

1. Menopause vs. Andropause

“O men, take a pause”

“Middle age: When you begin to exchange your emotions for symptoms”.

“Fear of old age doesn't come alone, Gents beware! Your gender's no safety net”.

There is usually a temporary rise in IQ at the time of puberty. This occurs earlier in girls than boys. But in another year or so the boys catch up with the girls, and from then on it is neck and neck.

Why adolescents Act That Way

Within the human body chemical magic wands constantly perform wonders that rival the magic of fairy tales. Mind becomes telltale index of our health, our way of life. Consider the transformation that takes place at puberty, when a happy-go-lucky little boy is turned into a troubled, rebellious semi-adult—a stranger both to himself and to his parents. Consider the magic which re-sculptures a reedy, angular little tomboy into a curvaceous, reserved young woman.

The hurdle separating childhood from adulthood is perhaps the greatest barrier human beings are called on to surmount. So to surmount the handicaps against long life during menopause and andropause is beyond medicine. In the chemical ferment of puberty an entirely new human being is born, and the process is a time of trial for all families.

There is, of course, a grand design in this transformation: the child body is being prepared for its ultimate task of reproduction, to ensure continuance of the race. And this race to continue the race becomes very taxing. Scarcely an organ or tissue is untouched by the dramatic events taking place within the body. Heart and lungs may begin growing at rates even triple those of puberty years. The thyroid in the neck begins enlarging to adult proportions, and the mysterious thymus in the chest begins shrinking—in time it will virtually disappear. Muscles harden, and fat is deposited in new patterns. During childhood, bone ends are capped with soft cartilage to facilitate growth. But during and shortly after puberty, calcium begins to infiltrate the cartilage. Bone ends harden; growth slows and finally stops. Even the texture of the skin changes. Fat glands become more active, oil secretions increase and pores enlarge. When bacteria gain entrance to the skin, the result may be acne, that age-old curse of puberty. Puberty is triggered by the pea-size pituitary gland on the underside of the brain. What prompts it to move into action remains a mystery. But the results are instantly apparent when it begins producing tiny amounts of gonadotropic hormone—which stimulates ovaries in girls, testes in boy. During childhood these glands have remained quiescent. But under the pituitary stimulus they begin producing hormones of their own.

In the adolescent girl newly activated ovaries produce estrogen in fantastically small amounts—a daily output equal to 1/1000 of a grain of sugar! But that is enough of this potent stuff to propel the girl-child into womanhood. She begins shooting up at a rate of as much as three inches a year, leaving laggard boys behind—a fact that further contributes to the antipathy between the sexes at this age. (Propelling a girl half a head taller around a dance floor represents exquisite torture for the boy—and the girl suffers equally).

Pelvic bones begin to grow, widening hips and providing a bony cradle for babies-to-be. Breast tissue proliferates—slowly at first, but ever faster under the hormone influence. Tissue in the birth canal thickens and toughens to be ready to withstand the rigors of childbirth. The womb, too, enlarges from the plum size of childhood to the pear size of adulthood.

When the boy's turn comes for pubertal development, no less momentous events take place in his body. Under the urging of pituitary hormone, testicular tissue begins proliferating, maturing.

When fully developed it will serve a dual purpose: production of the male hormone, testosterone, which is emptied into the bloodstream, and production of the sperm cells necessary to fertilize the egg. Effects of the hormone are instantly visible. Hair patterns of the body change, and a beard begins to sprout. Body growth often goes at a dizzy clip—perhaps six inches in a year, plus 25 pounds of added weight. The boy shoots past the towering girl, to the relief of both. Hands and feet grow at an inordinate rate—to produce an awkward, coltish effect.

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Male hormone also triggers the development of the prostate, which helps provide the fluid that propels and nourishes sperm cells. This gland grows from the size of a bean to about that of a chestnut. However unready he may be socially, the boy is now able, physically, to father children. If the physical changes of this period have been enormous, the emotional changes have been no less so. This is a period of profound readjustment. Emotionally, two people are living within the same body, and each is fighting for supremacy. One wants to retain the privileges of childhood; the other tries to exercise all the prerogatives of adulthood without having adult understanding or responsibility. The once friendly, tractable boy becomes the arrogant show-off. He challenges all authority. Teachers become unfair tyrants to be treated with disdain. Parents, once adored, become barely tolerable dunces. Given the tools of adult world to work with, yet having only the reactions of childhood to guide him, the youngster does countless foolish things. He is often a menace in an automobile. He dives into streams from perilous heights. He experiments with sex.

The pattern is standardized, yet each generation is surprised at seeing it repeated. The father who gobbled live goldfish thirty years ago is baffled by a son who finds hot rods more enticing than algebra; the mother who did the Charleston in above-the-knee skirts has difficulty understanding a daughter sent into ecstasies by a rock-'n'-roller. The quite normal revolt that occurs as the child moves into the adult world takes odd twists. Knowing that parents insist on personal cleanliness, the boy prides himself on being dirty. He is obsessed with self and will spend hours gazing into the mirror, examining each minor blemish. He may express his rebellion in bizarre haircuts—flattops, ducktails and so on.

So great becomes the ferment in his mind that he pays little attention to what he sees or hears. Parents and teachers complain that boys are fuzzy-minded, inattentive, and lazy. This is only partly true. It is well known that worry produces fatigue. The pubescent boy worries most of the time and is tired most of the time—not lazy. Under the stress of his internal physical and emotional activity, he *does* become fuzzy-minded.

Girls face problems equally great as they bid good-by to childhood and grope their way into an alien world. Often, they are self-conscious about their new bodies. They may attempt to hide their breast under tight straps, react with shame to monthly periods. They become secretive, withdrawn into a strange world of their own creation. Parents, once trusted become unsympathetic taskmasters. Any criticism is likely to bring a reaction of rage or tears or sullen hurt. As with boys, there is complete preoccupation with self—the slightest physical imperfection becomes a major tragedy.

Loyalties shift. Boys of the same age, because they are less mature, become repulsive of the developing girl. Older boys are far more desirable. But the child-woman usually decides that it is safer to adore them from a distance. Hero worship is another phenomenon. When squealing girls besiege the latest pelvis-wriggling singer they are following normal behavior patterns.

If this is a trying period for new adults in the making, it is equally trying for parents, teachers and others. About the best we can do is, face the situation with patience and understanding. There is always the comforting thought that it will soon be over.

2. Ayurveda: Ayurveda

An Ayurvedic way of Life:

Over 6000 years old Ayurveda, which literally means “Science of Life” is an Indian tradition of healing. Ayurveda does not describe health as the absence of disease, but as a “state of mind and body, where the body elements & digestive fire are balanced & the whole body, senses, mind and soul are nourished thus giving the feeling of contentment and happiness.

Our wellness package is designed with a holistic approach of five elements, “*tridoshas*” and seven “*dhatu*s” to scientifically relax and rejuvenate your body. It helps in external and internal toning of body at all levels, thus attaining a healthy glow and insight to balance lifestyle and avoid diseases of modern civilization, viz. metabolic disorders, i.e. heart disease, diabetes and hypertension.

We in India, have many such effective methods of cancer and other diseases’ management where the stress is on strengthening the patient’s immune system. The leading claimants are *Ayurveda* and *Siddha* systems where there are many immune boosters that could effectively suppress cancer growth aided and supplemented by the mind tranquility methods of Yoga and *Praanaayama*.

Routine screening by modern hard technology machines of allopathy, of the apparently healthy is one of the most dangerous things that could happen to a healthy person. Therefore people could stay with a disease but not diagnosis. All those apparently healthy people thus detected would have been better off if they did not know the death warrants sent out to them through the screening process. Richard Smith, the then editor of the *British Medical Journal*, in his own editorial entitled, The Screening Industry, exposes the fraud in our screening business.

3. Buddhism

The 2,500 year old Buddha Dharma has a special role to play because Buddhism uniquely propounds the concept of interdependence, which accords closely with the fundamental notions of modern science. There are those Buddhist traditions that look to the collection of scriptures preserved in *Pali* as their source and those who look to the Sanskrit tradition. This later tradition reached its zenith at the renowned ancient university of *Nalanda*, where the literature and understanding of philosophy and logic were profoundly refined by Buddhist scholars of the time. This Sanskrit tradition is a crucial part of Buddhist heritage.

4. Diet & You

“Half of the people in the world are on diet & half are starving”.

“We live on 1/3rd of what we eat & the Doctors on the rest”.

“Those animals who drink water by mouth are vegetarians & those who drink water by tongue are the non-vegetarians.”

Have a good combination of 15% fats, 35% proteins and 50% carbohydrates.

Always have inverted pyramid diet management, i.e. heavy breakfast, light lunch and light dinner and still you could manage to do 12 hours of fasting everyday as per Jain philosophy.

Drink at least 2 liters of water everyday.

Nature has allotted you region wise diet, just like north Indians, consume wheat too much and the south Indians rice.

Cooking is like making Love, you do it well, or you do not do it at all.

When diet is wrong, medicine is of no use, when diet is correct, medicine is of no need.
----- Ayurvedic proverb

Those who eat more eat less; but those who eat less, ultimately eat more.

We live to eat, but eat to live.

Nature offers all sorts of Diet, for example, vitamin D is available in plenty in the early Sun rays.
Do Suryanamaskar.

4 parameters of good health: Eat well, sleep well, shit well and “Do” well.

Our food habits are like mobile phone: incoming is free, outgoing is taxing, and then we go on sending miss calls.

Tasty to lips and big to hips.

“Heavy” Workload: Getting a pay cheque—good for your bottom line, but not necessarily your waistline.

Miracles of Olive-Oil: It helps fight heart disease, diabetes and cancer, besides increasing life expectancy. The essential fats (linoleic acid and alpha linoleic acid) in olive oil are in a ratio that helps boost immunity, brain function and delay aging. It is also rich in fat-soluble vitamins including vitamin E, beta carotene—important vitamins and powerful antioxidants. Other desirable components include phytochemicals such as phenols, chlorophyll, pheophytin, squalene, and sterols. They provide protection from many diseases by lowering blood cholesterol levels. These elements help in neutralizing free radicals which are associated with cell destruction, cancer and formation of arterial plaque. A high vitamin E content also protects olive oil from rancidity, thus contributing to a long shelf life. Olive oil is versatile, healthy and equally suitable for raw use in salads and dressings, as well as for stir frying and regular cooking. However, it is not recommended for deep frying because heat impairs its flavor. Remember, there is no perfect oil—a balance of poly-and mono-unsaturated fats and saturated fat is good for health. Olive oil combined with mustard oil or sesame oil or fatty fish can go a long way to promote health and prevent diseases.

Traditional to the Mediterranean diet, the olive tree has been cultivated for nearly 5000 years. What makes olive oil so special is its cold-pressed extraction. This means that unlike refined oils, it retains its essential fats, vitamins, antioxidants and essential components. Besides this, it is high in mono-unsaturated fat, a highly desirable form of fat, primarily in the form of oleic acid. Mono-unsaturated fats protect against cardiovascular disease by reducing bad cholesterol without lowering HDL (good cholesterol) and may even help raise HDL to some extent.

Mono-unsaturated fats also control blood sugar in diabetics as it helps the body cells use glucose more efficiently. Mono-unsaturated fatty acids has been found to reduce the risk of formation of gallstones by producing mild and regular evacuation of the gall bladder, thereby encouraging flow of bile and preventing the precipitation of cholesterol in the gall bladder as gall-stones.

5. Modern ailments & Yoga

Breast Cancer

A study conducted by researchers at the Washington State University, has found that the immunity system of breast cancer survivors improved significantly after practicing Yoga. Considered to be a more active form of Yoga, researchers reported at the American Physiological Society meeting in Washington DC that in breast cancer survivors, Yoga not only promoted psychological well-being but also benefited the patients' immune system. According to lead researchers Pamela E. Schultz, practicing the yoga form resulted in an important immune system protein called *NF-kB* in patients, which is a marker of stress in the body, that increased activation of *NF-kB* indicates decreased stress in the body. *NF-kB* is activated in the body by physical or mental stress. Schultz randomly assigned 19 women, average age 61 years, diagnosed with stage I-III breast cancer and receiving anti-estrogen or aromatase inhibitor hormonal therapy, to 8 weeks of yoga. Beginning level yoga classes were conducted 2 times per week for 8 weeks and included following yoga poses: standing poses, chest and shoulder openers and inversions.

Blood samples to determine lymphocyte *NF-kB* activation were collected prior to and following the intervention. Psychological tests showed that the demands of illness, which reflects the burden of hardship of being a breast cancer survivor, lowered in yoga participants. The survivors showed changes in the way their immune cells respond to activation signals. The function of genes in immune cells can be regulated by proteins called transcription factors. Transcription factor nuclear *factor-kappa B (NF-kB)* is linked to immune cell activation and to the stress response. Certain *asanas* improve the quality of blood and results in better blood circulation. It also improved the production of proteins in the immune system called T-cell receptors that actually direct the immune system to attack specific targets. Immune cells that contain the engineered T-cell receptor better display targeted immunity with a few *asanas*.

Cancer and its treatments are associated with considerable distress, impaired quality of life and reduced physical function, especially for women with breast cancer who receive multi-modality treatment over an extended period of time. Yoga greatly helps to relieve and improve quality of life among cancer patients over time. *Sudarshan Kriya and pranayama* greatly helps to cut down the growth of breast cancer cells within the body. Through release of stress, adverse effects of chemotherapy were also could be avoided.

Yoga can reduce migraine attacks:

Yoga can cut down the frequency and lessen the intensity of migraine attacks by over 70%. Combination of certain Yoga postures, breathing exercises and chants helps to reduce migraine attacks substantially. Yoga significantly reduces levels of cortisol (stress hormones) besides improves heart rate variability (measure of variations in the heart rate. Reduction of HRV is associated with hypertension, hemorrhagic shock and septic shock. Scientists have been considering serotonin, a brain chemical, to be a crucial factor for headaches. They think how serotonin levels might cause blood vessels to dilate and cause migraine. And yoga is known to improve levels of serotonin. This made our Yoga Institute to embark that improving serotonin level could actually reduce migraine attacks. We give education on managing their pain by avoiding migraine triggers and making diet and lifestyle changes. Gentle yoga-postures like *ardhakati chakrasana, ardha chakra, shashank asana, and ardha matsyendrasana, kriyas like jala-neti, shatkriya, kapal bhati and pranayama* besides breathing practices, relaxation and meditation. Neck and shoulder exercises, sideward and forward bending postures started having headaches less often and endured less pain with each migraine attack. It also significantly improved symptoms of anxiety, stress and depression, in the migraine management.

Hypertension: the blood pressure battle:

A *Lancet* study says that by 2025, the number of people affected could hit 1.56 billion from 972 million in 2000.

Is the time bomb ticking? One in four adults already has the condition, which increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and death. In an editorial, the journal says that despite effective and

affordable treatments, target blood pressure levels are very rarely reached, even in countries where cost of medication is not an issue. But lifestyle factors, such as physical inactivity, a salt-rich diet with high processed and fatty foods and alcohol and tobacco use, mean the problem is spreading at an alarming rate from developed countries to emerging economies, such as India and China. Our data in year 2004 showed that high BP is prevalent in 10% of the rural population and 25% in urban areas. High BP is a blood pressure reading of 140/90 mmHg or higher. Blood is carried from the heart to all parts of the body in vessels called arteries. Blood pressure is the force of the blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. Each time the heart beats (about 60-70 times a minute at rest); it pumps out blood into the arteries. The BP is at its highest when the heart beats, pumping the blood. This is called systolic pressure. When the heart is at rest, between beats, your blood pressure falls. This is the diastolic pressure. Normal BP is lower than 120/80 mmHg. Prehypertension is BP between 120 and 139 for the top number, or between 80 and 89 for the bottom number. The good news is that it can be treated and controlled. Meditation may lower blood pressure and reduce insulin resistance in people with heart disease.

What are risks of untreated high BP? High BP affects all vital organs but most importantly the brain. It can lead to hypertensive emergency—bleeding in brain—which can cause a stroke. It is called the silent killer because it usually has no symptoms. Some people may not find out they have it until they have trouble with their heart, brain or kidney.

Asthma:

Asthma sufferers can reduce their use of reliever inhalers by 86% with breathing exercises.

Diabetes:

You lose about eight years from your life span if you are diagnosed with diabetes after 50 years of age. Men lose 7.5 years and women 8.2 years. Women twice at risk to contract heart diseases. Already heart patients, twice as likely to die. Diabetes and depression is the worst combination. The longer the duration of diabetes, the faster is the ageing and degeneration process. Meditation may lower blood pressure and reduce insulin resistance in people with heart disease.

Project Heart

The human heart, at whatever age, opens only to the heart that opens in return.

Heart under Attack:

Give yourself a second chance:

Attack and after:

Young India: on the move, into the ICU:

Stressed? Time for timeout:

Get moving and get more sleep:

Ladies beware! Your gender's no safety net:

Yeh Dil Maange More:

Take charge of your Heart:

When a muscle is in fixed spasm, it probably shuts down its own blood supply. In this condition, it frequently sets off “referred pain”—pain perceived at a distance from the muscle that is its source.

This is analogous to the pain of a coronary thrombosis, or heart attack. When a section of heart muscle has an inadequate supply of blood owing to spasm of the coronaries, or to a thrombus—clot—in the coronary arteries, the heart gives rise to referred pain. The pain is felt up and down the breastbone or it may be perceived in the neck, or in the back or down the arm to the fingers. Meditation may lower blood pressure and reduce insulin resistance in people with heart disease. Inactive folks are up to 2.4 times as likely to have heart disease as more active people.

6. Feminine Fitness

From Puberty to Menarche: “Her Journey”

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We have forgotten the *Rushi's* advice as the age-old art of dying is no longer practiced our culture and the fact that it is possible to die in good health seems to have been forgotten by all us. Time has come to think seriously about our efforts at different diseases' and disorders' management, now lest our future generation should not club us with our forefathers who used to brand every conceivable disease with red hot iron. The future generation might not forgive us for this sin. It is somewhere between intensive care and the crematorium.

Premenstrual tension is a mystery that has puzzled men of medicine for centuries, and it is the most common of all female nervous disorders. A week to ten days prior to menstruation, a sizable number of females—schoolgirls, businesswomen, housewives—get jittery, become inefficient, irritable, depressed. Some have headache, backache, sore breasts. Four times as many unpremeditated crimes of violence are committed by females in premenstrual days as on other days, studies show. In 500 serious auto crashes involving women drivers, a significantly high proportion was found related to the menstrual cycle.

Beginning about a week before menstruation, something causes a woman's body to store up extra fluids. It is usual for her to gain as much as 2 pounds, but severe sufferers, gain 5, 6 even 8 or 10 pounds. No wonder they complain of feeling "heavy". With the onset of menstruation, fluids are released, tension subsides. Fluid retention is the chief villain, are now available on a doctors' prescription. Faintness and fatigue, the jitters and the craving for sweets were much like the symptoms of a diabetic who has taken too much insulin. Could the cause be the same? Blood tests said yes. They showed, for these days only, a sharp, vitality-sapping drop in blood sugar. Then include: ammonium chloride to dehydrate; a relaxing agent to lessen tension; caffeine as a stimulant to combat mental sluggishness and depression; Vitamin B complex for its tonic effect, and multiple feedings, high in protein, to battle the blood-sugar deficiency. Following this regimen, together with restricted sodium-salt intake, for ten days before the expected menstrual period, is a best remedy. The male members of a family, understanding this, could ease many a crisis.

Meanwhile, new medical studies are afoot—in hospitals, in clinics, and especially in industry, where better premenstrual health will carry a multimillion-dollar bonus. Absenteeism, social friction and erratic production have already been significantly reduced in some factories by supervised premenstrual treatment. Premenstrual tension is still an individual problem, and only the doctor and the non-pharmaceutical healers like us, can decide which of a dozen weapons at their commands they will use. The worst thing that can be said about menstruation is that it interferes so regularly with a woman's life. She can be sensible about this, ignoring all the old wives' tales—and never repeating a single one of them to her daughters.

The most effective medicine that a physician can give a woman entering the menopause, is the simplest—an explanation. He can explain to her that the menopause does *not* mark the end of personal attractiveness or of sexual enjoyment. He can explain that the menopause is a time of readjustment that is usually the introduction to *a rich period* of satisfying work, play and affectionate relationships. Unfortunately, such explanations often come too late. Even the most skilled doctor finds it hard, during a consultation or two, to sweep out all the mental cobwebs and superstitions that a woman of 45 to 50 has accumulated.

The time to educate women about the menopause is before the seeds of error are planted. I'd like every girl to learn the facts when she learns about menstruation, and to get a 'refresher course' from time to time thereafter. Thus a woman enters the third major era in her life, a little older, a little wiser, no longer able to have babies—but otherwise not so different in her fifties from what

she was in her forties. Some women have considerable physical discomfort during the changeover. The commonest symptom is the “hot flash”—a sudden rush of blood to the head and upper body. Other symptoms are less well defined—headaches, backaches, fatigue or just a sense of feeling miserable all over. The physical and emotional aspects of the “hard time” in menopause are curiously intermingled. A considerable number of women—estimated at 15 to 20%—have no symptoms at all; they just gradually stop menstruating. The majority have a few hot flashes, feel blue from time to time, but experience nothing they can’t take in stride.

For those who experience distressing symptoms, medical science now has two remedies to offer—hormones and reassurance. Hormones are excellent but reassurance is even better. Here the sympathetic physician often makes a telling point. There will be weeks and even months along the way when they will feel as healthy and vigorous as ever. Then there is the general fact of aging and appearance. Aging body of a woman refuses to obey any mechanical law or rule. But the aging begins, of course, on the day one is born; the menopause does not hasten the appearance of age, nor does it cause women to put on fat. During this period, as always, fat come chiefly from eating too much.

There is now no need to endure the more severe forms of melancholy sickness that blight the happiness of some women at their change of life, do Yoga. Some years ago hormones had to be given by cumbersome injections; there were doubts as to their safety; they were too costly. But now at last they can transfigure the stormy afternoon of life, in many cases, into a time of serenity and vigor.

When the symptoms are severe in women undergoing change of life, they feel nervous, jumpy, trembly; sometimes they want to scream. Even mildly disagreeable news overexcites them; they’re irritable at the noise of children playing. Formerly calm women sometimes become argumentative; some become intensely jealous of faithful husbands. They are likely to suffer gnawing headaches and vague abdominal pains.

Worst of all is the depression, the melancholy that haunts many women in this condition, so that they lose interest in life, cry for no reason at all, lie awake nights with anxiety that something dreadful is going to happen, begin to believe that the world and even their near and dear ones are against them. What’s at the bottom of this upset that causes unhappiness to millions? Long ago it was suspected that failing ovaries were the culprits—but that couldn’t be proved till chemists actually isolated the female hormone. Then from the urine of pregnant women, Dr. Doisy trapped the female hormone, crystal pure. Its power over the sex organs and sex activity of females of every species of animal was truly fantastic. For suffering women a hopeful premonition was that the hormone was chemically identical in whatever animal found—had the same strange power whether it came from doves or turtles. It controls the monthly growth of the lining of the human womb, is essential to childbearing and menstruation and causes the development of women’s bodily contours. It’s what makes women womanly.

Why do many women suffer no more than uneasy discomfort, while in others the pressure pounds higher and higher until they feel ready to explode? And why does it slacken when the menstrual flow begins? The average age when menstruation begins is 13.8 years, but it may begin any time between 11 and 17. Blondes tend to be earlier than brunettes. According to the books, menstruation occurs every 28 days, but the interval is not the same in every women. Each has a different chronometer, set by some mysterious combination of forces in our bodies. Scientists have long agreed that “the only regular thing about menstruation is its irregularity”. It won’t be the same every month, year in and year out, for many thing cause irregularity. Diseases—from TB to the flu or just a cold in the head—affect it, as do glandular disorders. Change of altitude or climate causes periods to be early or late, long or short. Certain psychological hazards may hasten or retard them. Fear of pregnancy or wanting a baby very much may cause menstruation to occur quite late, or may produce every symptom of early pregnancy. Then, too, most women are extremely irregular at the beginning and close of their

reproductive life. In all such cases there is nothing to do but remember that tomorrow everything will look brighter.