

Menopause Guidebook



SANFORD[®]
WOMEN'S

Caring for Your Needs



Bemidji Region

Sanford Bemidji Main Clinic
1233 34th Street NW
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601
(218) 333-5289 (phone)
Primary Hours: Monday through Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM



Bismarck Region

Sanford Obstetrics & Gynecology
414 North 7th Street
Bismarck, North Dakota 58501
(701) 323-5870 (phone)
(701) 323-5869 (fax)
Primary Hours: Monday through Friday 8:00AM - 5:00 PM



Fargo Region

Sanford Southpointe Clinic
2400 32nd Ave South
Fargo, North Dakota 58103
(701) 234-8880 (phone)
Primary Hours: Monday through Friday 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM



Sioux Falls Region

Sanford Women's Health Plaza
5019 S. Western Ave. Suite 200
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57108
(605) 328-9700 (phone)
(605) 328-9701 (fax)
Primary Hours: Monday through Friday 7:00 AM - 5:00 PM



My Sanford Nurse

Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, a nurse is here to assess your symptoms and answer your health questions.
Call a Nurse in your area at 1-877-473-1215

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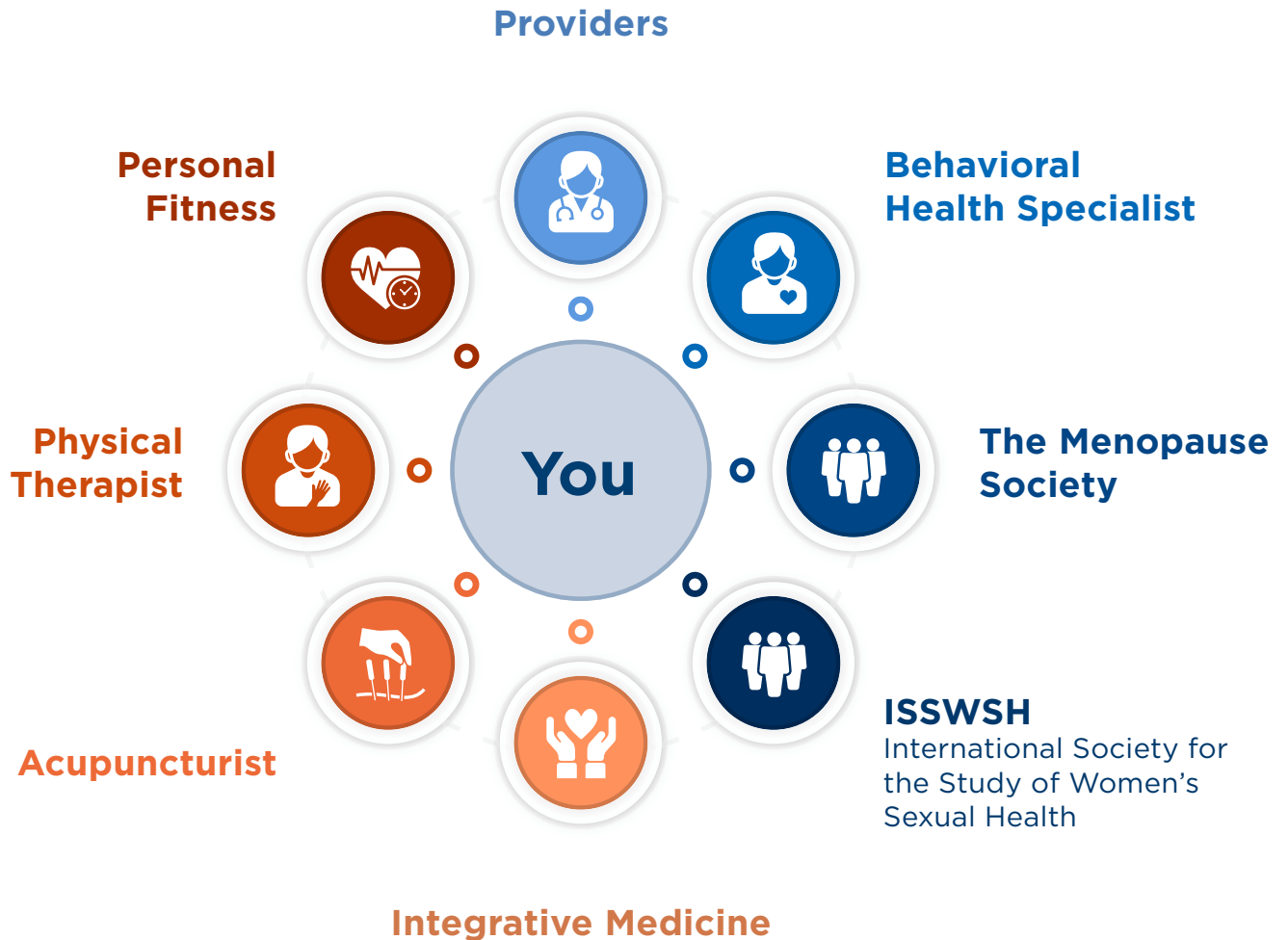
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Welcome to Sanford Women's

Sanford's healthcare team is here to help with your menopause journey. Your care team will work closely with you, paying close attention to issues involving women like you, and make sure your menopause needs are met and treated.



Your Menopause Care Team and Supportive Services

Providers

Specialists in Women's Health, can be a Medical Doctor, Nurse Practitioner, or Physician's Assistant. Orders or performs medical care and treatment needs, with the most up to date information.

Behavioral Health Specialist

This can be Psychologists, Integrative Health Therapists, Behavioral Health Therapists, or Counselors who work closely within Women's Health. Meeting the needs of your Mental Health and wellbeing.

The Menopause Society

An organization providing best practices and standards, for the highest quality of care to women throughout their menopause journey.

International Society for the Study of Women's Sexual Health (ISSWSH)

Offers further learning, giving providers tools to support women's health concerns specific to sexual health.

Integrative Medicine

Includes services in massage, guided imagery, aromatherapy, and deep breathing to decrease symptoms and overcome discomforts that may happen throughout menopause.

Acupuncturist

A provider trained in acupuncture. This technique places hair-thin needles into the skin in specific places or points and then activated to promote healing. This is most often done with other treatments to promote your body to naturally heal.

Physical Therapist

An expert in movement and muscle strength. Physical Therapists will guide you through exercise programs specific to your symptoms and needs. This work is known to avoid the need for surgery and added medicine.

Personal Fitness

There are many benefits of a regular exercise program, including decreasing the risk of your body losing muscle and bone mass. We can help create an exercise program that supports you through all your life's stages.

Connecting with the Healthcare Team



My Sanford Chart

My Sanford Chart is your secure, online connection with your healthcare team.

- 24-hour access to appointment information, medical records, and test results
- Send a message to your care team anytime. **MyChart messages are not checked after hours or on weekends/holidays.**
- All messages are viewed by a registered nurse, who will reply within 48 hours. The nurse will send the message to the appropriate staff as needed.
- If you have an **urgent** concern when the clinic is closed, call the clinic to be directed to the local after-hours service options.

Understanding Menopause

Premature Menopause

This is when menopause happens before the age of 40. Premature menopause may put you at an increased risk of bone and heart conditions.

Perimenopause

The months or years before menopause. Most often this begins in your late 30s or 40s. Your body goes through a lot of physical and emotional changes which can be caused by decreasing or changing levels of the hormone estrogen which is made in the ovaries. You may experience:

- Periods (menstrual cycles) that come more or less often
- Periods (menstrual cycles) that are lighter or heavier than you are used to
- Hot flashes
- Night sweats
- Trouble sleeping
- Vaginal dryness, which may cause sex to be painful
- Mood swings
- Feeling more tired than normal (fatigue)
- Palpitations (the feeling that your heart is beating faster than normal)
- Having to urinate (pee) often or trouble controlling or holding your urine
- Joint pain
- Bone health changes – changing and lower levels of the hormone estrogen can cause your bones to become weak and fragile
- Pelvic health changes – problems can occur when the pelvic floor muscles are too tight or become weak

Menopause Transition

When the menstrual periods are happening more or less often than you are used to. Menopause transition occurs during perimenopause.

Menopause

When the levels of the hormone estrogen reach their lowest point, menstrual periods will stop completely. After you have gone 12 months in a row with no menstrual period, this is menopause. The average age for menopause is about 50, but it can happen to women at younger or older ages. You may continue to have some of the same symptoms that occur during perimenopause.

Post Menopause

The years after your final menstrual period. Once this occurs, you will be in this stage for the rest of your life. You may continue to have some of the same symptoms that occur during perimenopause and menopause. Routine screening is important in this stage.

Natural Menopause

This is when menopause takes place naturally, without any medical treatment.

Surgical or Induced Menopause

This happens when both ovaries are removed surgically for other health concerns. This can also happen when ovaries are damaged from medical treatments, such as treating cancer with chemotherapy or radiation therapy. If you have surgical or induced menopause your symptoms may happen quicker, although the symptoms will be similar to natural menopause.



Management of Menopause

You may have struggles throughout your menopause journey. This is an emotional process with ups and downs. You may feel like you are alone, but you are not. These feelings are common during this time. Whenever possible, continue to do the things you enjoy and be with the people you love. How your menopause is managed will depend on your specific need(s). You and your provider will create a plan together.

Hormone Therapy and Medications

Hormone therapy is used to add hormones your body has stopped making. This option can help you with:

- Preventing bone fractures
- Controlling hot flashes and night sweats
- Less vaginal dryness
- Fewer mood swings
- Decrease your chances of colon cancer
- Decrease your chances of dementia

Different medications can be used to:

- Regulate your menstrual period
- Balance brain chemicals
- Control hot flashes and night sweats

Healthy Lifestyle



Diet

Maintain a healthy weight.

- Follow a heart healthy diet including fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Additional Calcium and Vitamin D may be needed. Talk with your provider about the amount you should have in your diet or the need for more.



Activity

It is important to be active during this time. This may include:

- Walking or jogging – be sure to stretch before and increase time of activity as often as you can
- The US Department of Health and Human Services recommends at least 150 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity
- Other weight-bearing activities such as aerobics
- Swimming or pool exercises - check with your local wellness or fitness center for activity options
- Biking
- Spending time outdoors
- Relaxation techniques such as yoga and meditation



Do Not Smoke

How to Quit Smoking

- Do not smoke, vape, or use E-cigarettes
- <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/quit-smoking/index.html>



Avoid Alcohol

Alcohol and Your Health

- <https://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov>

Sleep

It is important to get a good night's sleep. Things that may help:

- Do not nap after 3:00 pm
- Limit caffeine
- Use cotton sheets on your bed
- Wear cotton pajamas when you sleep
- Keep your sleeping room cool and dark
- Use a fan as needed

Routine Screening and Lab Testing

Extra lab testing, routine screening, and preventive screenings may be needed during this time.



Bone Health

Changing and lower levels of the hormone estrogen can cause your bones to become weak and fragile leading to osteoporosis. Screening for osteoporosis should begin in all women 65 years and older.



Cervical Cancer Screening

This screening includes a PAP smear or HPV (Human Papillomavirus) testing and should be done every 3 to 5 years until you are 65 years old. These tests can detect cancer before you start experiencing symptoms.



Heart Screening

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women, up to 1 in 3 women will die from it. This risk becomes higher with age and following menopause. This screening should be done every 10 years when you are between 40 and 75 years old.



Vascular Screening

Your vascular system sends blood throughout your body, this screening makes sure your veins and arteries are working properly and catches problems before they become serious. Problems with your vascular system can lead to heart attacks and strokes. This screening needs to be done sooner if you have a personal or family history of vascular disease or are a type 1 diabetic.



Breast Health

A yearly screening starting at 40 years old can find breast cancer at its earliest and most treatable stage. There are other screenings and tests available for abnormal findings.

Lab testing that may help you includes:

- **Estradiol** – this hormone is the type of estrogen made by the ovaries.
- **Follicle-Stimulation Hormone (FSH)** – this hormone is made in your pituitary gland and travels to your ovaries to help grow your eggs during the menstrual cycle.
- **Total Testosterone** – your ovaries make small amounts of testosterone. Too much or too little can cause health concerns for women’s bodies.
- **Luteinizing Hormone (LH)** – this hormone is made in your pituitary gland and tells your body to release a mature egg during the menstrual cycle.
- **Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH)** – this hormone is made in your pituitary gland and helps your thyroid work correctly. Too much or too little can cause your thyroid to work too hard or not enough.

Support and Additional Resources

If you need more help and support, talk with your provider, your journey is unique and may include other healthcare team members who specialize in women’s health and emotional support. We are here to help you.



The Menopause Society

- <https://www.menopause.org>



ISSWSH

(International Society for the Study of Women’s Sexual Health)

- <https://www.isswsh.org>



Her Kind of Healthy Podcast

- <https://news.sanfordhealth.org/podcast-series/her-kind-of-healthy>



Emotional Support

Family, friends, and licensed counselors can provide helpful support during this time.

- Sanford Behavioral Health

What I Need

Next appointment: _____

My provider's name: _____

Date of last menstrual period: _____

Other provider's caring for me: _____

My menopause symptoms: _____

How long have my symptoms lasted? _____

How do my menopause symptoms effect me and others around me? _____

Things I have tried to help my symptoms: _____

Things I would like to try to help my symptoms: _____



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