investigator suggested that improved menopause education is required to improve quality of life during the menopausal transition and a most positive narrative of life post-menopause.<sup>9</sup>

M. Deepan Babu et al (2019) conducted a descriptive study to assess the knowledge on pre-menopausal symptoms among middle aged women in a selected village at Kanchipuram district, Tamilnadu, India. The convenience sampling technique was used to select 109 samples. The data were collected by self-administered questionnaires. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used. The study shows that 0% of the women had adequate knowledge, 15% of the women had moderate knowledge, and 94% of the women had inadequate knowledge regarding pre-menopausal symptoms.<sup>10</sup>

Sajitha.S et al (2017) conducted a community based cross sectional study on menopause related symptoms and their correlates in Kollam district of Kerala. This study aims to describe the magnitude of menopause related symptoms, pattern of health care seeking and associated factors. Structured interview schedule with Green Climacteric scale was used for data collection and analysis was done using IBM SPSS version.21. A total of 420 participants were included in the study. The study revealed that a high proportion of women are affected by menopause related symptoms. Care seeking for all symptoms is not uniform, indicative of a lack of knowledge about the treatable nature of many of these symptoms. Sensitization of both women and the health care system may serve to address this issue of menopause related symptoms and the possibility of treatment for these.<sup>11</sup>

Sajeera.s, et al (2012) conducted a comparative study to assess the knowledge regarding premenopausal symptoms and its management among women aged between 40-50 years in selected urban and rural areas of namakkal district", the study revealed that 83.33% of the urban women were belongs to inadequate knowledge level and only 16.67% of the women had moderate knowledge regarding premenopausal symptoms and its management. No one in the area had adequate knowledge. The overall knowledge score of urban women was 40.72%.<sup>12</sup>

N. Sivasubramanian et al (2024) conducted a cross-sectional study on knowledge, attitudes and demographic effect on menopausal experiences among 200 Indian rural women of Visnanagar. The menopausal experiences of women in selected rural areas, addressed a research gap within cultural and socio-economic landscapes is of interest. The global aging trend was reflected in the 26% representation of women aged 50 and over in the study. Results from a structured Knowledge Questionnaire and a Likert Scale for Attitude revealed that women generally possessed commendable knowledge (mean score 10.94) and positive attitudes (mean score 28.66) toward menopause. This study underscored the need for tailored interventions in rural settings, considering the influence of cultural, regional, and demographic factors on menopausal experiences. The findings contributed to bridging the research gap and emphasized the importance of individualized approaches for promoting the well-being of menopausal women in rural communities.<sup>13</sup>

Deva Pon Pushpam. I. (2021) conducted a study a Descriptive study to assess the level of knowledge regarding Menopause among rural women of age group 45-55 years at Kot Bhalwal, Jammu among 100 women of 45-55 years age who fulfil the inclusion and exclusion criteria were selected using purposive sampling technique. A self-structured questionnaire was developed for the study. The tool was tested for content validity and reliability prior to the study. The collected data was tabulated, analysed and interpreted by using descriptive and inferential statistics and findings showed that majority of the sample 97(97%) had below average level of knowledge, 3(3%) had average level of knowledge and 0(0%) had above average level of knowledge and there was no significant association between the selected socio-demographic variables and the level of knowledge.<sup>14</sup>

Aneesha Mol et al (2021) a quantitative study to assess the knowledge regarding menopausal symptoms among women residing in selected community area at Kollam with a view to develop a self-instructional module on menopausal symptoms and its management among 60 women. Convenient sampling technique was used. The investigator assessed menopausal women's knowledge using structured questionnaire regarding menopausal symptoms and its management. After conducting the pretest, self-instructional module was introduced to the menopausal women in community area. The finding of the study suggests that information booklet is effective in increasing the knowledge of primary school teachers regarding behavioral problems and their management and prevention.<sup>15</sup>

Sayali P Banole et al (2023) conducted a cross- sectional study on knowledge, attitude and perception of perimenopausal and menopausal changes in middle age urban women of 40-45years. Female participants between the age group 40-45 years having regular or irregular menstrual cycle were asked to fill a self-made questionnaire which was face validated. The study concluded that 99% women have heard about the term perimenopause and menopause of which 96% women have knowledge about it. 46% were aware about the physical symptoms, 84% about the emotional/psychological symptoms, 78% about the hormonal deficiency related symptoms and 92% about the bone and muscle related problems. 41% of women had knowledge about Hormonal Replacement Therapy. 51% of the women have knowledge about the exercise which helps cope with perimenopause and menopause symptoms. More efforts are needed for creating awareness about symptoms, complication and risk factors associated with perimenopause and menopause and importance of exercise as the first line of treatment option to cure the symptoms.<sup>16</sup>

Haamid Ismail et al (2020) conducted a cross-sectional study which was carried at outpatient department of psychiatry, Government medical college, Srinagar over a period of 3 months. Participants who fulfilled the inclusion criteria of the study were evaluated on a semi-structured proforma for demographic variables, knowledge and attitude towards menopause. Study results revealed that a total of 120 postmenopausal women were included in our study. 85% of study population had heard about menopause at the time their periods stopped mostly from family elders and friends. 45% had knowledge about the age of the menopause, while as only (20.8%) were aware about the symptoms of menopause. 56.6% of study population were having positive perception about the menopause. The conclusion of the study was majority of women were unaware of menopausal symptoms. Most of them considered it as a natural process of aging and thus were having a positive perception about the menopause.<sup>17</sup>

Amrita kumari et al (2019) conducted a cross-sectional study on 220 post-menopausal women to assess knowledge, attitude and treatment seeking behavior and the barriers for not seeking health care among these post-menopausal women in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The results of the study show that 60.9% of women have a heard about menopause before attaining menopause but 33.1% women attitude towards menopause is negative. Only 10% of study population were aware of HRT that it treats menopausal symptoms. We found that the awareness of

cancer cervix was 19.1% but the screening was done only by 2.7% of study population. There is considerably lack of knowledge and awareness about the effects and the treatment of menopausal symptoms especially in rural and slum women in India. So, such studies help in creating awareness since disseminating health education for postmenopausal women is of prime importance.<sup>18</sup>

Amitha et al (2025) conducted a cross-sectional study to assess the knowledge and perception of married women regarding menopause, and to find out the association between the knowledge and perception of married women regarding menopause with selected demographic variables. This descriptive study was conducted among 140 married women between the age group of 45-55 years in Karnataka. Data were analysed by using inferential and descriptive statistics. Majority of the married women 120 (85.7%) had average knowledge on menopause. Among 140 married women most 111(79.3%) of them had good perception. There is significant association between knowledge score and education ( $\chi^2=25.680$ ,  $p=0.008$ ) and income ( $\chi^2=11.071$ ,  $p=0.027$ ). There is weak positive correlation between the knowledge and perception was observed ( $r=0.212$ ,  $p=0.010$ ).<sup>19</sup>

### **III. Methods**

A comprehensive literature search and a total of 36 studies were included in the review using some major electronic databases, including PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science, as well as gray literature sources, such as conference proceedings, theses, and reports. The search was limited to studies published from 2010 to 2025.

### **IV. Results**

A total of 19 studies were included in the review, providing a comprehensive overview of knowledge on menopause and its co-relating factors. The studies covered major parts in India, representing a diverse range of geographic and cultural contexts. There were very few to negligible studies in northeastern part of India in regard.

#### **Knowledge on menopause**

- The knowledge level of the woman on menopause was ranged from null to moderate level which indicates that women are lacking in the adequate knowledge level regarding menopause and is still a taboo in India.
- The urban set up showed that the term “menopause” was familiar to most of the urban women but it remained as an avoidable event in their life, and to accept whatever physical symptoms come within.
- Menopausal symptoms such as hot flush, mood swings and joint pains were evident in most of the studies but treatment seeking attitude or consulting a physician was not evident nor suggested by any family member.
- Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) was a vague term for most perimenopausal women and 90% of them have never heard about it.

#### **Implications:**

- The poor level of knowledge regarding menopause among middle aged women in India highlights the need for attention and action to address this unavoidable women health issue.
- Effective interventions, such as self-instructional module, nutrition education and life style modifications should be the action in need.
- Digital application can also be introduced that will be easy to use by the women individually as it can solve and tract many women in need.

### **V. Discussion**

The findings of this review signify the need of nation-wide awareness on menopause among women. Lack of awareness and knowledge among women and negative attitude regarding this unavoidable event of their life pushes them to make this phase stressful. Lack of knowledge, low calcium levels, not making necessary life style modifications are some of the factors contributing their menopausal phase difficult to handle.

### **VI. Recommendations**

1. Various awareness programs to be arranged in this field so that more and more knowledge can be gained by the target group.
2. Self-instructional module should be supplied free of cost in all the health centers in local languages.
3. Self-help groups can be established at local levels.
4. A mandatory health check up once a year after the age of 40 years.
5. Improve access to health care services, counselling and surveillance process for women during perimenopause.

### **VII. Limitations**

This review has some limitations, including the heterogeneity of the included studies and the lack of representation from all states in India especially northeastern part. Future studies should aim to address these

limitations and provide more comprehensive data on the knowledge regarding menopause on middle aged women populations in India.

## VIII. Conclusion

Menopause is a significant unavoidable event in a woman's life. The findings of this review emphasize the need for knowledge on menopausal symptoms and available managements among women and society at large. Comprehensive interventions include such as awareness program, nutrition education, life style modification and available medical managements. Healthcare policymakers must prioritize the health needs of women to reduce the stress and physical morbidity of menopausal phase and improve overall health outcomes.

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