

# The WLB Perimenopause Snapshot Tool

After working through our own struggles, helping others, and getting input from menopause healthcare providers, we've created this "perimenopause snapshot" worksheet. Use this four-part tool to get the most out of your next healthcare appointment by sharing relevant data and guiding the discussion toward your goals.

You can also use this to keep track on your own. Pull it out every six months or so to see how things have changed for you, notice what's gotten better, and what might need some attention.

If it's been a while since you've seen your healthcare provider, bring with you a list of the prescriptions and any supplements you take regularly.

## Part 1: Data Gathering — Symptoms and Cycles

### Your symptom history

*Symptoms often come and go as we traverse this many-year transition. Hormones fluctuate initially and ultimately decline near our final menstrual period.*

#### THREE TO SIX MONTH VIEW

- List your top three most *bothersome* symptoms over the past 3 to 6 months.
  - Symptom 1:
  - Symptom 2:
  - Symptom 3:
- How have these symptoms changed?
  
- Have you noticed that these symptoms correspond to where you are in your cycle?

## CURRENT VIEW

- What symptoms you are having now?

## MOST BOTHERSOME SYMPTOM

- What symptom would you most like to get rid of?
  
- What makes you think this might be related to the hormonal changes of perimenopause?

## SYMPTOM TIMING/FREQUENCY/TRIGGERS

If you don't already track the frequency of your symptoms, consider giving this chart a try. The information you gather will help you and your doctor make informed decisions.

Symptom	Frequency		Linkage to anything? Cycle? Triggers? Related to food?
	Weekly	Monthly	
	# of times/week	# of times/month	

## Your menstrual cycles characteristics

You and your provider can learn a lot from looking at your menstrual history. Shortening cycles is one of the first signs that hormonal changes are afoot.

### CYCLE LENGTH

**How to calculate cycle length:** Take the first day of bleeding/flow from one cycle and count the days until, but don't include, your first day of bleeding/flow from your next cycle. This is your cycle length. *For example, if your first day of bleeding was June 2<sup>nd</sup> and then your next period started on June 29<sup>th</sup>, your cycle length would be 27 days.*

- If possible, gather 6 months of cycle length data: the more, the better.

Lengths of recent cycles: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

- Has your cycle length changed from 2-3 years ago? 5 years ago? 10 years ago?

### BLEEDING PATTERNS

#### Length of period (# of days of flow)

How many days does your period last?                      0   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8+

Has that changed over the past few years, year, months?                      Yes                      No  
If yes, how/when changed?

More or fewer days of bleeding?                      More                      Fewer

Are you spotting between periods?                      Yes                      No

#### Amount of flow

- Has your amount of flow changed? Is it heavier? Lighter? Over what timeframe has it changed: years, months?
- Heavier for a few days and then lighter?
- Not consistent?

## Part 2: Your self-care plan

*Our bodies need extra support during this time of hormonal fluctuations and change. There are many things we can do to allow our bodies to recalibrate rather than adding more stress to the system. Life may provide that.*

### CURRENTLY DOING

- Are you doing anything now to provide yourself with extra support? Daily walking? Better hydration? Prioritizing sleep? Eating differently?

### COULD IMAGINE DOING

- What things could you imagine changing? What self-care could you initiate?

## Part 3: Expectations and remedies of interest

### EXPECTATIONS

*It's helpful to pre-think what you hope to get out of your appointment. This is different for each of us.*

- An understanding of what's causing your symptoms
- An acknowledgement that your symptoms might be linked to hormonal changes
- Ideas for lifestyle changes that might improve symptoms
- Information about supplements or herbals
- A referral to another provider

### REMEDIES

*There are many approaches available to women in the menopausal transition — products, programs, herbs, prescriptions, lifestyle changes and more. We advise you to research options, talk to your friends, and get input from your healthcare provider in order to weigh the benefits and any risks that might come with a certain remedy.*

What remedies are interested in trying for your symptoms? What is the source of your interest? Did you hear from a friend? Read something online? Think about how to share this with your provider.

## Part 4: Notes and post appointment plan

*For those that benefit from note taking to jog your memory, here is a space to do that during your appointment.*