

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:01 A.M. EST
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2026**

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**The
Menopause
Society™**

Leading the Conversation

Excessive Bloating and Gas Plague Women Throughout the Menopause Transition

New study documents that gas and bloating are the most prevalent gastrointestinal symptoms during all three phases of menopause while anxiety is the worst during perimenopause

CLEVELAND, Ohio (October 20, 2026)—It's not uncommon for women to experience more gastrointestinal (GI) issues, especially bloating and gas, during menopause due to fluctuating hormone levels that slow down digestion and alter gut function. Anxiety is also common. But are the two problems related? A new study sought to answer that question. Results of the study will be presented at the 2026 Annual Meeting of The Menopause Society in San Diego, October 20-24, 2026.

The menopause transition affects women's bodies in many different ways, including wreaking havoc on their GI systems. Common GI problems include excessive bloating, gas, constipation, diarrhea, pain, and nausea. Menopause is also known to heighten anxiety. A new study involving more than 1,800 women aged between 40 and 60 years sought to examine GI symptom burden and anxiety severity across the menopause stages (premenopause, perimenopause, and postmenopause) and examine the association between the two issues.

Based on the results, researchers confirmed that excessive bloating and gas were the most prevalent GI symptoms, with 65.6% of women scoring above the normal severity range. GI symptom severity did not differ significantly by menopause stage across any domain but, rather, remained consistent throughout the transition. No other GI symptom was identified to be out of the normal range during the menopause transition.

In contrast, anxiety scores were highest during perimenopause compared with premenopause and postmenopause. Overall, 17.5% of participants reported moderate to severe anxiety. This was lowest in premenopause (14.6% in the moderate to severe category) and remained elevated in both perimenopause (19.2% in the moderate to severe category) and postmenopause (19.0% in the moderate to severe category). Moderate to severe anxiety increases as women progress from premenopause to perimenopause and stays elevated into postmenopause.

The next step in this work is to assess gut microbiota profiles and their relationship to GI symptoms and anxiety. Year 2 testing is ongoing and future use of cohort data will look at changes over time in these measures. The findings suggest that more research is needed to understand the relationship between GI symptoms and anxiety across the menopause journey. Clinicians should screen for both GI symptoms and anxiety in women regardless of menopause stage.

"The connection between the gut and the brain is rapidly gaining attention, and we are excited to see the menopause-specific insights we can provide from our newly established cohort," says Sanjana Solomon, lead author from the University of Calgary.

Details of the study will be discussed as part of the presentation, “Gastrointestinal symptoms are associated with anxiety across the menopause trajectory: findings from the MOMENTUM Canadian menopause cohort.”

“Understanding GI symptoms and anxiety during menopause is important because fluctuating and declining hormone levels create a disruptive bidirectional interaction in which GI distress worsens anxiety and anxiety triggers further gut symptoms,” says Dr. Stephanie Faubion, 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.