



WOMEN'S  
HEALTH  
INITIATIVE

# FACT SHEET — *Menopause*

## THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT POST-MENOPAUSAL WOMEN

### Who are post-menopausal women?

- ◆ Women usually become post-menopausal in their late 40s to their early 50s.
- ◆ Rapid growth in the number of post-menopausal women started in the early 1990s and will continue until the early 2010s because of the "baby boomer" generation.
- ◆ According to the Census Bureau, in 1998 there are an estimated 39.7 million women over the age of 50 in the United States, compared to an estimated 36.3 million in 1992. That is a nine-percent increase in six years.
- ◆ A woman can expect to live one-third of her life after menopause.

### Women Outlive Men

- ◆ While in 1998 there are an estimated 39.7 million women in the United States, there are only an estimated 32.3 million men.
- ◆ Beginning at age 30, women begin to outnumber men and the female edge keeps getting larger with age. At age 85 there are 100 women for every 39 men.

### Women Continue to Work as They Grow Older

- ◆ In 1994, approximately 16 million women age 45 to 64 were working, and 1.7 million women age 65 and older were still working compared to 38.2 million age 18 to 44.

### Numbers Of Post-Menopausal Women Per 1,000 In 1994 With Chronic Conditions Affected By Menopause Are:

CONDITION	45-64 YEARS	65-74 YEARS	75 YEARS AND OLDER
Arthritis	297	513.6	604.4
Cardiovascular Disease			
Heart Disease	111	250.8	361.4
Hypertension	224.5	378.7	417.5

### The Number Of Days In Which Usual Activities Were Restricted Because Of Chronic And Acute Conditions Increasing With Age

- ◆ Post-menopausal women age 45 to 64 average 24 days each year and post-menopausal women age 65 and older average 37 days a year compared to women age 25 to 44 who average 16 days a year.



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## Health and Healthcare

- ◆ Of post-menopausal women age 45 to 64, 29 percent say they feel they are in good health while for women age 65 and older, 34 percent feel they are in good health compared to women age 25 to 44, of which 24 percent feel they are in good health.
- ◆ Post-menopausal women age 45 to 64 have eight contacts per year with physicians, while women age 65 and older have 12 contacts per year. This is compared to women age 25 to 44 who have six contacts a year.
- ◆ One in seven women age 45 to 64 has some form of cardiovascular disease. The number increases to one in three women over the age 65.
- ◆ Post-menopausal women suffer 2.7 million bone fractures, with 41 percent dying in premature deaths caused by fractures.
- ◆ After menopause, a woman's body stops making 80 percent of her pre-menopausal estrogen.
- ◆ 75 percent of bone loss that occurs in women the first 20 years after menopause is caused by estrogen deficiency rather than aging.
- ◆ By 2020, it is estimated that the cost of medical procedures related to hip fractures will increase six times in the U.S.
- ◆ Sexuality and sexual intimacy can and should continue after menopause.

## Leading Causes Of Deaths Among U.S. Women Over 50 Years Of Age

<b>Cardiovascular Disease</b>	<b>54 percent</b>
<b>Other Cancers</b>	<b>18 percent</b>
<b>Breast Cancer</b>	<b>7 percent</b>
<b>Accidents</b>	<b>5 percent</b>

## Important Issues Surrounding Post-Menopausal Women and Musculoskeletal Concerns:

- ◆ Musculoskeletal problems can dramatically limit a post-menopausal woman's lifestyle and can contribute to other health problems.
- ◆ Proper nutrition is important to maintain healthy bones and joints to avoid musculoskeletal problems.
- ◆ Exercise helps maintain healthy bones by putting weight on the bones and protecting from bone loss.

## Suggestions for Post-Menopausal Women with Musculoskeletal Problems

- ◆ Obtain a complete physical exam to assess the ability to tolerate exercise
- ◆ Obtain an osteopathic musculoskeletal examination to evaluate postural/structural imbalances to learn which activities may or may not be beneficial.
- ◆ Get consultation and evaluation from a nutritionist or dietician to review "healthy eating habits".
- ◆ Address any abnormal lab results to see if changing the diet may improve general health.
- ◆ Contact community resources for exercise or activity classes

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) urges women to contact their osteopathic family physician for advice on preserving good health for an active lifestyle. Osteopathic physicians (D.O.s), physicians treating people, not just symptoms, are especially well qualified to assist in preventive healthcare since they are fully trained licensed physicians who have additional training that focuses on the body's structure and function, and its ability to heal itself. For more information visit the AOA's Web site at [www.aoa-net.org](http://www.aoa-net.org).