

‘The Other Side of Fifty’

**Compiled by Jane Hurley
With contributions from 5 groups in SW England
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An A-Z collection of 90+ life changes which can occur for men and women after the age of 50. Suitable for all health workers and anyone who is interested in the subject.

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Introduction/How it all began:

A few years ago a friend approached me because I was the oldest person she knew who might be able to advise her about a personal/intimate problem. I don't know her age but she was probably in her early-mid 50's and she was experiencing problems with painful sex.

It was one of those rather embarrassed conversations (perhaps the time and place wasn't right) where I didn't take any clear details.

The outcome was that I felt woefully ignorant myself and couldn't do much except to commiserate, admit to the same experience myself, but with no fool-proof solutions.

How could this be?!

I had taught 'the menopause' for years at a college of homeopathy, I was about 60 then, yet I didn't have any solutions.

Like many women, I thought it must be 'just me' and because I didn't want to use HRT I was doomed and so was my husband to accept 'my failure'.

Then I began to run my Nuts & Bolts Homeopathy seminars and realised that none (or very few of us) knew much about post-menopausal life and there was a real need for information.

The problem was – there wasn't much information!

Yes, there were a million statistics, and yes there were plenty of online boasts, but nowhere could I find out what really happened when we get older.

So

I began to gather information from as many sources as I could find and I also began to speak to people age 50+.

One very generous group, aged 51-81, also spent a day with me sharing their personal experiences. Their contributions and more from my other groups are anonymously included here.

Code for contributions from conversations with:

5 men (M+age) e.g. M53 to M81
and more than 20 women (F+age) F25 to F83

We met in respectful and safe groups where embarrassment and feelings of exposure were supported and received with gratitude. We were also of respectful to partners past or present, friends, relatives or patients who were not present with us but who were necessarily talked about.

Cure or accept?

One of the things I wanted to explore together was which Mid-life changes are normal and therefore irreversible and which ones can and should be treated. My own experience as a homeopathic practitioner was that I was optimistically naïve: I thought that almost any problem brought to me could be cured or changed. Sometimes I was right but my own midlife experience began to tell me that some things I tried to cure were just normal and appropriate mid-life changes - or I think they were.

A-Z

This A-Z list covers many of the changes which take place in men's and women's minds and bodies during their mid to later-life years, roughly ages 50-70. Some of them are trivial; others are surprising, bewildering, worrying or disappointing. Basically it covers post-menopause women but before real old age and men whose problems are not conventionally recognised but can be equally significant. Many of the peri-menopause conditions like flooding and fibroids are not included.

The subject headings explore the experience of mid-life for both men and women. They are gleaned from my own personal experiences and those of my patients as well as many contributions from friends and colleagues who have generously shared them with me. This is a working document of generalisations, assumptions and some facts which still need more real experiences to justify or validate them. It will never be complete but I hope the information will reassure, educate and encourage you to find out more.

The Swinging Sixties post-Pill have-it-all generation are now in their 60's. Despite the Beatles singing 'When I'm 64' it never really occurred to us that one day our post-puberty hormones which had given us such a good time then would go into reverse gear and we'd get old.

Rather suddenly we began to realise that maybe we can't have-it-all anymore. The Doom isn't all Gloom but certainly it can feel as though we have lost control over our bodies and our lives.

Like all resourceful humans we try to make silk purses out of our new pig's ears and adapt to our changed shapes and energies.

The bits we might once have flaunted are no longer fit for display.

Mid-life brings changes which are often unsexy and are hard to talk about. With understanding, sharing and even some good homeopathy the Doom can become Bloom once again.

This is from my colleague Gordon Adam who wrote to me:

“Mid-life changes...yes...I think I've done that now or maybe it's still happening? For me it's been a gradual process of waking up to who I am (while I am still alive and healthy) and actually doing something about manifesting my unique creative potential. I feel I can, now, with some conviction, answer the question posed by Mary Oliver in the last two lines of her wonderful poem 'The Summer Day':

*Tell me, what is it you plan to do
with your one wild and precious life?*

Where homeopathy has a proven role in helping it is marked with asterisks:

* = may be helpful

*** = very helpful

+ = medical supervision required/recommended as well

Homeopathic remedies are typed in *italics*.

Although some homeopathic remedies can be bought over the counter it is strongly recommended that chronic conditions are treated by a qualified and experienced homeopath.

Other alternative therapies such as acupuncture, Alexander Technique, herbal remedies, kinesiology, Bowen, counselling, etc. may also be helpful.

A	
Absent mindedness	See Memory loss
ADH	Anti-diuretic hormone. See Urination
Advertising, the media, publications, statistics and expectations	<p>How the media portray mid-life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Advertising.</u> Smiling, well-groomed silver-haired couples. But also: Inappropriate claims for the success of some products like sexual stimulants: - ASA orders withdrawal of ‘Natural Viagra’ ads. Natura-Viga claimed that the pill ‘not only enhances sexual performance but gives you vigour, vitality and rolls away the years’. The ASA said there was no evidence to substantiate any of these claims. The manufacturers admitted that ‘extensive natural trials’ were in fact questionnaires filled out by some of the 3000 readers of the Sun newspaper who were given free samples. - DVD: ‘The Couples Guide to Great Sex over 40’, 2 volumes. Given a 3-star rating - based on <u>one</u> male reviewer who said: “Easy to understand, excellent information, expecting older actors, great actors, great camera work/editing”. But: “No, I would not recommend this to a friend. Being an older adult I was looking for examples of 60 years or older. My friends can’t relate to such good bodies”. Perhaps it’s interesting that a 60-year old man would identify himself in the ‘Great Sex over 40’ category? • <u>Not all advertising is bad.</u> - <u>Saga</u> magazine (for the over 50’s) offers genuinely useful products - financial, insurance, travel, etc. But other ads can be unrealistically aspirational and/or too expensive for most people (like some retirement homes, overpriced mobile phones).) - <u>The Oldie</u> has quite enlightened advertising. Along with the compulsory transparent bath, tilting beds and chairs, or change your bath-into-a-shower-in-one-day ad they have small businesses’

ads like special handmade shoes, books, computer learning hotel breaks, good mail-order food, literary lunches plus discrete masseuses!

- Journalism and broadcast interviews, especially local news.

There may be a patronising, indulgent tone adopted when interviewing anyone elderly, as though they've acquired a medal, not a bus pass. e.g. Plucky Pensioner stories when they're only 60! And Plucky Grandmother stories when they're not much over 40.

- Publications

- Saga: A lifestyle magazine for the over 50's. Very good in many ways, incl. holidays with no single room supplement etc., but can also paint a very rose-tinted view, especially in advertising.
- The Oldie: (derived from Private Eye) is much more scurrilous and realistic with almost shockingly frank cartoons.
- Germany has an over- 40's magazine with no models, just ordinary women.
- People's Friend: Good for agony aunt advice.
- Yours

- Cartoons

Politician Sir Ming Campbell said "No cartoon ever appeared without me looking totally bald and with a Zimmer frame".

- Statistics and Surveys

Can be misleading:

e.g. A survey in Saga magazine of 10,000 over-fifties found that 65% were still sexually active'. This means that 1 in 3 is not.

And what exactly does sexually active mean?

And how old were those 6,500 active lovers?

Were they evenly spread over the 50-to-oldest age group or were most of the respondents between, say, 50 and 55?

'Embarrassing Bodies', Channel 4 programme said that 25% of over 65's are sexually active.

So, in the 15 years from Saga's over-50's population and Channel 4's over-65's the proportion of sexually inactive people increases from 35% to 75%.

From The Independent, articles by Jeremy Laurance:

- 1) Between 1 in 10 and 1 in 4 women suffer

	<p>from low libido, which varies with age and whether they are pre or post-menopause’ A bit vague!</p> <p>2) Four in 10 men over 75 say they are still having sex, but only 2 in 10 women. (BMJ compilation of 2 studies). Are the men having sex with younger women or are they lying? As Laurance says: ‘All sex surveys based on self-reports are bedevilled by the accuracy of measurement. It is hard to be sure whether the gender imbalance shows the resilience of male interest or the resilience of their propensity to boast about it.’ And: ‘Many Americans are confused about what counts as sexual activity. When Bill Clinton famously declared ‘I did not have sex with that woman’ (Monica Lewinsky), he was telling the truth in the eyes of a large percentage of people who agreed that oral sex did not count as ‘having sex’.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: My self image was influenced by <u>covert</u> messages from the media. The Twiggy influence. I still battle at age 51 with self image.</p>
<p>Ageing/People older than us</p>	<p>Age is a change in function and ability.</p> <p>Research (in BBC2 Horizon and Radio 4 Programmes, 2010) suggests 3 possible factors that contribute to ageing: Shortened chromosomes Newly isolated chemicals Some genes, mental and physical, are associated with longer life.</p> <p>Also: Old age shifts with age! More intelligent people live longer! (Scottish Mental Health Surveys in 1932 and 1947 on cognitive epidemiology). How you live your life is most important – diet, circumstances, exercise, etc. The longer you live now the shorter time is spent with disabling illnesses. i.e. we die ‘quicker’ now because we spend less time bedridden. Certain illnesses like dementia and arthritis are age-related to some extent. It is very difficult to accurately assess someone’s</p>

	<p>age. Life expectancy has increased, originally because of public health improvements and latterly because of medical interventions, especially heart health. Age discrimination occurs more in old age.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: Being old is related to whether you feel old or not. I am more in control now than I was when younger.</p> <p><u>M53</u>: ‘It’s to do with how we respond to things, life changing events. What does life want from us?’</p> <p><u>F59</u>: Rising to the challenge of ageing; I find it exciting’ but also ‘It can be a very confused state: finding myself at the same time that I am losing my siblings.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: Are the diseases we get related to overuse of the mind or body? So old people who have used their bodies too much get arthritis and those who used their brains too much get dementia?</p> <p><u>M81</u>: It can be isolating if you can’t hear Everything.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: Your music tastes can date you, and isolate you.</p> <p><u>F63</u>: When I was younger I didn’t want to talk to older people – I thought they weren’t interesting.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: China reveres old people, but not so in Hong Kong – they’re put out to the hills.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: There are more old people now but they’re invisible. The economy is geared to younger people’s spending.</p> <p><u>F59</u>: My mother’s memory – she can’t or doesn’t want to remember my present husband’s name. She calls him by my first husband’s name. If I visit her I feel pulled back.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: Getting married improved my relationship with my father. It relieved his parental anxiety about his child’s happiness.</p>
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	<p><u>M53</u>: This is the age when our parents become ill or dependent.</p> <p>Then:</p> <p><u>M81</u>: I dread that time coming for me. Our children's perceptions of us - there's a pressure from them for us 'not to lose it', we're not allowed to get old, lose it or become a burden. Our children think they're bolstering you when they call you a 'game old bird' or 'young at heart' but they're not.</p> <p><u>Following on from that M56 said to M81</u>: I see you as an elder, with gravitas and humour.</p> <p><u>M57</u>: We don't respect our elders.</p> <p><u>F51 observed that M81</u>: is looking after his wife (who has dementia) with grace and dignity. That's the opposite to my sister in her 'wonderful mother role', she's a martyr.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: I had to think of my blind father as the rational person he once was, not the totally dependent man he had become.</p> <p><u>M53</u>: We grow from being children of our parents to carer for our parents.</p> <p><u>M81</u>: It's harder for women to give up the carer role, but it's a stereotype that men aren't carers.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: I didn't have a choice (caring for my husband's granny). I hate caring. I used to rush in and care for people. I'm sick of caring. I can't do it with good grace now.</p> <p><u>F63</u>: It's a symbol of the change of life – a major transition from caring for kids to caring for parents or grandchildren.</p>
Alexander Technique	<p>Not just about treating backache, headache or other stress-related symptoms but a method of showing people how they are misusing their bodies and teaching them how to prevent such misuse, whether at rest or during activity. See Back</p>
Aloe Vera	<p>Can be used for all age groups but mid-lifers seem to find it particularly helpful. Contains vitamins C</p>

	<p>& E, minerals and other herbal goodies. Renowned cure-all or soothe-all gel-like juice particularly for ME, arthritis, asthma, bowel and skin conditions. Can be drunk or applied to the skin. Best quality probably from Forever Living or Aloe Pura.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: Gel can be used instead of KY Jelly.</p>
Alzheimer's	See Dementia
Anaemia ***+	<p>No more after the menopause for women who have always been susceptible to it, so needs investigation if it occurs in older age groups. Aspirin, ibuprofen and others NSAIDS (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) are often taken by older people and can cause asymptomatic gastrointestinal bleeding and therefore anaemia. Usually insidious onset so often not diagnosed for a long time.</p> <p>Heart failure maybe caused by or implicated with anaemia.</p> <p>Symptoms: Feel tired and fatigue easily, appear pale, develop palpitations and become unusually short of breath. Four basic causes: haemorrhage, haemolysis (excessive destruction of red blood cells), underproduction of red blood cells or not enough normal haemoglobin. There are many forms of anaemia, some of them common, others rare.</p> <p>See Thyroid</p>
Appearance	<p>Did 'middle-aged' people all look very similar - their hairstyles, dress and behaviour - in the past? Now it is hard to tell anyone's age or stage in life because of cosmetic surgery, Botox, hair colouring, wigs, good make-up, choice of clothing, HRT, etc. Men mainly do things to their hair - shave it all off rather than look bald in places, add hairpieces, colour hair or beards.</p> <p>But while men and women can do lots to change their external appearance they are unlikely to look</p>

	<p>so good naked with large tummies or saggy breasts, although some people find them attractive.</p> <p>Beauty gurus suggest that older people should never wear white near the face; ‘it makes yellow teeth look yellower and the whites of eyes look grey’.</p> <p>A general assumption that weight gain is a turn-off but some people prefer their partner to be a bit plumper.</p> <p>On the other hand, particularly after menopausal weight-gain, some women feel so unattractive and unsexy they don’t even want to be touched. It’s deeply ingrained that women have to be thin and beautiful to be sexy.</p> <p>Fat contains oestrogen so theoretically there should be weight loss post-menopause! This might happen but it is only a small loss or weight stabilization after pre-menopausal gain.</p>
<p>Arnica <i>Homeopathic remedy</i> ***</p>	<p><u>F83</u>: If in doubt, I take Arnica for everything, and I give it to all my friends.</p>
<p>Arteriosclerosis *+</p>	<p>Loss of elasticity/hardening of the arteries. Often associated with high blood pressure. Shortness of breath especially going upstairs.</p> <p><i>Some homeopathic remedies:</i> <i>Sumbul – makes old puffers young again! Bar Carb, Bar Mur, Strophanthus, Crataegus, Secale, Calc Fluor, Glonoine, Aurum, Sulfonal, Viscum Alb, Plumbum, Stront Carb, Aurum Mur, Carduus Mar, Vanadium, Lycopodium – especially with low blood pressure.</i></p> <p>See Blood pressure</p>
<p>Arthritis, Rheumatism, Stiffness ***</p>	<p>All can respond very well to homeopathy - sometimes therapeutically and sometimes with more complex constitutional treatment. They are sometimes diagnosed with a different name – like polymyalgia rheumatic or Sjogrens Syndrome. AB blood group may be protective against arthritis. It is not automatic that ageing causes it. Could it be caused by an accumulation of toxins in</p>

	<p>joints and muscles which would have been eliminated via the uterus pre-menopause? It is said that sunlight on the eyes can prevent/improve arthritis (and lower blood pressure) but contact lenses can block it.</p> <p>Case: Female, aged 29, diagnosed with severe disabling pain diagnosed as polyarthritis. Endured a humiliating ‘medical trial seminar’ but no conventional treatment prescribed. In desperation had homeopathic treatment and is now fit and well age 54.</p> <p><i>Some homeopathic remedies:</i> <i>Rhus Tox, Bryonia, Sulphur, Thuja, Causticum, Dulcamara, Radium Brom, Formica Rufa 6x, Rhododendron, Calc Phos, Kali Salic, Ran Bulb, Lithium Carb, Kalmia, Berberis, Gnaphalium, Medorrhinum, Actea Spic, Digitalis, Apis, Benzoic Acid, Caulophyllum, Ferrum Pic, Kali Bich, Urt Urens, Lac Can, Stellaria (fingers), Nat Phos (R.knee), Ruta Grav (wrists), Natrum Sulph 5M (neck after whiplash), Ledum (hips and knees), Manganum (shins), Colchicine, Hekla Lava, Staphysagria, Calc Fluor, Kali Mur, Phos, Tuberculinum, Hepar Sulph, China (pain every 2nd day), Dioscorea, Phytolacca, Viscum Alb, Pulsatilla, Morgan Bach.</i></p> <p>See Rheumatism, see Lumbago, see Backache, see Sjogrens Syndrome</p>
Atrophic Vaginitis	See Senile Atrophic Vaginitis

B	
Back *	<p>Words of wisdom from an Alexander Technique Teacher (CL):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't believe that we need to lose bone (osteoporosis). Twenty minutes daily in the semi-supine position (a key feature of Alexander Technique) plus gravity and spinal alignment should give enough weight-bearing exercise to stimulate osteoblast (bone-building cell) production. • Our own body weight stimulates osteoblast activity. • Weight bearing (being overweight) is very different to weight-bearing exercise. • In osteoporosis the cell building cannot keep up with the collapse (osteoclast activity). • It's not bones that hold bones up, it's muscles that hold the bones up. • Falls are less likely if our spines are aligned correctly. • We can get mentally stuck and think there is nothing we can do to look after our spine and skeletal system, so do doctors. • Gyms and Pilates do not necessarily teach the correct way to <u>use</u> our bodies and backs. • Case: A 90-year old female patient was brought to CL in a wheelchair because of severe curvature of the spine. No more medical treatment could help her. After months of Alexander Technique she can now drive her own car, touch her toes and her back is straight again. <p>And words of wisdom from FM Alexander, creator of the Alexander Technique:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you stop doing the wrong thing the right thing will do itself. • You translate everything, whether physical or mental or spiritual, into muscular tension. <p><i>Arnica, Hypericum, Rhus Tox, Bellis P, Berberis, Phosphorus, Aesculus, Nat Mur, Cimic, Mag Phos, Secale, Helonius, Sepia (Elvia Bury)</i></p> <p>See Alexander Technique, see Lumbago, see Rheumatism, see Sciatica</p>

<p>Being 50 - Effects of menopause</p>	<p><u>M56</u> asks: What's it like for women at 50?</p> <p><u>F51</u>: I have to put my glasses on/off all the time. I'm frightened of physical changes.</p> <p><u>F63</u>: So sad, everyone is taken by surprise by the menopause. Men and male partners suffer its effects too. It's easy to mock women in it.</p> <p><u>F59</u>: I take one day at a time.</p> <p><u>F63</u>: Because of hormones, the peri-menopause then menopause we become something else. 50 for me was quite nice; I had more energy at 50 than before. No more periods, no more anaemia so my energy improved after 50.</p> <p><u>F59</u>: This is my 2nd marriage - I'm determined to keep communication skills open. It's embarrassing to talk about the menopause and sex with my partner.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: My energy went down at menopause.</p> <p><u>Male views</u>:</p> <p><u>M67</u>: Chaps need to be warned. It puts relationships under stress. Menopause produces big stress.</p> <p><u>M53</u>: You start moving apart. It's insidious.</p> <p><u>Consensus</u>: 'Always communicate if possible' The mean age for the menopause is currently 52 but many women will experience 'the change' earlier or later than this.</p>
<p>Benefits and freebies</p>	<p>Free bus pass, eye tests, prescriptions. Free do-it-yourself bowel cancer tests! Reduced admission to cinemas; senior railcards. Lower insurance car/home, etc. No longer have to pay National Insurance. State pension and winter heating allowance. Sometimes cheaper meals for OAP's! Pension credit for those on very low incomes. The current qualifying age of 60 is now rising. Worth a look: http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/family/over-sixty-pension-checklist</p>

<p>Bigger bits</p>	<p>Ears or ear lobes grow. Getting long in the tooth mean the gaps between them grow so we often need toothpicks. Most women will go up by one dress size around the menopause years. This change has to be accepted as it cannot easily be reversed by dieting.</p> <p>See Body shape</p>
<p>Bingo wings</p>	<p>Loose skin under the upper arms. Can anything be done about them? Alexander Technique teacher CL thinks so – weightlifting.</p>
<p>Blood pressure ***+</p>	<p>From the British National Formulary book: High blood pressure: elevation of blood pressure, above the normal for the age. Arteries harden up with age and may become coated inside with atheroma fattiness which makes it harder for the heart to pump blood around the system; therefore it has to pump at a higher pressure. Lowering raised blood pressure decreases the frequency/likelihood of strokes, ‘coronary events’, heart failure and renal failure. An optimal target B/P is now regarded as 140/85 for most people ... in some patients it may not be possible to reach the suggested targets despite the use of appropriate therapy Obesity, high salt intake, tension and strain can increase B/P. Symptoms: none; or headache, fatigue, roaring in ears.</p> <p>From JH: There are many side effects from antihypertensive drugs which can affect all parts of the mind and body so any symptoms which begin after blood pressure treatment is started might be side effects. <u>Hypertension</u> Some people’s b/p is <u>normally</u> high. They feel unwell if it is brought down to medically acceptable levels. <u>Hypotension</u> Some (tubercular) patients may have <u>normally</u> low b/p which is untreatable medically in UK (KM) but homeopaths can use <i>Lyc, Nat Mur, Pic Ac, Kali Phos, Calc Phos, Caust, Tub, Stannum, Gels, Carb Veg, Psor, Sepia</i></p> <p>Homeopath, Ian Watson, says that direct sunlight via the eyes can lower blood pressure and</p>

	<p>prevent/improve arthritis, but contact lenses can block its penetration.</p> <p><i>High b/p remedies:</i> <i>In chronic cases if b/p does not come down even with conventional drugs use only 'small' remedies, e.g. Viscum Album 6 tds ongoing, check frequently; Bar Mur 6x ongoing; CGP 6x = Crataegus/Glonoine/Passiflora; Lycopus V 3x; Nat Mur 6-30 bd; Lach 6 bd thins the blood <u>but</u> Lach patients don't like b/p cuff round arm, it causes temporary hypertension (N&B)</i> <i>Also Phos, Aurum, Glonoine, Gelsemium, Sulphur, Crataegus, Viscum Album, Spartium, Gels, Passiflora, Ars Iod, Arnica, China, Aurum Iod, Bar Carb, Pituitary 200, Carb An, Serum Anguillar, Sumbul, Conium, Ignatia, Nux Vom, Fluor Ac.</i></p> <p>See Drugs, prescribed, see Arteriosclerosis</p>
<p>Blood tests</p>	<p>Some good, some bad, some accurate, others less so. Thyroid, cholesterol, PSA, anaemia, etc.</p> <p>See Cholesterol, see Prostate</p>
<p>Body shape</p>	<p>It changes! Fat tummies. Thighs get wobblier. Bottoms sag.</p> <p>See Bigger bits, see Breasts, see Bingo wings</p>
<p>Bowels ***</p>	<p>Symptoms not exclusive to mid life but may come as result of anxiety, other emotions, lack of exercise or side effects of drugs. Include cramps, constriction, obstruction, constipation, diarrhoea, flatulence, IBS, etc.</p> <p>Men are more likely to be more obsessed with their 'motions' than women. Or they may be very relaxed about their bowel habits.</p> <p><u>F63</u>: I have never told anyone this before but I had to be near a loo whenever I went out. I didn't even tell my homeopath but it got better after treatment with <i>Sepia and Staphysagria</i>. It might have been caused by a prolapsed womb, age 38 after last son born. Everything I ate went 'straight through'. It lasted for 17-18 years.</p> <p>Homeopathic <i>Folliculinum</i> is listed to treat E.Coli</p>

	<p>and bloating. Could they be linked?</p> <p><u>F56</u>: A theory that the body detoxes via the womb. Post-menopause there is no more flushing action so E.Coli could become established.</p> <p><u>F52</u>: If I get diarrhoea I get cramping pains in my ovaries now, not in my uterus. (No menopause yet)</p> <p>A woman who had very heavy periods got diarrhoea more when they ended.</p> <p>Constipation: <i>Cuprum, Coloc, Ignatia, Rhus Tox, Opium, Plumbum, Ruta, Kali Carb, Caust, Digitalis, Arg Nit, China, Sulphur, Alumina, Nux Vom, Calc Carb, Amm Crud, Gels, Spigelia, Mag Carb, Iris, Polyvalent 200, Selenium.</i></p> <p>Also Crude Black Molasses as a gentle cleanser. Mango juice or linseed for constipation from medications but too rough with IBS or bowel disease. Ortisan Fruit Cubes (from health food shops).</p> <p>Diarrhoea: <i>Verat Alb, Ars Alb, Cuprum, Phos, Aloe, Ant Crud, Acet Ac, Carb Veg, Coloc, China, Phos Ac, Bovista, Arg Nit, Bapt, Kreos, Gambogia, Crot Tig, Podo, Dig. (Elvia Bury)</i></p>
Breasts	<p>Lose their firmness - but sometimes improve again a bit post-menopause. Or they grow bigger.</p> <p>Good news: women who have always had painful breasts gain; they no longer hurt when squashed for a mammogram X-ray (LyH)</p> <p><i>Bellis Perennis, X-ray.</i></p>
Bunions	See Feet

C	
<p><i>Carcinosin</i> <i>Homeopathic remedy</i></p>	<p>Vital for helping with transition to the third stage of life. For example, women who are carrying unresolved ‘emotional baggage’ seem to have a more difficult menopause; than women who have resolved or come to terms with earlier problems.</p> <p><i>The Nat Mur/Carc/Staph triad (in any order or potency) will frequently be needed by these women. Complementary to Folliculinum (N&B)</i></p> <p>See Menopause, see Folliculinum</p>
<p>Cataracts</p>	<p>Although there are many homeopathic and herbal/nutritional remedies for cataracts, modern surgical techniques have become so good that alternative treatments are only recommended now (by JH) for patients who will not consider surgery.</p> <p>See Vision.</p>
<p>Cellulite/Cellulitis</p>	<p>Not in the homeopathic repertory or medical books; a new feature of the post-menopausal woman’s body. It ‘flops around in the jacuzzi’. (LyH)</p> <p><u>Cellulite</u> is a cosmetic problem caused by fatty deposits that form under the skin; it has no relation to cellulitis.</p> <p><u>Cellulitis</u> is a bacterial infection of the deep layer of skin (dermis) and the layer of fat and soft tissues (the subcutaneous tissues) that lie underneath the skin. The infection can make skin red, swollen and very painful.</p> <p>See Obesity, see Weight Gain</p>
<p>Cholesterol *** <i>Also available as a homeopathic remedy</i></p>	<p>Cholesterol is a lipid (fatty substance) mostly made by the liver from the fatty foods we eat. It is vital for the normal functioning of the body.</p> <p>It cannot travel around the body on its own because it does not dissolve in water. Instead, it is carried in the blood by molecules called lipoproteins/lipids. Having an excessively high level of lipids in your blood (hyperlipidaemia) is said to increase the risk of having a heart attack or stroke.</p>

Steroid hormones are all derived from cholesterol. Pregnenolone is the steroid manufactured directly from cholesterol. It can then become the precursor to progesterone and many other hormones. All of these conversions happen through slight alterations in the shape of a molecule which is caused by enzyme actions. If there is not enough progesterone the body may not be able to produce enough of the anti-inflammatory hormones such as cortisol, as well as other hormones which affect the brain and mood. (JL, LK)

Every cell wall needs cholesterol. Low cholesterol = low cell building. (LS)

Statins are a relatively recent preventative drug is, for now, the pharmaceutical companies' dream. Government's 'normal' cholesterol test level is set at less than 5mmol/L (millimoles per litre of blood) and was based on the level of a healthy 24 year old man's blood cholesterol! - presumably he was a healthy young medical student. In the UK, two out of three adults have a total cholesterol level of 5mmol/L or above: men in England have an average level of 5.5mmol/L and women 5.6mmol/L. Therefore two thirds of adults are considered to have high cholesterol levels -unless they are at the same level as a young medic!

There are many side effects of statin cholesterol-lowering drugs, e.g. Lipitor, including depression which might be severe – but this s/e is not listed in the British National Formulary. (LC)

F52: My mother stopped taking statins and took Flora Pro-active (yoghurt drink containing plant sterols) daily instead which reduced her cholesterol levels from 7.2 to 4.7. Nothing else could have done it.

However, if there is a genetic history of high cholesterol this reduction may not be possible. (SG)

A handful of almonds a day is said to lower cholesterol levels (CG)

Fatty nodules on the skin may be a high cholesterol indicator (SG)

[Thyroid/Cholesterol link:](#)

	<p>From: http://www.cholesterol-doctor.com</p> <p>Cholesterol levels are affected by thyroid levels. The thyroid gland is responsible for the production of thyroxine hormone which regulates the overall metabolism of the body. The more thyroxine produced, the higher your metabolism will be and hence the higher the energy generation and fat consumption in your body. If the body is not producing enough thyroxine, energy consumption levels will decline. The slowness in generation of thyroxine also leads to slower speeds of processing and consumption of cholesterol in the body.</p> <p>In 2008, research was conducted to understand if people who have low levels of thyroxine are more susceptible to coronary artery disease than those who do not. The research justified the assumption and it was more likely to occur in women than in men.</p> <p>The main lipoproteins are LDL and HDL. <u>LDL cholesterol is known as 'bad cholesterol', and lower levels are better. HDL is referred to as 'good cholesterol', and higher levels are better.</u> LDL is the main cholesterol transporter and carries cholesterol from the liver to the cells that need it. If there is too much cholesterol for the cells to use, this can cause a harmful build-up in your blood. Too much LDL cholesterol in the blood can cause cholesterol to build up in the artery walls, leading to disease of the arteries. HDL carries cholesterol away from the cells and back to the liver, where it is either broken down or passed from the body as a waste product. The amount of cholesterol in the blood (including both LDL and HDL) can be measured with a blood test. Doctors may also measure triglyceride level: the fats used for energy which come from the fatty foods.</p>
Colostomy	<p>Not always permanent now; it can be reversed if damaged bowel tissue has healed.</p> <p>Joke: On hearing a woman friend has a colostomy bag: 'Have you got the shoes to go with it?'</p>
Confidence ***	<p>Perhaps it changes in mid life so some confidence gets better and other confidence gets worse?</p>

	<p>e.g. It may improve so we become less troubled about saying or doing the wrong thing, or it can decrease so we feel we cannot drive on motorways or at night. Or we may get a new confidence to go to the cinema or theatre on our own – or lose the confidence to go anywhere on our own.</p> <p>Women have confidence in themselves, men with their performance. (CG). Debateable.</p> <p><u>F60</u>: You don't need to get your confidence from anyone else.</p> <p>Not shy any more. You care less. The way you're viewed affects confidence – better or worse. It can be crushing when experience isn't valued. And new technologies like computers affect it for the worse. Feeling useful improves it. (TG)</p> <p><u>M56</u>: 'Loss of potency causes a devastating loss of confidence in maleness. It's crushing if men can't get it up'.</p> <p>See Falls (loss of confidence to do things)</p>
Corns	See Feet
Cystitis – menopausal *	<p>Not the cystitis that any woman can get (- usually women because their urethra is much shorter than a man's so much more susceptible to infection) but a menopausal/hormonal cystitis.</p> <p><u>F56</u>: Certainly more frequency.</p> <p><u>F53</u>: Perhaps from a slight uterine prolapse that the woman is unaware of. Homeopathic <i>Sepia</i> helps greatly.</p> <p>Sphincters are less tight so infection is more likely. It may be wrongly diagnosed as interstitial (relating to interstitial kidney cells) cystitis when no infection is found. (CG)</p> <p>See Sex</p>

D	
Deafness	See Hearing
Death, dying and funerals *	<p>An increasingly common feature of mid-life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death in old age is a natural part of life but premature death or suicide, particularly of a child or grandchild, is literally a life-changing catastrophe. • Can be very hard on the partner if unexpectedly left on own, especially if plans for happy retirement cannot be fulfilled. • Fear of premature death is common for people who have lost a relative or close friend around the individual's present age. • In mid-life perhaps our greater concern these days are about dying, or even not-dying. It reflects the quality of care available in hospitals and nursing homes. • Increasingly, we may find ourselves coping with care for elderly people and find ourselves to be uncharacteristically helpless with the system. • Not all funerals are miserable or even sad. Increasingly our generation is involving itself in an event which used to be organised by funeral directors with established ways of planning and conducting them. • Expensive - currently about £2,500 for a modest funeral. • Euthanasia issues <p>What about flowers/no flowers, donations to charity, wearing sombre/colourful clothes, memorial services, green burials, expense?</p> <p>Americans dislike honest words like 'dead' or 'body' or even 'ashes'; they use 'passed on', 'the deceased' and even 'cremains'.</p> <p>Extra information: If a body is donated for medical science the receivers pay for funeral costs. Aborted fetuses and miscarriages now have proper committals and cremations. Hospital chaplains are very helpful in these circumstances. It is illegal to scatter ashes in a public place or churchyard because they can contain toxic matter. (CG)</p>

	<p><i>Nat Mur, Ignatia and other constitutional remedies.</i></p> <p>See Hospital</p>
<p>Dementia</p>	<p>Not so common in the mid life age group but we may find ourselves taking care of older family members who are affected by it or Alzheimer's. It is not a <u>normal</u> part of ageing.</p> <p><u>Important:</u> Confusion and symptoms which look like dementia may be caused by low sodium levels – from renal damage, low grade urine infections, vitamin B12 deficiency or bowel disease. They may also be a side effect of some diabetes and blood pressure medications e.g. 'water tablets'/diuretics may cause patients to decide to stop drinking. However, low dose antidepressants can be very helpful with anxiety and fear of not being able to remember. And homeopathic <i>Calc Carb</i> (C&SG's)</p> <p>Beetroot is a very good, and Omega 3 supplements – essential for cell membranes. (EG)</p> <p>The drug Aricept is now approved for use in Alzheimer's disease but not for other dementias.</p> <p>Patients with dementia symptoms will not be admitted for care if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn away carers - Break a leg - Are a danger to themselves (SG) <p>Recommended book: 'Contented Dementia' by Oliver James. (EG)</p> <p>From NHS website www.NHS.uk/Dementia: Dementia describes the effects of certain conditions and diseases on a person's mental ability, personality and behaviour. People with dementia commonly experience problems with memory and the skills needed to carry out everyday activities. There are many different causes of dementia but Alzheimer's disease is the most common one. It develops gradually and may not always be obvious in the early stages. Early signs and symptoms include: Regularly forgetting recent events, names and faces. Regularly misplacing items or putting them in odd places. Confusion about the time of day.</p>

	<p>Failing to recognize familiar objects or places. Problems finding the right words. Reduced judgment, for example, unaware of danger. Mood or behaviour problems such as apathy or irritability. Lack of care with personal hygiene. As it progresses, there may be: Further decline in mental abilities and memory Lack of awareness of their surroundings. Personality changes. Loss of control of bodily functions. Inability to perform daily activities. About 500,000 people in England have dementia and although it can occur at any age, it's more common in older people. About one in 20 people over 65 has dementia. Dementia usually gets worse slowly, often over many years, and may mean that the person affected can no longer live independently. This affects both people who develop dementia and the people who care for them. It can shorten people's lives and is an important cause of disability.</p> <p>See Memory loss; see Falls</p>
<p>Diabetes **+</p>	<p>Type 2 tends to start in mid-life.</p> <p>Diabetic people always have resentment (so does MS) so homeopaths treatment should treat that first. Patients resent the need for lifelong injections, diet control, medical interventions, cataract formation, etc; It can be cured if treated before insulin replacement is started; Unstable diabetics can also be helped. (N&B)</p> <p>Rheumatoid patients are lovely but diabetics are irritable - they cannot taste the sweetness of life (LS).</p> <p>A Type 1 diabetes patient had a raw, pure, natural food diet plus regular sun/daylight and never needed insulin to control it. Some diabetic patients can work out how many grams of carbohydrate they can eat and the amount of insulin needed to balance it. (N&B)</p> <p>Sainsbury's and Boots sell blood sugar pin-prick testers. Shop around for best prices as they are expensive. Best time to test is first thing in the morning. (EG)</p>

	<p><i>Homeopathy and alternatives:</i> <u>Beware</u> prescribing <i>sac lac</i> or sugar-base pillules - it can upset the sugar balance and/or make them tired. (KM) <u>Caution:</u> <i>Nat M 200</i> or <i>Lyc 200</i> can produce a hypo in insulin-dependent diabetics if they are unstable. Stick to 30's. (KM) <u>Warning to homeopaths :</u> Be very careful about <i>Ethics/Code of Conduct (J)</i>.</p> <p><i>With debility - Glycerinum; Nat Mur; Syzygium; Insulin; Uran Nit; Bovista; Carb Ac; Ars Alb; Helonias; Sulph; Phos Ac; Sepia; Curare; Iris Vers; Kreosotum; Ratanhia; All Rhus's; Secale; Tarent Hisp; Terebintha (KM).</i> <i>Insulin 30 weekly, Dolichos, Rhus Arom, Eup Purp 6x, Phaseolus, Crat 6x, Lactic Ac. (EB).</i> <i>Lac Humanum; Spectrum.</i> <i>Mag Mur (SP)</i></p> <p>Chromium (is stabilising, re-balances blood sugar and therefore can prevent diabetes) and Vanadium in mineral form gradually replaces insulin in adult-onset diabetes (Dr Joel Wallach).</p> <p>Especially for diabetics who cannot tolerate Metformin medication - drink juice made from boiled aubergine skins to reduce blood sugar.</p> <p>Pycnogenol (Pine Bark) and Cinnamon Bark capsules are good supplements. (EG)</p>
<p>Drippy noses or watery eyes *</p>	<p>Why? After grief – <i>Nat Mur state</i></p>
<p>Dry eyes</p>	<p>See Sjogren's syndrome, see Vision</p>
<p>Duboisia <i>Corkwood Tree</i> <i>Homeopathic remedy</i></p>	<p><i>A remedy for menopausal absent mindedness and impaired memory. Also eye symptoms, vertigo, and upper respiratory tract. Incoherent conversation with silly and nonsensical behaviour (HfW)</i></p>

E	
Embarrassment	<p>Any physical changes can be potentially embarrassing so it's important that practitioners can be comfortable about anything we hear in the consulting room.</p> <p>Channel 4's 'Embarrassing Bodies' programme handles people's problems with a stunning lack of embarrassment - an important educational resource for everyone.</p> <p>Embarrassment can also prevent couples from discussing intimate changes and problems together.</p>
Emotions ***	<p>In response to question from <u>M53</u> about how midlife hormones affect women:</p> <p><u>F51</u>: Heightened emotionality – I am more emotional than I used to be and don't want it.</p> <p><u>F59</u>: How to get from selfless to a more selfish role. I feel I have a life too, everyone else will manage.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: You can do more for others, not always the family, and be selfish in a good way. Looking after the house and grandchildren makes demands on your time and emotional capacity.</p> <p><u>F59</u>: I think we get stronger, an inner strength, but it may not look very feminine to be stronger after the menopause, like Maggie Thatcher.</p> <p><u>F63</u>: Women are resourceful and adaptable but it was the bits I didn't expect that were more difficult. Now I have good health and a happy marriage but the loss of my sex life was a massive hit. I was a child of 60's but I didn't know I couldn't play forever. I didn't expect to walk across the bridge to oldness'.</p>
Empty Nest Syndrome **	<p>A sadness or depression which occurs when the youngest child ends its constant contact with the mother, either to start school or to move away from home. Some parents have a late baby to avoid that feeling.</p> <p>Some parents yearn for empty nest syndrome because their children never leave home!</p>
The Epley manoeuvre: Epley's exercises for vertigo	<p>For BPPV: Benign Paroxysmal Positional Vertigo. Benign because it can be disabling but is not a</p>

serious disease, Paroxysmal because it occurs in short bursts, Positional because it is provoked specifically by movement to or from certain positions, and Vertigo: defined as an illusion of movement, either of the sufferer or of their surroundings. This is different to spontaneous vertigo like Meniere's disease, and movement-provoked vertigo which is caused by any sudden movement.

Often performed by a doctor or a physical therapist, but can be performed by the patient at home.

1. Sit upright.
2. Turn your head to the symptomatic side at a 45 degree angle, and lie on your back.
3. Remain up to 5 minutes in this position.
4. Turn your head 90 degrees to the other side.
5. Remain up to 5 minutes in this position.
6. Roll your body onto your side in the direction you are facing; now you are pointing your head nose down.
7. Remain up to 5 minutes in this position.
8. Go back to the sitting position and remain up to 30 seconds in this position.

The entire procedure should be repeated two more times, for a total of three times. During every step of this procedure the patient may experience some dizziness.

Developed by Dr. John Epley and first described in 1980.

The aim of the manoeuvre is to reposition loose chalk crystals in the semi-circular canals of the inner ear which are normally embedded in a lump of jelly.

Homeopathically it may respond well to Calc Carb: Vertigo from turning the head, < looking upwards, ascending, going upstairs.

Erectile Dysfunction	See Kegel exercises, see Sex
Erections	<p><u>M53</u>: Men don't always want an erection but they can't stop it; they may just want intimacy, not sex. "Bloody erection – I don't want that in the way right now". It's measurable; you can't pretend it's not there.</p> <p>2 recommended books on why boys are different - and how to help them become happy and well-balanced men: 'Manhood' and 'Raising Boys' by Steve Biddulph. (CG)</p>
Expectations	See Advertising, see Emotions
Eyes and eyesight	See Vision and eyesight

F	
Falls *	<p>Falls, even if not serious, may cause a loss of confidence about moving quickly, falling downstairs or even going out. They can be life changing.</p> <p>They may be associated with dyspraxia – loss of balance - and dementia.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: People don't lift their feet so much. Older people need to keep more supple.</p> <p><u>M57</u>: I'm more cautious now. I think more about going up and down steps.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: You have to concentrate more.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: Bones are more brittle.</p> <p><u>M56</u>: I had to concentrate really hard in the icy weather – not like when younger.</p> <p><u>F60</u>: My spatial awareness has been affected post menopause. I can't reverse my car so well.</p> <p><u>F63</u>: But sometimes it improves again later on.</p> <p>See Back; see Dementia</p>
Fat	<p>Mysteriously creeps on to previously flat tummies and never goes away again.</p> <p>'Who needs a surfboard when they've got a post-menopausal body?</p>
Feet, bunions and corns *	<p>Feet need primary care to keep active and keep going. People can become grumpy, even alcoholic, if their feet are wrong; if they can't get about, if they are painful and immobilizing. (LS)</p> <p>Bunions (Hallux Valgus). If newly developed, wiggle toes 4 times a day then when flexibility returns continue to wiggle/stretch toes daily ongoing. Can be very painful to start with and little movement possible but continued wiggles can reduce bunion size (LS) New surgical procedures are very good - same-day surgery where you walk away afterwards! (EmB)</p> <p><i>Hekla Lava, Agaricus, Silica, Carb Veg, Nit Ac (TS)</i></p>

	<p>Corns: <i>Ferr Pic 6x + Rad Brom every 2 weeks, Nit Ac, Ant Crud (EB)</i></p>
Fibroids	<p>These should disappear naturally after the menopause because they depend on oestrogen for their growth. How many hysterectomies are performed inappropriately?</p> <p><i>Aur Mur - uterus enlarged, vaginal spasms, constant vaginal discharge; Calc Iod – small fibroids with yellow discharge; Tarent - large fibroids, restlessness, menses to soon; Folliculinum, Nat Mur, Sepia, Thyroidinum and many more; see Lach (J; HfW)</i></p> <p>See Hysterectomy</p>
Fidelity	<p>Is it important to everyone? And at this stage of life?</p>
<i>Folliculinum</i> <i>Homeopathic remedy</i>	<p>A homeopathic remedy with the power to clear any ill effects from taking The Pill or HRT. Particularly helpful for some women at menopause or post-menopause.</p> <p>They may feel or do one or more of these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feels she is controlled by another Out of sorts with her rhythms Living out someone else's expectations Feels fed off emotionally or psychologically Loses her will Overestimates her energy Self denial Addicted to rescuing people Drained A doormat Forgotten who she is Has no individuality Loses sense of self Totally loses self in relationships <p>Folliculinum restores the will and self-esteem</p> <p><i>Complementary to Carcinosin.</i></p> <p>See Bowels</p>

Funerals	See Death and dying
Funny turns	No-one knows exactly what they are but they can cause people to fall or collapse suddenly. Possible causes are heart arrhythmia, vertigo, low blood pressure, postural hypotension. See Vertigo

G	
Gaps for Grumpies	<p>www.gapsforgrumpies.com was created for people whose children have left home and those who may have just retired or want a break between jobs. It's particularly for those who want the opportunity to give something back, to travel to less traditional destinations – or they may just be asking: why should their children have all the fun? Open to people over 40.</p> <p>Saga does a similar programme of charity/volunteer trips.</p> <p>Ads show the usual silver haired contended couples! Some ordinary gap year sites have older people's gaps as well.</p>
Generations	<p>Can be confusing: Children have left home - but then they may return. Frail elderly parents or relatives may need care. Grandchildren. Changing stable partners through divorce, separation, death. Complex family units: multiple in-laws/ grandparents, step-children, etc.</p> <p>Good book: 'What about me too?' by Kate Figes.</p> <p>See Grandchildren, see Ageing</p>
Glaucoma *+	<p>Generally associated with raised intra-ocular pressure or pressure may be normal but damage can still occur to the optic nerve and cupping of the optic disc.</p> <p>Affects loss of visual field and may need emergency treatment. Beta blockers and prostaglandin analogue drugs are most commonly used.</p> <p>Pigmentary glaucoma causes floaters and bad headaches. There is an eye/liver relationship – to do with poor fluid drainage. (CG)</p> <p>A single dose of Vitamin C (500mg) can lower intra-ocular pressure for 9 hours. (EG)</p> <p><i>Aconite, Opium, Spigelia, Gelsemium, Bryonia, Phosphorus, Belladonna along with medical supervision. (TS). Physostigma, Ruta 10M + Ruta 6x (E B)</i></p>

	See Vision
Glonoine <i>Homeopathic remedy</i>	A homeopathic remedy made from nitro glycerine (explosive) which can be helpful for vaginal dryness and hot flushes.
Gout ***+	<p>Excess uric acid in the blood forms crystals which accumulate round one or more joints. May be spread out in upper arms or concentrated in knees and lower extremities. Generally pain, redness and heat in the big toe. Can look like grumbling arthritis if no acute attacks present. May be a sodium deficiency side effect from Bendrofluazide/pharmaceutical diuretics. Pseudo gout is caused by excess calcium salts, therefore can be a side effect of calcium supplements. Also caused by diet - oily fish, cheese – but a small amount may help, raw capsicums, red meat especially offal, alcohol, peas. Better from soda water, cherries, celery, celery seeds.</p> <p>There are numerous sources of uric acid in the body, a breakdown product of nucleic acid (essential component of all living matter and contained in all foods). It accumulates from either too much in the diet, too much synthesised in the body (genetic) or too little excreted by the kidneys</p> <p><i>Ledum - feels like a bee sting on the foot, Urtica Urens - especially for acute flares/wrists and ankles, Colchicum - heel, Arnica – Don't touch!, Lycopodium, Belladonna, Formica Rufa; Sulphur, Sabina - with red patches, Amm Phos – chronic cases with nodules, Astacus, Viscum Album, Rhus Tox, Pulsatilla, Berberis, Nux Vomica, Kali Iod – neuralgia. (EB, T S, KM)</i></p>
Grandchildren	<p><u>F63</u>: Women may be cast back to caring, nurturing role which they may welcome or might not want. Grandfathers too – but often the first time for them.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: You can be squashed between an elderly parent and children/grandchildren at the same time.</p> <p><u>M81</u>: Women take it (grand mothering) on. Men can too but it's easier for them to stay aloof.</p>

	<p><u>M53</u>: Mothering issues – leaving them behind then getting caught up again. Men call it responsibility.</p> <p>Wonderful or a nightmare: different rules/standards for upbringing/eating/bedtimes/money/TV etc.</p> <p>Expensive – not just buying things for them but needing a bigger car, etc.</p> <p>Have to learn how to open and close £400 pushchairs, or clip on childproof harnesses and car seats, or play Nintendo and Wii games.</p> <p>Sometimes the grandparent is the safe haven or go-between when things at home are tough.</p> <p>See Generations</p>
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H	
Hair *	<p>Some comes and some goes. Men's eyebrows may grow. Women tend to lose eyebrows but may grow nasal hair and/or other facial hair. Men may lose it from their heads and lower legs (can be a sign of early heart disease) but grow it on their shoulders, and in their ears and nostrils. Women may lose it on their eyebrows (check their thyroid), armpits, pubic area and sometimes hairline. Eyebrows may need plucking when never before. Scalp hair may become curly or straightened. Perms may not take so well.</p> <p><u>F53</u>: I have one long hair now, which grows beside my nose!</p> <p><u>F54</u>: For hair loss and weak nails: Oil of Evening Primrose (2000mg for first month then 1000mg daily after that).</p> <p>May need electrolysis, waxing, sugaring, or laser treatment which might be provided on the NHS in severe cases.</p> <p>See Bigger bits.</p>
Harassment	<p>No more from men– women become invisible. (LyH)</p> <p>And older people generally become invisible to young people. (TG)</p>
Hearing *	<p>Homeopathy may be able to help with a range of problems from acute oversensitivity to noise, deafness and sometimes Meniere's disease and tinnitus too (but they can be difficult to treat).</p> <p>Modern tiled cafes and restaurants have awful acoustics for people with hearing loss.</p> <p><i>Phosphorus, Pulsatilla, Graphites, Sal Ac, Chenopodium, Carb An, Iodum, China, Caust, Sang, Lach, Aurum, Calc Carb, Ferr Phos, Aurum, Carb Sulph, Bell, Sulph, Rhus Tox, etc.</i></p>
Heart ***+	<p>Palpitations, angina, heart failure, heart attack, arrhythmias, etc. Can be caused or worsened by high blood pressure,</p>

	<p>stress, atheroma, anaemia, etc. Heart failure patients may be anaemic. Could it be caused by daily aspirin?</p> <p>Orthodox medical treatment can be supported by homeopathic remedies (but not self-help) which can even be curative.</p> <p>Important relationships between magnesium, calcium and heart disease. e.g. hard water has a protective effect. Consider magnesium supplements. Consider <i>Mag Mur</i> for heart arrhythmias, bypass surgery. Chocolate, oats and liquorice contain lots of magnesium (SP)</p> <p><i>Constitutional and acute treatments:</i> <i>Nux Vom, Ars Alb, Cactus, Crataegus (tincture or potency), Spigelia, Aconite, Lachesis, Digitalis, Mag Phos, Glonoine, Carb Veg, Arnica, Sulphur, Phosphorus, Latrodectus, etc. +</i></p>
Home	<p>Becomes too big when children leave, or may have to be adapted (walk-in baths, stair lifts, etc.). Downsizing or even upsizing to accommodate extended family - frail parent or children's children.</p> <p>Sheltered housing, retirement apartments and villages are open to anyone over 50!</p>
Hormones	See Emotions, see Cholesterol
Hospital	<p><u>F67</u>: Previously healthy and private people may find themselves in hospital as ageing causes things to go wrong. Some may be distressed by unfamiliar surroundings and procedures, mixed male and female wards, nurses of the opposite sex.</p> <p>Stressful role as a visitor - invisible and ignored when trying to get help for a patient.</p> <p>Helplessness: loss of control and personal dignity. Being treated like a child.</p> <p>Can be hard for family/visitors to come to terms with patient's reason for being in hospital. (SG)</p>
Hot cuddles	Cuddling triggers such great heat that the cuddle has to stop. Not necessarily the same as a hot flush as the heat can also come from the man.

	<p>Hot cuddles, not flushes.</p> <p><u>Exeter group women (ages 51 – 64)</u> recognised them: ‘Hot stuff’.</p> <p>‘Yes, it’s mainly female heat’.</p> <p>‘Awful, can’t even do cuddles: <u>Not Cuddles!</u></p> <p>‘Purely physical’.</p> <p>‘If men don’t feel the heat themselves it’s very puzzling for them’.</p> <p>‘Radiating’.</p> <p>‘Act of touching, even fingertip, creates the heat’.</p> <p>‘<i>Belladonna</i> heat’.</p> <p>‘<i>Sulphur</i>’ heat.</p> <p>‘Shame – touch gets less’.</p> <p>‘Cuddling is a great joy – can be very disappointing if not understood’.</p>
<p>Hot flushes ***</p>	<p>See Menopause</p> <p>The sudden experience of heat, often with sweating, and flowing over the whole body. They can start after the menopause and will always return if HRT has been taken to get rid of them.</p> <p><u>F60</u>: I had a hot flush every time I sat in front of my computer.</p> <p><u>F54</u>: I always get red facial flushes for a week after taking a homeopathic remedy.</p> <p><i>Pulsatilla, Glonoine, Sepia, Folliculinum, Amyl Nit, Stront Carb, Sanguinaria, Verat Viride, Aconite, Dig, Lach, Mang Acet.</i></p>
<p>HRT ***</p>	<p>HRT can produce confusion by creating inappropriate expectations for both men and women. HRT women are able to look youthful (trim bodies, unlined faces) and remain sexually active. Men (and perhaps most women) do not understand that it is a falsely maintained HRT state.</p> <p>It may be disapproved of in alternative medicine world but it certainly preserves women’s bodies in a relatively pre-menopausal state. (JH)</p> <p><u>F59</u>: There’s a pressure for quick fixes. I use Serenity (natural progesterone cream) instead.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: HRT can be good/feel younger.</p>

	<p><u>F59</u>: I take one HRT tablet every three days to maintain comfort. (NB. This is not a prescribed regime but something the person has worked out for herself.)</p> <p>See Natural Progesterone cream (Serenity)</p>
<p>Hughes Syndrome *</p>	<p>Have we heard of it or is it just a new name for thick blood?</p> <p>“There are two major ‘new’ diseases of the late twentieth century – AIDS and Hughes Syndrome ...” says Dr. Vilardell, Barcelona. In 1983 Dr Graham Hughes described a condition - often known as “sticky blood”, a.k.a. antiphospholipid syndrome (or APS) in which there was a danger of thrombosis. Diagnosed by simple blood tests, affects millions of people throughout the world. Once diagnosed, can, in most people, be treated, and further thrombosis (clotting) prevented. Patients are at risk from vein thrombosis (including DVT’s), and in some, more dangerous arterial thrombosis, including a risk of strokes and heart attacks.</p> <p>The Hughes Syndrome website also mentions link with Sjogren's syndrome and Alzheimer’s disease.</p>
<p>HCG Human Chorionic Gonadotrophin <i>Homeopathic remedy</i></p>	<p><u>F59</u>: A new multiple potency homeopathic mix in a spray, available from Helios Pharmacy. Recommended by health author Lesley Kenton for rapid and effective dieting. For losing underlying ‘pocket’ fat. ‘Headaches for first week as detoxing takes place then feel good. Can only eat a low GI diet of 500 calories/day but you don’t feel ill or weak!</p>
<p>Hydrogen <i>Homeopathic remedy</i></p>	<p>As well as lots of spacey symptoms also has ‘old’ feelings and symptoms.</p> <p>See Old feeling</p>
<p>Hypertension and hypotension</p>	<p>See Blood pressure</p>
<p>Hysterectomy *</p>	<p>So many are performed between age 40 and 50, usually because of fibroids or heavy bleeding which would stop naturally at the menopause. Women who have had a hysterectomy don’t know when they are in/through the menopause.</p> <p>Some surgeons still remove healthy ovaries as well</p>

	<p>as the uterus ‘because you won’t need them any more’ and plunge women into hormonal chaos with an instant menopause.</p> <p><u>F56</u>: I couldn’t bend or get up easily after hysterectomy.</p> <p>See Fibroids; see Folliculinum</p>
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I	
Impotence	<p>Is this more common than we would expect? One group member reported of her partner that “He became impotent after his mother died” and another said of her partner “He became impotent when his father died”.</p> <p>See Sex</p>
Incontinence – bowel *	<p>Not just urinary - Embarrassing Bodies programme said that 10% of women over 65 have some bowel incontinence as well as bladder incontinence! A new medical procedure is to put in a surgical implant which acts on nerves in the bowel.</p> <p>It is said that bowel incontinence (faecal/anal incontinence) is a sign or a symptom, <i>not</i> a diagnosis. It is the uncontrolled loss of solid or liquid stools, or wind (gas) with leakage, which occurs when the sphincter muscles and nerves in and around the rectum and anal canal are damaged (e.g. after childbirth or surgery), or become weaker (with age). Bowel incontinence affects 1% to 10% of adults and can seriously affect quality of life for most sufferers. A largely hidden problem, with sufferers too embarrassed or ashamed to tell anyone about their symptoms. Can affect anyone, but it is much more common in older people, particularly those with long-term health and mobility problems.</p> <p><i>Bar Carb – from senility, Equisetum – from infection, Gelsemium – bladder stone/enlarged prostate, Sabal Serr – enlarged prostate, Ferr Phos (T.Smith)</i></p> <p>See Kegel, see Urination; see TVT</p>
J	No information

K	
<p>Kegel exercises *</p>	<p>For men and women. The aim of Kegel exercises is to improve muscle tone by strengthening the pubo-coccygeus muscles of the pelvic floor.</p> <p><u>For women:</u></p> <p>Urinary incontinence for middle aged women (in their 40's and 50's) with stress incontinence.</p> <p>Pelvic prolapse prevention</p> <p>May improve sexual enjoyment</p> <p><u>For men:</u></p> <p>Sexual function: to help men achieve stronger erections and gain greater control over ejaculation. The objective of this may be similar to that of the exercise in women with weakened pelvic floor: to increase bladder and bowel control and sexual function. This exercise lifts up the testicles.</p> <p>Incontinence</p> <p>Post-prostatectomy urinary incontinence. There may be some benefit of offering pelvic floor muscle training with biofeedback early in the postoperative period immediately following removal of the catheter.</p> <p>Three main types: barbells, springs, and rubber bulbs. The barbells (or vaginal barbell) can be used as a vaginal exerciser, vaginal dildo or sex toy. Made of smooth, polished solid stainless steel, it is cylindrical in shape, with a rounded bulge at each end. Typically weighs one pound (454g), 6¾ inches (17.1 cm) long with a diameter of one inch (2.5 cm) at the widest part. Spring devices are made of plastic, with removable springs to allow progressive resistance. These allow pressing directly against resistance. An advantage of rubber bulb devices is that they provide visual feedback (via a gauge) of how much pressure you are applying.</p> <p>(Kegel is a popular prescribed exercise for pregnant women to prepare the pelvic floor for physiological</p>

	stresses of the later stages of pregnancy and vaginal childbirth.)
KY Jelly	See Aloe

L	
Lachesis <i>Homeopathic remedy</i>	Especially helpful at the menopause - when menses become irregular, > when bleed starts; when suspicious or jealous or usually very loquacious.
Leakiness ***	<p>Most women never talk about it (that's why I call it leakiness here rather than the more embarrassing incontinence or enuresis). Can be fairly constant, or just when walking, coughing or sneezing, or when they hear/see running water.</p> <p>Some women can laugh about it: they call themselves Tena-ladies. e.g. 'Don't make me laugh - I'm not wearing my Tena pads today'!</p> <p>Can be embarrassing to buy pads - HC says men's pads are kept on the top shelf at her pharmacy but women's are at eye-level. "They're used to looking at the top shelf - for girlie magazines!"</p> <p>Do men leak too? Yes, particularly if they have an enlarged prostate.</p> <p>Can be so serious that on rising a woman has to put a bath towel between her legs just to get to the loo. (CG)</p> <p>It happens at different times: walking downhill, sat in a car, or just getting to the loo and turning. (CG)</p> <p>Although Tena pants are designed to protect women with bladder weakness some pre-menopausal women find them helpful for flooding because the elastic prevents leakage. (TG)</p> <p>Self help and other interventions include Bowen, Pilates, pelvic floor exercises (for men and women) and Botox injections into the bladder. (E&TG's)</p> <p><i>Caust, Ferr Phos, Nux Vom, Sepia, Apis, Nat Mur, Puls, Zinc Met.</i></p> <p>See Kegel, see Incontinence, see Prostate, see Drippy noses, see TVT</p>
Leucorrhoea	<p>Leuco = white. 'A white, mucous, vaginal discharge, usually the result of an infection of the vagina. Also called the whites.'</p> <p>Does leucorrhea also cover the normal oestrogen-</p>

	<p>related pre-menopausal cyclical discharge? It disappears as well as menses at the menopause. (Very very difficult to find any reliable information about this.)</p>
<p>Libido *</p>	<p>Libido is conscious or unconscious sexual desire, not 'performance' or sexual satisfaction. Generally sexual desire increases with age for men and decreases for women. It is normal for sexual drive to diminish with age but the degree is highly variable. Elderly people often enjoy sex into later life, often beyond the expectations of others. Quality aspects of sexual activity may also change and improve with age. It is associated with wellbeing, hence illness, hormone changes and psychological factors may depress libido. Male hormones are important in libido for men and women. Lack of androgens and excess of prolactin both appear to be important.</p> <p>Reasons for low libido in mid life may be: Normal hormone changes at menopause. Treatment for cancer of prostate. Diminished sexual potency and vaginal dryness may contribute. If sex is not fulfilling, then interest will wane. There may be erectile dysfunction, premature ejaculation, failure of ejaculation or performance anxiety due to criticism. Other circumstances: illness, injury, stress, exhaustion, depression, anxiety, mental health problems, drugs or alcohol, family difficulties, grief, lack of time, prolonged separation for work or family issues, ageing and menopause. Poor body image and/or low self-esteem. Relationship issues. Past or current physical or emotional abuse. History of sexual abuse or rape. Latent lesbianism. Chronic high intake of alcohol depresses sexual desire and cirrhosis can depress androgen levels.</p> <p>HRT to promote libido is not appropriate on the balance of efficacy and risks. The value of androgen patches for treating hormone deficient men is somewhat dubious. The effects of the hormone on liver and cholesterol may be adverse. The use of testosterone in men is controversial and in women even more so.</p>

**Living alone/Staying together
and LATs**

*

Living Apart Together is a term for couples who, while committed to each other, decide to have separate homes rather than one shared residence. Research in 2007 suggested that there were as many LAT relationships in the UK as there were cohabiting relationships. There are three approaches LAT couples can take, concerning decision to keep separate domestic residences. The majority are the "gladly apart", along with the "regretfully apart" (due to work commitments, family responsibilities, legal or residency requirements, or other reasons) and the "undecidedly apart" (committed but not especially moving towards cohabitation at the time).

65% of divorces in people over 50 are initiated by women. They have many implications – good and bad.

May be a sharp contrast to the adjustment needed if/when the house gets fuller - by retirement, old or young people moving in.

Peace and quiet or terrifying emptiness. Possible solution: get a pet or a lodger.

What happens if I'm ill, have a fall, etc and I'm on my own?

The joy or horror of sleeping alone. (No more snoring or having the light on late)

Choosing everything on your own - what to eat, where to go that day, what to watch on the telly or listen to on the radio, etc.

F51: Loneliness. I could be left on the shelf if leave my husband.

On Staying together:

M53: Staying together at least until children leave home. And: Some people stay together - inappropriately.

'It's a good second chance'.

M81: I came close to leaving my wife many times in the past. She tolerated me, so it was hard to go. Now there's deep affection. I think of people who swop partners and don't get the enduring

	<p>advantages. And: But long lives nowadays leave room for two or more long relationships.</p> <p><u>M57</u>: Think of couples who don't have children (including gay couples).</p> <p><u>M53</u>: Making bones together.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: People have their children much later now. Men have their midlife crisis age 40-ish while their children are still young.</p> <p>And: It's important to swap roles in couples.</p> <p>Words of wisdom from a nurse who looked after her own parents long term. Regarding intervention when they need but refuse help "let them do what they want to do" - like getting dressed or not, taking medications or not, even not washing every day if they don't want to.</p> <p>"In this day and age when you can have it all it can be a bit unfair when you get it all" – (looking after parents, children and/or grandchildren). (TG)</p>
Love	Does it change in mid life?
Lumbago *	<p>Pain in the low back involving lumbar muscles and sacro ligaments in a girdle-like distribution. Usually worse in cold, wet, draughty conditions and for movement.</p> <p><i>Rhus Tox, Aconite, Arnica, Bryonia, Ant Tart, Sulphur</i></p>

M	
<i>Magnesiums</i> <i>Homeopathic remedies</i>	There are several magnesium based homeopathic remedies which can be used to sooth and sustain the whole body including the nervous system, digestion, skin, blood and heart.
Male Menopause/Andropause *	<p>Also known as late-onset hypogonadism (or getting on in years and underwhelmed in the gonads). It is believed to occur in 8.4% of men aged 50-79 years.</p> <p>Treatable with TRT, testosterone replacement therapy, in a long-acting injection or as a Testogel which is rubbed on the shoulders daily.</p> <p>Possible indications: Declining sex drive Fatigue and lessening energy Forgetfulness and inability to concentrate Anger, anxiety, irritability and depression Weight gain Sleep problems Osteoporosis and muscle wastage Confusion and indecisiveness Declining self confidence Hot flushes and night sweats.</p> <p>GP's may prescribe anti-depressants but they can make testosterone levels worse. One anti-depressant Effexor is now known in medical circles as 'No-sex-or'. (The Independent, 24.8.10)</p> <p>See Mid Life Crisis</p>
Mammogram	See Breasts
Maturity	<p>This was not on my original list but when the mixed Exeter group brought it up they talked for 25 minutes.</p> <p>It was a very male-dominated subject. Cornwall group women added more later.</p> <p>'Maybe less of a problem for women. They mature earlier and communicate better'.</p> <p>Definition: 'Having access to whatever we want to be'.</p> <p>'Maturity is not being so bothered – about anxieties'.</p> <p><u>F59</u>: Growing up, waking up and an ability to respond.</p>

	<p><u>M56</u>: Never give the I Ch'ing to a man or a woman until they've passed at least fifty summers.</p> <p><u>M81</u>: Maturity doesn't mean 'sorted'. It's about accepting things. 'Give me the wisdom to change ...' quote. And the saying: 'Don't marry someone who can't spend an evening on their own.'</p> <p><u>F51</u>: Maturity is related to happiness. But you don't have to be mature to be happy. Can remain childish.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: Maturity is associated with taking responsibility.</p> <p><u>M67</u>: Women are more mature than men, especially when linked to responsibility. Women take responsibility earlier than men – from childbirth.</p> <p><u>M56</u>: We can actually grow up. We can mature and grow up while other bits fall apart.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: Now eroded: women have to be providers because men walk away.</p> <p><u>F63</u>: Maturity – a compliment for men but heavy for women.</p> <p><u>M81</u>: Mature means old, so more acceptable to men and difficult for women.</p> <p><u>F63</u>: Men are more interested in maturity than women. Women are ahead of the game, men have to strive harder for maturity.</p> <p><u>M53</u>: Aware men think it's important. Women's journey is about taking power in the world. Men look at themselves, women are more okay with themselves.</p> <p><u>M81</u>: The old Woman's page in the Guardian was really interesting because it was about people and relationships, not action (like sport).</p> <p><u>M53</u> asks <u>M81</u> what are the qualities associated with maturity? 'The way you handle situations. Learning other people's ideas/concepts'.</p> <p><u>M67</u>: Maturity may be a state some of us don't want to achieve.</p>
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	<p><u>M57</u>: Like an apple – it reaches maturity then goes rotten!</p> <p><u>F64</u>: Giving independence to our children makes them mature.</p> <p><u>M81</u>: I have an uncomfortable feeling that I haven't matured!</p> <p>'We don't get the bodies we deserve. Just at the point we begin to get the hang of it all, things begin to sag. Jowls come. Hair, for many of us recedes. Joints seize up, teeth loosen, eyelids droop, baldness strikes the shins, the abdominal musculature fails and the belly pots, and there is damn all the gym can do about it.'</p> <p>And</p> <p>'I suppose there comes a time when many men stop weighing up women in terms of leg-over possibilities and haven't a clue where to go from there.'</p> <p>And</p> <p>'We don't expect women to fancy us or fall in love with us. But nor do we expect to be the target of bigoted <i>vieux jeu</i> populist insults because we're too good mannered to return them. Don't accuse us of saggy ugliness; it's a boomerang, dears.'</p> <p>(Michael Bywater, The Independent)</p>
<p>Memory loss (including menopausal) *</p>	<p>May be quite frightening, especially around the menopause years, 45-55. Can feel as though the memory falls into a 'black hole', either momentarily or more generally. Usually recovers quite a lot or totally by age 60. Fear of dementia.</p> <p>Big difference between: 'Where are my glasses?' and 'What are my glasses?'</p> <p>Losing the car keys or losing the ability to drive. Forgetting where you parked the car or not knowing how to find your way home. Forgetting your grandchild's name or forgetting to pick the grandchild up from school.</p> <p>May be called Senior Moments or CRAFT Moments (Can't Remember a F***** Thing).</p> <p>Ageing tends to cause loss of short-term memory but improved long-term memory. If you can't remember names any more just say: 'I'm so sorry I've forgotten your name. All I remember is that I know I like you'.</p>

	<p><u>F60</u>: Sometimes memory loss can be helpful, like forgetting the year of my mother's death and things like that.</p> <p>Possible causes: Important: Urine infection Underactive thyroid Vitamin B12 deficiency Hormonal – menopause Alcohol Hughes syndrome, a.k.a. sticky blood syndrome - rare</p> <p><i>Anac, Arg Nit, Aurum, Conium, Bar Carb, Kali Brom, Lyc, Merc Sol, Nux Mosch, see Oleander, see Physalis, see Dubois (HfW, etc.)</i></p> <p>See Dementia, see Hughes syndrome.</p>
<p>Menopause ***</p>	<p><u>JH</u> theory: The more unresolved emotional baggage a woman carries with her into the menopause the worse her symptoms may be. And a difficult menstrual history may also lead to a difficult menopause.</p> <p><u>M53</u>: Some women want to pull away from men at their menopause. Losing reproduction - my wife lost interest in me because she can no longer have babies.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: Women want to shed that image of carer</p> <p><u>F59</u>: It's a natural process. We need good communications - to talk about natural difficulties.</p> <p><u>F60</u>: My special awareness has diminished since the menopause. I can't reverse my car so well. <u>F63</u>: But it should improve again after a while.</p>

	<p>www.menopausesupport.org.uk A social enterprise company Menopause Support which combines courses with an interactive website delivering information, self-help tips and useful exercises and techniques to enable women to take more control of their lives.</p> <p>http://www.daisynetwork.org.uk/pdfs/Natural Menopause Guide.pdf A brief and moderately helpful booklet produced by Pharma Nord on nutritional supplements.</p> <p>The cessation of menstruation, usually around age 50-52, caused by the end of the end of the reproductive cycle of ovulation; also brought on by surgical removal of ovaries and can be from psychological causes.</p> <p>Approx 10 years of peri-menopause when the symptoms start and may include flooding, fibroids, menstrual irregularities, then 10 more post-menopause after periods have stopped and symptoms gradually cease.</p> <p>Can cause any or none of these, either mildly or severely:</p> <p>Mood swings, irregular periods, menstrual clots, emotional tension, sexual changes (too much or too little desire), night sweats, hot flushes (which may be dry or damp, visibly red or not visible at all), vaginal atrophy/ dryness - itching and dryness that can make sex very uncomfortable. Sleep disturbance (from sweats and flushes) leading to irritability and problems with short-term memory and concentration. Also headaches, rheumatic pains, urinary infections such as cystitis, haemorrhoids, varicose veins, vertigo, transient memory loss, depression and more. Psychologically can be painful if hoped-for family has not been possible.</p> <p>Conventional treatment includes oestrogen cream and vaginal pessaries; Hormone Replacement Therapy which replaces missing oestrogen or Tibolone, a synthetic steroid like HRT.</p> <p><i>Sepia, Lachesis, Pulsatilla, Folliculinum, Carcinosis, Nat Mur, Ignatia, Lilium Tig, Cimicifuga, Verat Viride, Caulophyllum, Amyl Nit, Sanguinaria, Bellis Per.. etc.</i></p> <p>See Hot flushes; see Obesity, see Sex; see Leucorrhoea; see Menopause; see Natural Progerone</p>
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<p>Mid Life Crisis ***</p>	<p>Often home and work life is secure, friends are established, finances okay but something seems to be missing. A sense of being trapped by the very things and events that have been planned and worked for over the years. A period of profound self-appraisal with flatness and depression, failure and futility. Life's procrastinators: a fear of making changes in the past or future. Consequences affect everyone in the family. Rigidity and overwork may result as compensation. Infidelity, separation and divorce too. Midlife crises produce a peak in divorce. It's a modern phenomenon partly because people live so much longer and potentially have many more years with their partner after children have grown up than they used to. Before good contraception women could be well into their fifties before children grew up - then they died!</p> <p>Men – midlife crisis age 40-ish while children still young.</p> <p><i>May respond very well to homeopathy. Lyc, Nux Vom, Bryonia, Ars Alb, Kali Carb, Carcinosin.</i></p> <p>See Male Menopause, see Empty Nest</p>
<p>Money: poverty and wealth</p>	<p>Maybe much less than expected – or maybe much more from inheritance. Pensions/property/benefits/etc.</p> <p>Not specific to mid-life but we may be more used to make-do-and-mend than younger people if times get hard. Some people may be surprisingly well off because they have good index-linked pensions while others are much poorer at retirement. Some people may become unexpectedly rich from inheritance while others watch their parents' carefully accumulated wealth pay for nursing home fees.</p>

N	
Nails	<p>Become much stronger and thicker - both finger nails and toe nails.</p> <p>Gradual trauma (even micro-trauma with every step over the years) causes thickening.</p> <p>Also increased difficulty in bending to cut them.</p> <p>If nails are thin and split, type more. (LC)</p> <p>See Hair – Evening Primrose</p>
Naps	<p>A strong, sometimes uncontrollable need or desire to rest or doze in afternoons or evenings.</p>
Nat Mur <i>Homeopathic remedy</i>	<p>A wonderful British ‘stiff upper lip’ remedy especially for the effects of grief, including loss of a marriage/divorce when there may be some bitterness</p> <p>See <i>Carcinosin</i></p>
Natural Progesterone cream	<p>Definitive book written by American GP, Dr John Lee in 1993:</p> <p>Pros: 105 women used it for menopausal symptoms with 86% success rate.</p> <p>a.k.a Serenity Cream.</p> <p>Pros and cons:</p> <p><u>F59</u>: I tried it at age 57 but it gave me acne; I must have still been producing my own hormones then (with a late menopause). Now, at 59, I feel it allows me to produce the oestrogen I need now. If your body isn’t ready for it you could easily give up. I was getting fat cells, a ‘muffin top’ appearance but it went away when I re-started Serenity. I wouldn’t take HRT. HRT replaces oestrogen. But natural progesterone (Serenity) stimulates oestrogen production. If I’m not capable of producing it I wouldn’t take it. It has plumped up my vaginal tissue.</p>

O	
Obesity *+	<p>In addition to dietary indiscretions can also occur with hormonal changes such as thyroid imbalance especially at menopause.</p> <p>Dietary denial is common; we don't record or (want to) remember everything we eat.</p> <p><i>Thyroidinum, Nat Mur, Calc Carb, Phytolacca Berry – tincture.</i></p> <p>See Cellulite, see Weight gain</p>
Old feeling	<p><u>F51</u>: I felt old when I turned 50, like my mother. I took <i>Hydrogen 1M (a homeopathic remedy)</i> daily for a few days and now feel less old.</p> <p>An older or 'feeling old' partner can make the other partner feel older than they are.</p>
Oleander <i>Rose-laurel</i> <i>Homeopathic remedy</i>	<p>Weak memory. Slow perception. Sadness with loss of confidence and power. Also v. sensitive skin, cramps, heart symptoms, etc. (HfW)</p>
Osteoporosis *	<p>Osteoporosis means "porous bones" - when bones lose an excessive amount of their protein and mineral content, particularly calcium.</p> <p>Bone is living tissue that is constantly being renewed in a two-stage process (resorption and formation) that occurs throughout life.</p> <p>In the resorption/demineralizing stage which reduces bone density, old bone is broken down and removed by cells called osteoclasts. In the formation stage which increases bone density, cells called osteoblasts build new bone to replace the old.</p> <p>Osteoblast activity is stimulated by progesterone, oestrogen, testosterone, isoflavones, synthetic selective oestrogen receptor modulator molecules (SERMs), vitamin D and exercise.</p> <p>Osteoclast activity is stimulated by immune system disorders, depression, inactivity, nutrient-poor diet, steroid drugs and depleted hormones.</p> <p>Over time, bone mass, and therefore bone strength, decreases; bones become fragile and break easily. Even a sneeze or a sudden movement may be enough to break a bone in someone with severe osteoporosis.</p> <p>Occurs most often in older people and in women after menopause. Affects nearly half of men and</p>

women over the age of 75. Women are about five times more likely than men to develop the disease because of smaller, thinner bones to begin with, and they lose bone mass more rapidly after menopause when they stop producing oestrogen, a bone-protecting hormone,. In the 5-7 years after menopause, women can lose about 20% of their bone mass. By age 65 or 70, men and women lose bone mass at the same rate. As an increasing number of men reach an older age osteoporosis is an important health issue for them as well.

While women commonly lose 30-50% of their bone mass over their lifetimes, men lose only 20-33%. Women with small bones and those who are thin are more liable to have osteoporosis.

The most common fracture locations are the hip, spine, and wrist, but any bone can be affected. Breaks in the hip and spine are of special concern because they almost always require hospitalization and major surgery, and may lead to other serious consequences, including permanent disability and even death.

Compression fractures of the spine are common. These can happen even after a seemingly normal activity, such as bending or twisting to pick up a light object. The fractures can cause severe back pain, but sometimes go unnoticed—either way, the vertebrae collapse down on themselves, and the person actually loses height. The hunchback appearance of many elderly women, sometimes called "dowager's" hump or "widow's" hump, is due to this effect of osteoporosis on the vertebrae.

Women who stop menstruating early because of heredity, surgery or lots of physical exercise may lose large amounts of bone tissue early in life. Conditions such as anorexia and bulimia also may lead to early menopause and osteoporosis.

Smoking, drinking too much or lack of exercise produces an increased chance of osteoporosis. Also calcium or protein dietary deficiency - hence people who constantly diet are more prone to the disease.

Genetics. Research in Europe reported in 2003 that variations of a gene on chromosome 20 might make some postmenopausal women more likely to have

osteoporosis.

During childhood and early adulthood, more bone is produced than removed, reaching its maximum mass and strength by the mid-30s. After that, bone is lost faster than it is formed - primary osteoporosis. Can also be caused by other diseases or prolonged use of certain medications like steroids that result in bone loss - secondary osteoporosis.

The most accurate and advanced of the densitometers uses a technique called DEXA (dual energy x-ray absorptiometry). With the DEXA scan, a double x-ray beam takes pictures of the spine, hip, or entire body. It takes about 20 minutes to do, is painless, and exposes the patient to only a small amount of radiation—about one-fiftieth that of a chest x ray. The CT scan, which takes a large number of x rays of the same spot from different angles, is an accurate test, but uses higher levels of radiation than other methods.

Alternative treatments focus on maintaining or building strong bones. A healthy diet low in fats and animal products and containing whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and calcium-rich foods (such as dairy products, dark-green leafy vegetables, sardines, salmon, and almonds), along with nutritional supplements (such as calcium, magnesium, and vitamin D), and weight-bearing exercises.

Herbal supplements emphasize the use of calcium-containing plants, such as horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), oat straw (*Avena sativa*), alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*), liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza galbra*), marsh mallow (*Althaea officinalis*), and yellow dock (*Rumex crispus*).

Traditional Chinese medicine recommends herbs thought to slow or prevent bone loss, including Dong Quai (*Angelica sinensis*) and Asian ginseng (*Panax ginseng*).

Natural hormone therapy, uses plant estrogens (from soybeans) or progesterone (from wild yams), may be recommended for women who cannot or choose not to take synthetic hormones.

Getting calcium from foods:

Milk, cheese, and yogurt have the highest amounts. Other foods that are high in calcium are green leafy vegetables, tofu, shellfish, Brazil nuts, sardines, and almonds.

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium. People

	<p>can get vitamin D from sunshine with a quick (15-20 minute) walk each day or from foods such as liver, fish oil, and vitamin-D fortified milk. During the winter months it may be necessary to take supplements. Four hundred mg daily is usually the recommended amount.</p> <p><u>Smoking</u> reduces bone mass, as does heavy drinking. Avoiding smoking and limiting alcoholic drinks to no more than two per day reduces risks. An alcoholic drink is one-and-a-half ounces of hard liquor, 12 ounces of beer, or five ounces of wine.</p> <p><u>Exercise</u> regularly builds and strengthens bones. Weight-bearing exercises—where bones and muscles work against gravity—are best. These include aerobics, dancing, jogging, stair climbing, tennis, walking, and lifting weights. People who have osteoporosis may want to attempt gentle exercise, such as walking, rather than jogging or fast-paced aerobics, which increase the chance of falling. Exercising three to four times per week for 20-30 minutes each time helps.</p> <p>Apparently over-the-counter laxatives and antacids (which contain aluminium) should be avoided.</p> <p>Meta-analysis encompassing 15 randomised trials and over 11,000 participants concluded that the use of calcium supplements for osteoporosis without co-administered vitamin D is associated with an increased risk of MI (heart attack). ‘Clinicians should tell their patients that for most older people the risks of calcium supplements outweigh the benefits. Changing to calcium-rich foods may be appropriate’ (Dr Ian R Reid, University of Auckland) (BMJ online 29.7.10)</p> <p><i>Homeopathic remedies focus on treatments to help the body absorb calcium.</i> <i>Calc Carb, Calc Phos, Calc Fluor, Hekla Lava, Silica, Symphytum</i></p> <p>See Back</p>
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P	
Pelvic Floor Muscles ***	Weak after childbirth but also as a result of hormonal changes in mid-life. <i>Sepia. Nat Mur.</i> See Kegel exercises, see Leakiness
Pills *	For everything: not just for treating symptoms but now for preventing them as well. Staying healthy is a new marketing opportunity. e.g. Statins, beta blockers warfarin, vitamins, mineral supplements, fish oils, etc. People even have boxes labelled with the days of the week so they can load them with each day's pills. Do they all do what they're meant to? All drugs (including some herbal medicines) have some side effects and patients may become dependent on some of them, and some just don't work. Side effects – important: Can also be from nutritional supplements and herbal remedies, e.g. Agnus Castus (head falling) as herbal menopause treatment.
<i>Physalis (Solanum Vesicarium)</i> <i>Winter Cherry</i> <i>Homeopathic remedy</i>	Weak memory and urinary symptoms. Dizziness with haziness. Urge to talk continuously (HfW)
Potency	Male loss of potency = loss of confidence++ as well
Progesterone	See Natural Progesterone cream
Prolapse *+	Bladder and uterine. At every cough (LyH). Often needs surgical intervention but homeopathic remedies <i>Agaricus, Arg Met, Sepia</i> may help. See Kegel
Prostate enlargement/cancer/prostatitis ***	Enlarged prostate (benign prostatic hyperplasia or <u>BPH</u>). <u>PSA</u> (Prostate-specific antigen) blood test for

prostate cancer is very unreliable. Normal PSA is 4. I have seen men swing between 4 and 400 in the space of weeks - very unreliable.

Caused by an overgrowth of prostate cells, symptoms include: difficulty passing urine because of weak and slow flow, passing urine frequently (more than 10 times a day), frequently waking up in the night to urinate (nocturia), incomplete emptying of the bladder.

Similar to prostate cancer, prostate enlargement usually only affects men over the age of 50, and about half men over this age will have some sort of prostate enlargement.

For mild symptoms: avoid alcoholic or caffeine-based drinks; avoid drinking late at night; increase fruit and fibre in diet to avoid constipation, which can put pressure on the bladder.

Other treatment options can include medication or a prostatectomy (a surgical procedure to remove part of, or the whole, prostate).

Radiotherapy implants may be used now for prostate cancer.

Prostatitis is inflammation of the prostate, often caused by a bacterial infection. It can be caused by an infection that spreads from the bladder or can be an associated symptom of an STI, such as Chlamydia. It shares similar symptoms to a bladder infection, such as difficulty in passing urine, but if an STI is present then there can be additional symptoms, such as discharge. The infection can develop into a chronic condition, in which case it can reoccur at frequent intervals. There is no single cure for chronic prostatitis – if antibiotics don't clear up the infection then self-help measures such as hot baths, avoidance of strenuous activity and regular ejaculation are normally prescribed, the latter helping to drain the prostate and clear infected matter.

Zinc supplements; Pumpkin Oil; Boiled broccoli juice relieves pain.

Homeopathy: Always give Thuja or Med then Sabal Serr even for normal enlargement in old men; Conium - with urination problems; Euphr; Ferr Pic; Chimaphila; Lyc (KM). Sabal Serr in high potency followed by low, Gels. (Trevor Smith). For enlargement - pumpkin seeds made into a porridge

	<p><i>for breakfast (Boericke); Hydrangea 200 – urine retention; Cad Phos, Bar Carb, Nux Vom, Hydrastis 200, Selenium, Alumina, Pop Trem, Digitalis, Staphysagria 200. (Elvia Bury).</i></p> <p>See Kegel exercises</p>
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Q	No information
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R	
Respect	<u>M57</u> : For elders. No more.
Retirement *	<p>Doesn't suit everyone equally. Some love it while others feel like a spare part.</p> <p>Some can retire comfortably while others have to continue to work for the money.</p> <p>Many want to continue to work beyond 60 or 65. B&Q actively encourages older workers. 'The problem with retired people is that they're so incredibly busy'.</p> <p>'The strange experience of going back to visit your old workplace or attend an old colleague's retirement party and finding you know no-one there. And they're all so young'.</p> <p>One woman worried for the first six months of retirement that she'd die 'because people retire then die'.</p> <p>'It's a real issue doing things just for myself.'</p> <p>'Looking after the family isn't a proper job (therefore you can't retire from it)'</p> <p>'I feel guilty that I'm not working any more. (4 others agreed with this.) I can't sit and read a book during the daytime.'</p> <p>Unlike the Maturity topic which was dominated by men, this one was dominated by women.</p> <p><u>F58</u>: (After leaving work prematurely to look after her mother) I don't know what I am now. I always worked.</p> <p><u>F56</u>: I looked forward to his retirement but he's refusing to retire. He wants a new career.</p> <p><u>F54</u>: There can be problems in clergy families. They can go on to 70 and cling to their title and authority. Their wives have to share them all of the time (and there can be hostility from parishioners if the wife has her own life and interests or even just</p>

	<p>looking after her children which stop her giving wholehearted support to the church and her husband). Some clergy have no home to retire to and no money to buy one. (Farmers can be in tied houses too).</p> <p><u>F63</u>: My husband works away a lot. I can't imagine what it will be like when he retires. Professions like the armed services, oil rig workers, even teachers – they can be either away all the time or at home all the time - difficult and frequent transitions. Retirement is more final than that.</p> <p><u>F64</u>: You only retire for 2 weeks then get on with it.</p> <p><u>F51</u>: It's difficult and exhausting to organise your life without a schedule (of work). You need to retire <i>to</i> something.</p> <p><u>F61</u>: It's bloody awful (when your husband retires).</p> <p><u>F56</u>: No routine, no pattern.</p> <p><u>M57</u>: You need something to retire to, a passion.</p> <p><u>F59</u>: You lose your confidence.</p>
<p>Rheumatism</p>	<p>Inflammation of the sheaths of the muscles and joints. Painful with swelling sometimes. Caused by damp, cold, chills and draughts.</p> <p><i>Rhus Tox, Bryonia, Rhododendron, Causticum, Pulsatilla, Ruta Grav, Calc Hypophos – sharp pains in wrists/hands.</i></p> <p>See Arthritis</p>

S	
Sciatica *	<i>Kali Iod, Lyc, Viscum Alb, Coloc, Rhus Tox, Indium (Elvia Bury)</i>
Selfishness	Can get more selfish – may be a good thing or a bad thing
Sepia <i>Homeopathic remedy</i>	The Woman’s Friend - a constitutional remedy from puberty to old age
Senile Atrophic Vaginitis a.k.a. Vaginal Atrophy	<p>Post menopause, after oestrogen levels have dropped (and the oestrogen/testosterone balance is altered) the vaginal mucosa (lining) becomes thin, loses its elasticity and also its resistance to normal organisms that live around that tissue.</p> <p>The vagina can become inflamed and painful and, in time, narrows - making medical examinations and sex agonising. The vulva also shrinks with age. Only treatment is to restore oestrogen levels artificially.</p> <p>Can happen to women who have virtually symptom-free menapauses.</p> <p>The word Senile is generally not used by doctors now! (Dr Stuttaford in The Oldie, Feb 2008)</p>
Serenity	See Natural Progesterone Cream
Sex *	<p>Questions, questions: When does sex end naturally/biologically? Or doesn’t it? For women? (Gradually from 55 – 60 for me but I didn’t realise it would become permanent at the time.) For Men? (? 60+) How long do men go on for? Does it depend on their partner’s age? There are lots of older Dads. Does it matter when sex ends? Do practitioners need to know? Do people need to know when it will end for them?</p> <p>I gave out simple and anonymous questionnaires after some of my seminars but there was no consistency in replies to the above questions.</p> <p>We may be living in sexually enlightened times but sex is still a great taboo subject. Even calling it something can be difficult: ‘sex’, ‘sleeping with’, ‘fuck’, etc.</p>

People will talk about all sorts of relationship problems but very few can talk about what goes on in bed. For the last 40-50 years, perhaps since The Pill was developed and fertility was relatively easy to control sex became marketable as a must have, must do achievement. Magazines like Cosmopolitan, Forum, etc. taught us about multiple orgasms, simultaneous orgasms, G spots, female ejaculation, fantasies, mirrors, threesomes or even foursomes. And most importantly, if you weren't having loads of sex you'd become shrivelled and repressed. Consequently the idea of sexual failure and sexual pathology was born.

How's this for medical cynicism?

From an October 2010, newspaper announcement: 'Female Sexual Dysfunction was invented by the drug industry'. 'Female Sexual Dysfunction – which is claimed to affect up to two thirds of women – is a disorder invented by the pharmaceutical industry to build global markets for drugs to treat it, it is claimed today. Drug companies have invested millions in the search for a female equivalent of Viagra, so far without success. But while doing so they have stoked demand by creating a buzz around the disorder they have created, according to Ray Moynihan, lecturer at the University of Newcastle, Australia. Corporate employees worked with medical opinion leaders, ran surveys aimed at portraying the problem as widespread and helped create the diagnostic instruments to persuade women that their sexual difficulties deserved a medical label. But sex problems in women are far more complex than they are in men, encompassing lack of desire, lack of arousal and lack of orgasm and the industry's narrow focus is failing them.

In his book *Sex, Lies and Pharmaceuticals* Mr Moynihan says:

Drug marketing is merging with medical science in a fascinating and frightening way..... In 2005, Pfizer, makers of Viagra, funded a survey which showed that 63% of women had sexual dysfunction and that testosterone and Viagra might be helpful. In 2006, Procter and Gamble, makers of a testosterone patch for women, sponsored a survey showing one in 10 postmenopausal women had hypoactive (low) sexual desire disorder. Etc. Efforts by the companies to meet the need have subsequently foundered although the drugs have so far failed more are in the pipeline and 'the drug industry shows no sign of abandoning plans to meet the unmet need it has helped to manufacture.

Increasingly I believe that low sexual desire in women after the menopause is normal! – unless they take HRT.

In September 2010, the British Society for Sexual Medicine (BSSM) noted that some patients are inappropriately prescribed drugs which do not effectively tackle their problem.

More than half of patients taking Viagra found it did not solve their problems adequately. Low testosterone (see Male Menopause) was the main problem for 10% of men suffering erectile dysfunction and drugs such as Viagra had no effect if taken alone.

www.bssm.org.uk - good website.

F63: My husband became impotent 10 years ago at age 53 when his mother died. Viagra restored his sex life very successfully 18 months ago and I started using natural progesterone cream a few months ago to enjoy a renewed (post-menopausal for me) sex life. Then my husband suggested I use Viagra (for women) as well but I became aware that my body was naturally winding down sexually and I did not feel that it was appropriate for me. We've got a good relationship so we could discuss these difficulties and pleasures with honesty and good humour. I am though a great believer in listening to your body.

M53: Children and menopause can cause relationships to flounder. Sexuality/intimacy.

F62: Viagra gave my partner a good erection but he couldn't come. And he had side effects – headaches and insomnia.

F59: 'Not necessarily a sign of other things wrong. But sex is not easy. Can't easily talk about sex and sexuality with partner, it's embarrassing, but I'm determined to keep communication skills open.

F56: My husband gets more exhausted after sex. It's draining.

F57: My libido has gone underground; it takes longer to get there – but it's more intense and enjoyable than before the menopause.

M53: Testosterone rocks on, oestrogen withdraws' And 'It makes a big problem. A big loss when it goes. Sex keeps you together.

M67: There's no warning.

F53: The media concentrates on male sexuality – Viagra, etc. Nothing for women – only menopause. Dry vagina/desire.

F63: Not much info around for women maybe because they retire at 60. Gradual changes until disappointment at 60. I thought I could treat things – but I failed. The media suggest we're all at it all the time.

F53: TV talk shows message: it goes on forever but you may need more lubricant. And do they take HRT?

M67: You have to change gear, discover other things.

F59: My husband sometimes just needs sex for a release. A loving relationship enables a woman to be more giving: a 'quickie' for the right reasons. An honesty about it.

M57 talking about his in-laws: Older couple – decided no more sex at 60. He was nasty, now they're wonderful friends.

F63: Dryness is first stage of failure. You think everyone else is doing it. I couldn't talk about it then – my own personal inadequacy. You try the ads for lubricants but then everything shrivels up and no lubricant helps any more.

F63: Women tend to take the blame but possibly men in their 50's don't perform as well as they did, hence Viagra. Are men happy for women to blame themselves? Does it let men off the hook? It's very isolating for women.

Very little comment from the men except medical reasons (excuses?): 'Men have less energy; they can't do what they used to do, but "still a man"!

M57: Men have a problem (if their performance fails). I always thought women had got it sorted.

M56: Potency. It's crushing if men can't get it up. A quick sense of failure both ways. Women can't understand that'

M53: Bloody erection. The difference between intimacy and sexuality is important. And: My wife lost

	<p>interest in me at the menopause because she can no longer have babies.</p> <p>Perhaps this is more common than anyone realises. Sex hormones have a purpose - procreation.</p> <p>We've been led to believe that sex should always be fun but.....</p> <p>Painful sex for women is often due to vaginal dryness or even recurrent cystitis and almost certainly will take the pleasure from sex and hence the drive.</p> <p>Agony Aunt, Virginia Ironside noted that 'it can sometimes feel as though someone is rubbing you down on the inside with sandpaper'. For some women, no amount of hormone cream, HRT, Vaseline or fancy lubricants will entirely restore their earlier carefree enjoyment.</p> <p>She also says that: 'Getting lucky' no longer means you've scored with a bloke, it means that you found a car park space at Waitrose.</p> <p>For men, many become increasingly impotent with weaker erections and sometimes it takes longer to ejaculate. However, they may be better, more considerate lovers than their youthful, randy counterparts.</p> <p>No sex doesn't mean we can't be sexy.</p> <p>Perhaps sex just isn't as important as it used to be for some of us.</p> <p>And strangely, in sex surveys men always seem to have more than women. How can that be - unless they're all gay? Men tend to boast about their prowess.</p> <p>This book is written by a husband and wife couple and she takes HRT: 'The New Love and Sex After 60' by Robert N. Butler, M.D., Myrna I. Lewis, Ph.D. Here are some excerpts which show why we are now so confused: 'What can we safely say about sexuality in later life? Our views on this topic have not yet caught up with the slowly changing character of aging. Many people-not only the young and middle-aged but older people themselves-are quite uniformly negative about the prospects of continued sexual interest and ability. Many simply assume that the game is over somewhere in late midlife or early later life. They couldn't be more wrong. In spite of the scarcity of nationwide data, we turn to our own clinical and research work and the work of other gerontologists and researchers to demonstrate that relatively healthy older people who</p>
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enjoy sex are capable of experiencing it-often until very late in life. Frequently those who do have sexual problems can be helped..... We have written this book for those older men and women who are presently or potentially interested in sexuality and would like to know more about what is likely to happen to their sexuality over time. We will offer solutions to sexual problems that may occur, and propose ways of countering the negative attitudes that older people may experience-within themselves, from family members, from the medical and psychotherapeutic professions, and from society at large. We especially want older people to know that their concerns and problems are not unique, that they are not alone in their experience, and that many others feel *exactly as they do*. Even those people who have had a lively enthusiasm and capacity for sex all their lives often need information, support, and sometimes various kinds of treatment in order to continue engaging in sexual activity as the years go by. In addition, people for whom sex may not have been especially satisfying in their younger days may find that it is now possible to improve the quality of the experience despite their long-standing difficulties..... Sex and sexuality are pleasurable, rewarding, and fulfilling experiences that can enhance the middle and later years. But they are also-as everyone knows- enormously complex psychologically. Every one of us carries with us throughout our lives a weight of attitudes related to sexuality that have been shaped by our genes, our parents, our families, our teachers, and our society, some of which are positive and some negative, some of which we realize and many of which we are unaware..... As an older man or woman, you may find that love and sex in later life, when they are acknowledged at all, will be patronizingly thought of as "cute" or "sweet," like the puppy love of teenagers; but even more likely, they will be ridiculed, a subject for jokes that have undercurrents of disdain and apprehensiveness at the prospect of growing older. Our language is full of telltale phrases: older men become "dirty old men," "old fools," or "old goats" where sex is involved. Older women are depicted as uniformly sexless or sexually unattractive. Most of this "humour" implies the impotence of older men and the ugliness of older women..... A mythology fed by misinformation surrounds late-life sexuality. The presumption is that sexual desire automatically ebbs with age-that it begins to decline when you are in your forties or even earlier, proceeds relentlessly downward (you are "losing it"), and eventually hits bottom (you are "over the hill") at some time between sixty and sixty-five. Thus an older woman who shows an evident, perhaps even a lusty, interest in sex is often assumed to be suffering from

"emotional" problems; and if she is obviously in her right mind and sexually active, she runs the risk of being called "oversexed" or, more kindly, said to be clinging pathetically to her lost youth.'

"People don't seem prepared for the fact that sex, lust, is not going to last. By the time you get on, the whole nature of sex changes. It's about caring, being responsible for other's happiness" (*Elspet Gray, actress, wife of Lord Brian Rix*)

"The wonderful thing about getting old is that you can forget about sex. (*He doesn't say how old though!*) It's a greatly overrated and over-publicised activity and it only further complicates people's lives". (*Dame Edna Everage/Barry Humphries*)

New Sky TV survey for *The Secret Guide to Women's Health*, 16.3.10 edition will be on the menopause: Presenter, Coleen Nolan says: "The topic of sex, even though often joked about, can throw up some serious issues which can directly affect a woman's health and self confidence. It's one of those subjects that people might not want to admit to their friends or even their GP. The results from this survey have surprised me and I'm pleased that this research, and the new show, will give women a platform to discuss sex in an open environment".
'New research that we have commissioned has shown that 28% of women aged 35 and over never have sex..... Losing their sex appeal and sex drive still causes concern for many women aged 35 and over.... When quizzed about the menopause, 29% of women who live with their partners, fear losing or have lost their sex appeal more than any other side effects caused by the menopause.

A large American survey in 2000 found that sexual activity among the general populations is far less vigorous than one might imagine. A third of American adults have sex twice a week or more, another third have sex once or several times a month and the final third a few times a year or not at all. (*The Social Organisation of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*)

A British survey in 1994: Married women aged 45 to 59 had sex twice in the past 4 weeks and men in the same age group had sex 3 times in the last 4 weeks. *Proving that men always boast or that men were having sex with whom? Other men as well?* (*Sexual Behaviour in Britain: The National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles*)

	<p>Older lovers may make up in style what they lack in stamina. A Saga survey of 10,000 over-50's found that 65% were still sexually active and many older men and women reported the strongest orgasms and most meaningful sex of their lives.</p> <p>Sex may become 'the icing on the cake', it's secondary to the quality of the relationship which is based on love, kindness, companionship and shared memories.</p> <p>Range of 'intimate massagers' with very good reviews. http://www.emotionalbliss.co.uk. Also available at some Holland & Barrett stores.</p> <p>Gay, slow sex is best: The best sex going on in Masters and Johnson's sex lab in the 70's was had by the committed gay and lesbian couples, not because they were practicing special secret homosexual sex techniques but because they took their time!</p> <p>On the other hand, 'Lesbian Bed Death' is the term used when the relationship is so stable that desire disappears: 'We're so in tune with each other, so incredibly similar that we could easily drift into being flatmates in our nighties. Often we can't have sex because we're much too busy laughing and talking, which is sweet, but sometimes I think we need more difference between us to push us into having sex. There isn't a man with a thrusting erection demanding it'.</p> <p><i>Homeopathy: Agnus Castus, Conium - < celibacy, widowhood, Fluor Ac – inappropriate increased desire in men - and Moschus in women, Selenium – increased desire but decreased ability/prostate.</i></p> <p>See Male Menopause, see Impotence; see HRT; see Natural Progesterone Cream</p>
Senses: smell, taste	Senses can change with age. We may become more conscious of other people's smells and our sense of taste can change
Shrivelling *	Breasts and vagina
Sjögren's Syndrome ***	<p>Causes dry eyes, dry mouth and aches and pains, usually affecting 50-60 year olds.</p> <p>Some people with Sjögren's Syndrome produce antiphospholipid antibodies and can develop features of</p>

	<p>Hughes Syndrome.</p> <p><i>Nat Mur, Proteus, Sepia</i></p> <p>See Hughes Syndrome</p>
<p>Skin *</p>	<p>Liver spots, thread veins, varicosities, thin skin. No elasticity - pull it up and it stays there. Jewellery doesn't look so good on crepey necks and transparent fingers.</p> <p>Oil of Evening Primrose capsules, 1000-2000mg daily, is said to be very good for the skin.</p> <p>Good news: <i>homeopathic haemorrhoid cream</i> is great for thread veins. (N&B)</p> <p><i>Warts and growths: Ant Crud, Ars Alb, Kali Ars, Thuja, Caust, Nit Ac (EB)</i></p>
<p>Sleep ***</p>	<p>Too much at the wrong time of day or too little. Afternoon dozing, night-time insomnia or early waking</p> <p><i>Good homeopathic remedies for Sleep Disturbances: Acon, Arg Nit, Ars Alb, Carc, Coffea, Ignatia, Lyc, Nat Mur, Nux Vom, Sulph. Valeriana 30c in evening and repeat at bedtime. (J, HfW)</i></p>
<p>Stiffness</p>	<p>See Arthritis</p>
<p>Staphysagria</p>	<p>See Carc</p>
<p>Statistics</p>	<p><i>Spread around the text in different places</i></p>
<p>Staying together</p>	<p><u>M81</u>: I had often thought about leaving in the mid life years. My wife tolerated me and everything I did so it made it really hard to go. I couldn't be that cruel. Now we have a deep affection together. <u>M51</u>: That's great. Making bones together.</p>
<p>Stress incontinence *</p>	<p>At every cough, sneeze or rapid movement</p> <p>See Kegel exercises; see Leakiness; see TVT</p>

T	
Talking to yourself *	<p>Things like: ‘Where are my glasses? Pity I can’t see well enough to find them. Oh, they’re on my head’.</p> <p>Or ‘Where are my keys, I know I put them in this handbag’.</p> <p>Or scolding someone while hovering.</p> <p>(F51 and M57 both do it - others were surprised.)</p>
Teeth *	<p>‘Long in the tooth’ as gums recede and teeth look longer. Often major dentistry needed: root canals, dentures, crowns, gum disease, replacement of old fillings.</p> <p><i>Homeopathic Fluor Ac 30 weekly – good for decay.</i></p>
Tests	<p>Mammograms and cervical smears can be humiliating.</p> <p>False negatives/false positives.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>‘The nurse wants to see me’ - people are pleased someone is showing an interest in them/their condition.</p>
<p>Thyroid/Thyroidinum/Thyroxine ***+ <i>Homeopathic remedies</i></p>	<p>Thyroid problems are common at and after menopause when the endocrine ‘symphony orchestra goes out of tune’.</p> <p>All endocrine gland symptoms can be linked to each other, including adrenal burn-out.</p> <p><u>M57</u>: Tiredness and aggression are linked – feeling put upon.</p> <p><u>M51</u> talking about his partner: It really changes a person –underactive thyroid, on Thyroxine – he has become more aggressive, weight gain, blows his top easily. (Not listed under side effects, but there is restlessness and excitability plus quite a lot of physical symptoms).</p> <p><u>F51</u>: I can feel if my thyroid is low - I massage it. Can feel like cracked glass. Possibly made worse in winter, from lots of computer work or exhaustion.</p>

	<p><u>Thyroid and anaemia</u> Both are low grade unrecognised conditions which can have massive effects on life. People can be very relieved to be clinically diagnosed.</p> <p><i>Thyroidinum, Iodum, Hypothalamus, Sepia</i></p> <p>See Cholesterol</p>
<p>Tremors *</p>	<p><i>Homeopathic remedies: Ambr Gris, Gels, Ars Alb, Zinc Met, Ant Tart, Ant Crud, Aur Sulph, Lachesis, Mercury – near specific for Parkinsons disease, Hyos Hydrobrom – Disseminated sclerosis (EB)</i></p>
<p>TVT</p>	<p>It can stand for either Tension-free Vaginal Tape or Trans-Vaginal Tape. These are identical operations</p> <p>It is performed to treat stress incontinence, a condition where women leak urine from their bladder with certain activities e.g. coughing, sneezing, laughing, lifting, walking or with sport. Stress incontinence happens when the urethra is weak. Such weakness may be caused by damage to the muscles and nerves of the pelvic floor which may be aggravated by the menopause, a chronic cough, heavy lifting and being overweight.</p> <p>From a leaflet by: http://www.kentgynaecologist.com/tvt.html</p> <p><u>F58</u>: ‘I have had it very successfully twice - internal strips by day surgery’.</p>

<p>U</p>	
<p>Urination – frequent/night ***</p>	<p><u>Frequency.</u> Caused by enlarged prostate, diabetes, cystitis, bladder weakness, tumour, hormones or emotions.</p> <p><u>Post menopause</u> especially at night. (It is said that ADH (anti-diuretic hormone) drops off after the menopause so low/no ADH produced. Therefore no point restricting fluids/tea from pm onwards, etc. because it's not caused by fluid intake but irreversible lack of ADH and necessary or get up and pee –even small amounts - anyway). I think it is reversible/part of the hormonal symphony and can be treated with Sepia, etc.</p> <p>This subject attracts a lot of discussion, questions and beliefs. e.g. ‘Does the Pill affect ADH because young women have water problems?’ ‘There’s a great range in how frequent/how much/which foods or drinks cause frequency.’ ‘The moon affects it – people pass less or more at different moon phases.’</p> <p>Shewees (portable outdoor urination aids), night bottles, bed bottles (like trays) might be useful. ‘Shewees are also useful for collecting urine samples’.</p> <p><i>Cantharis, Berberis, Equisetum, Digitalis, Sabal Serr, Nux Vom (TS), Sepia, Folliculinum</i></p> <p>See Prostate; see TVT</p>

V	
Vaginal dryness *	<p>Starts during the menopause, part of the natural ageing hormonal process, causes thinning and dryness. In earlier stages may be improved with lubricants (KY Jelly, Aloe Vera, etc.) and remedies: <i>Aconite, Causticum, Ferr Phos, Kreos, Lyc, Nat Mur, Med, Sepia, Tarent Hisp, Thuja.</i> (HfW)</p> <p>http://www.daisynetwork.org.uk/pdfs/Natural_Menopause_Guide.pdf A brief but reasonably helpful guide about nutritional support. Pharma Nord's Omega 7 (Sea Buckthorn Oil capsules) helped 47% of users with vaginal dryness.</p> <p>See Aloe Vera, see Sex, see Leucorrhoea, see Menopause</p>
Varicose Veins *	<p>Veins are relaxed, look like twisted snakes, feel bruised and sore, and may ulcerate. 'Embarrassing Bodies' showed new intravenous laser therapy which isn't painful.</p> <p><i>Often treated surgically but homeopathy can help a lot too. Can also help phlebitis (inflammation of the veins) and varicose ulcers.</i></p> <p><i>Locally Hamamelis cream/tincture or in potency, Aconite, Silica, Carb Veg, Fluor Ac., Vipera, Graphites, Ambra Gris, Pulsatilla – especially phlebitis, Calc Fluor.</i> (EB, TS)</p>
Valeriana <i>Homeopathic remedy</i>	<p>A homeopathic and herbal remedy when the body feels itchy and maybe limbs jerk on falling asleep. Unpleasant dreams. (HfW)</p>
Vanity	<p>Less important to post-menopausal women because more at peace with themselves.</p>
Vertigo	<p>See Epley Manoeuvre, see http://www.diagnose-me.com/cond/C503063.html</p>
Viagra	<p>See Sex. Pfizer have closed their Viagra producing factory in Kent. Jan 2011.</p>
Vision and eyesight *+	<p>With age, eye muscles are less able to exert the pressure needed on the lenses to ensure sharp focus. The lenses also change in consistency and elasticity. They transmit colour less effectively so blues and</p>

blacks become hard to distinguish. The cells of the retina (like all the cells of the central nervous system) become sparser. A 60-year old needs three times the amount of light to read comfortably as a 16-year old. It takes longer to accommodate to either sudden light or sudden darkness so older people can be suddenly dazzled, trip down dark staircases, can't distinguish the kerb from the road and find that dark-clothed people blend into the dusk. (DrS)

Stronger reading light is needed and night driving becomes more difficult - both coping with contrasts and oncoming headlights and with differentiating curb from road. Some people unnecessarily get stronger glasses then have difficulty with them in normal light. (RS)

A perk for life-long short-sighted people: they can only read *without* their glasses. Most people need reading glasses and also extra light to read/see.

Regular eye examinations should be done to check for cataracts, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, retinal tears and age-related macular degeneration (AMD) – the wearing out of the retina. Dry AMD accounts for 90% of cases, its progress is slow and treatment is available. Wet AMD affects 10%, treatment is improving for it – fluid escapes from degenerate blood vessels below the retina. (Dr Stuttford)

F54: Cover one eye. Check a straight line somewhere. If there is a kink in it get help quickly as it might be a sign of AMD. ‘

Eat leafy green vegetables 4-7 times a week - good for wet and dry AMD.

Many eye conditions, many remedies:

Ruta, Ledum, Calc Carb, Nat Mur, Euphrasia, Gels, Thiosinaminum, Hep Sulph, Pyrogen, Naphthalene, Mag Carb, Conium, Nat Sulph, Caust, Sepia, Ars Alb, Bell, Aur Met, Allium C, Puls, Calc Sulph, Kali Bich, Graph, Kali Carb, Xerophyllum, Symphytum, Arnica, Cocc Cact, Nux Vom, Prunus, Mez, Phos.

Good OTC (over the counter) preparations for dry eyes: Viscotears, saline solution, homeopathic Nat Mur. (JaS)

See Glaucoma, see Cataract

W	
Watery eyes	See Drippy noses
Weight gain	<p>As wisdom comes with age and so does weight gain, perhaps we keep our wisdom in our fat?</p> <p><u>M56</u>: Contentment. I make more space to hold more substance. A bit more weight, presence, substance to hold more.</p> <p>‘There’s not enough room for wisdom in our heads so we keep it in our cells. It’s not fat, it’s wisdom!’</p> <p>‘Body brain!’</p> <p>See Cellulite, see Obesity, see HCG</p>

X	
Y	
Z	
Zestra	<p>A massage oil applied like a vaginal lubricant and scientifically proven to enhance sensation. <i>'For increasing arousal in women seeking to heighten the whole sexual experience or for those wanting to enhance their libido'.</i></p> <p>The Journal of Sexual and Marital Therapy conducted a study which found that 89% of women using Zestra reported increased sexual pleasure, frequency and intensity of orgasm compared to only 15% using a placebo. <i>However</i> very little research has been done with post-menopausal women. It seems the women dropped out of the trial.</p> <p>Ingredients: Borage Seed Oil (Starflower oil), Evening primrose oil, Special Extract of Angelica, Special Extract of Coleus, and the anti-oxidants; ascorbyl palmitate (lipid-soluble Vitamin C) and alpha-tocopherol (Vitamin E), along with natural fragrances. <i>'It is easily applied to the clitoris, labia & vaginal opening during foreplay. Once applied its bioactive botanical ingredients begin to increase genital sensory nerve conduction velocity as well as genital blood flow'.</i></p> <p>One reviewer said it smelt like old fried bacon grease!</p> <p>See Sex.</p>

References: Not everything is referenced. Some of it is common to many sources.

- (J) Jane Hurley
- (BP) Brenda Pretty, pharmacist, homeopath
- (LS) Lele Schirmeister, heilpraktiker
- (KM) Kenneth Metson, mentor/homeopath
- (CW) Chris Wilkinson, homeopath
- (CL) Colette Lyons, Alexander Technique teacher
- (LyH) Dr Lynne Huntley, psychotherapist
- (CG) Cornwall study group (homeopaths)
- (RS) Dr Ruth Sewell, psychotherapist
- (EB) 'Guidelines to the Homeopathic Treatment of Illnesses in the Elderly'
by Elvia Bury
- (EmB) 'Embarrassing Bodies' Channel 4 programme and website
- (TS) 'Homeopathic Medicine: A Doctor's Guide to Remedies for Common
Ailments' by Dr Trevor Smith
- (BNF) 'British National Formulary'
- (HfW) 'Homeopathy for Women' by Dr's Barry Rose and Christina
Scott-Monterrieff
- (EG) Exeter (The Other Side of Fifty' Group
- (CG) Cornwall group
- (SG) Somerset Group
- (N&B) Nuts & Bolts Homeopathy CD compiled by Jane Hurley
- (LK) Leslie Kenton, author of 'Passage to Power'
- (JL) Dr John Lee, author of 'Natural Progesterone'
- (DrS) Dr Stuttaford, writing in The Oldie magazine
- (VI) Virginia Ironside

Recommended books:

- 'Passage to Power' by Leslie Kenton
- 'Couples, the Truth' by Kate Figes
- 'The Virginia Monologues' by Virginia Ironside
- 'Natural Progesterone, The Multiple Roles of a Remarkable Hormone' by
John R Lee MD 1993

Recommended by others but not read by me yet:

- 'Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom' (Only goes up to menopause). And
'The Wisdom of Menopause' by Dr Christiane Northrup (American
gynaecologist)
- 'Where did I leave my glasses' by Martha Weinman Lear
- 'Manhood' and 'Raising Boys' by Steve Biddulph
- 'Green Medicine' by Dr Larry Malerba
- 'Levels of Health' by Dr George Vithoulkas (Good for homeopathy students)