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**The
Menopause
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Leading the Conversation

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Women Get Better at Managing Their Anger as They Age

New analysis suggests that chronologic and reproductive age both have a significant effect on a woman's level of anger and her ability to manage it

CLEVELAND, Ohio (July 2, 2025)—There has been a lot of research focused on understanding women's experiences with depression during the menopause transition and early menopause, but there are few studies on perimenopausal women's experiences with emotional arousal, such as anger. A new study shows that women's anger traits significantly decrease with age starting at midlife. Results of the study are published online today in *Menopause*, the journal of The Menopause Society.

Anger is defined as antagonism toward someone or something, often accompanied by a propensity to experience and express it indiscriminately. This is different from hostility, which refers to a fear-eliciting emotion. Some describe hostility as constantly being ready for a fight.

Studies of anger and its health implications in midlife women date back to 1980 but have predominantly focused on heart disease, including hypertension and coronary artery disease. Further study of women and heart disease revealed that increasing trait anger (anger proneness) was associated with increased systolic and diastolic blood pressure over a 3-year period.

Subsequent studies of the relationship of anger and hostility to carotid atherosclerosis revealed that women with higher anger scores had high intima-media thickness 10 years later. There have also been studies associating anger with depression. Women with anger issues are more likely to develop more severe depressive symptoms during the menopause transition. This effect was strongest in women using hormone therapy for menopause symptoms.

To date, however, no study has accounted for the progression of anger traits through the menopause transition. The objective of this new analysis involving more than 500 women aged 35 to 55 years was to examine the influence of aging and reproductive-aging stages on women's reports of anger.

Based on the results, the researchers concluded that chronologic age is significantly related to most anger measures, including anger temperament, anger reaction, anger expressed aggressively, and hostility. Specifically, these forms of anger decreased significantly with age. Only anger suppressed was not related to age. Similarly, reproductive-aging stages significantly affected anger, resulting in a decrease after the late-reproductive stages. These results suggest better emotion regulation may occur during midlife.

Additional study of women's anger in context of everyday life is recommended to effectively inform emotion regulation and anger management strategies and their consequences for midlife and older women.

Study results are published in the article “Anger, aging, and reproductive aging: observations from the Seattle Midlife Women’s Health Study.”

“The mental health side of the menopause transition can have a significant effect on a woman’s personal and professional life. This aspect of perimenopause has not always been acknowledged and managed. It is well recognized that fluctuations in serum hormone concentrations during the postpartum period, as well as monthly fluctuations in reproductive-aged women corresponding with their menstrual cycles and during perimenopause, can result in severe mood swings associated with anger and hostility. Educating women about the possibility of mood changes during these vulnerable windows and actively managing symptoms can have a profound effect on overall quality of life and health,” says Dr. Monica Christmas, associate medical director for The Menopause Society.

For more information about menopause and healthy aging, visit www.menopause.org.

The Menopause Society is dedicated to empowering healthcare professionals and providing them with the tools and resources to improve the health of women during the menopause transition and beyond. As the leading authority on menopause since 1989, the nonprofit, multidisciplinary organization serves as the independent, evidence-based resource for healthcare professionals, researchers, the media, and the public and leads the conversation about improving women’s health and healthcare experiences. To learn more, visit menopause.org.