**Early and premature menopause**

**Speaker 1:** Most of us think that menopause happens to women in their fifties, but that's not always the case.

Menopause is when a woman stops having her period. It's usually defined as having had no periods or spotting for 12 months.

Why does this happen? To put it simply, it's because of a change in a woman's hormones. The ovaries wind down and no longer release any eggs.

Some women can go through menopause at a younger age. Premature menopause is when a woman has her final period before 40. Early menopause is when it happens between the ages of 40 to 45. Up to 8% of women have their last period by the time they're 45.

There are several reasons why this can happen. Primary ovarian insufficiency, also known as POI, is where the ovaries stop working and periods stop. There is often no reason for why this happens.

Periods can also stop as a result of chemotherapy and or radiotherapy for some cancers. This can cause ovaries to stop working. Periods might also stop because of surgical removal of ovaries. This surgery could be for a number of reasons, including cancer or endometriosis.

Treatment for early or premature menopause can vary. It might include menopause hormone therapy, also known as MHT or HRT, or the pill to replace the hormones the body is missing.

Talk to your doctor. They can check your symptoms and give you a reliable explanation or diagnosis. There are many experts in the area that can help you are not alone. Go to jeanhailes.org.au.

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**Information about Jean Hailes for Women’s Health**

Jean Hailes for Women's Health is a national not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving the health of all women, girls and gender-diverse people. For free, evidence-based and easy-to-understand health information, visit [www.jeanhailes.org.au](http://www.jeanhailes.org.au).

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