

Table 1. **Early and intermediate symptoms of the menopause.**

EARLY SYMPTOMS

Vasomotor'

- Hot flushes; night sweats; palpitations; headaches; and dizziness.
- 75% of caucasian women affected during a natural menopause.
- Vasomotor symptoms are more common and severe in those women experiencing an acute menopause after surgical castration.

PsychologicaP

- Difficulty in concentrating; loss of self esteem; irritability; mood swings; decreased energy; depression; and lackof libido.
- Origin of psychological symptoms is complex and likelty to involve both biological and psychosocial factors.

Menstruation

- Duration between menstruation maybe shortened or irregular.

INTERMEDIATE SYMPTOMS

Oestrogen deficiency leads to the rapid loss of collagen which contributes to the atrophy that occurs after the menopause.

UrogenitaP

- Dyspareunia; vaginal bleeding from fragile atrophic skin.

Lower urinary tract

- Dysuria; urgency; frequency (urethral syndrome).

Generalised'

- Increased bruising, thin translucent skin which is vulnerable to trauma and infection, loss of collagen from ligaments leading to aches and pains.