

FAMILY COUNSELING

The eighth periodic magazine - Issued by Family Counseling & Development Foundation



• The Hormonal Changes
and Men's Unawareness

Women... between Two Fires

Premenstrual...

Monthly Suffering
that need support

Psychological changes in women..

Suffering
from childhood
to aging

Suffering from Postpartum Depression

**Yasmine from Happiness
to Sadness**



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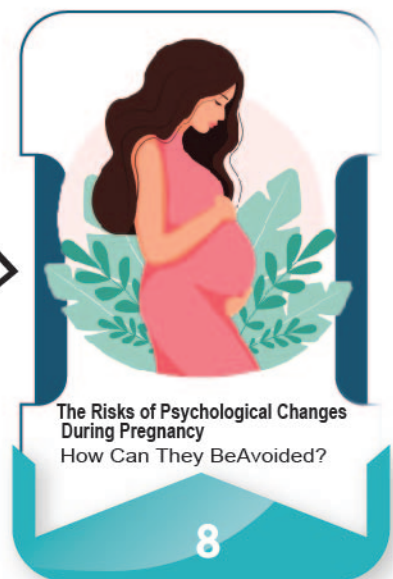
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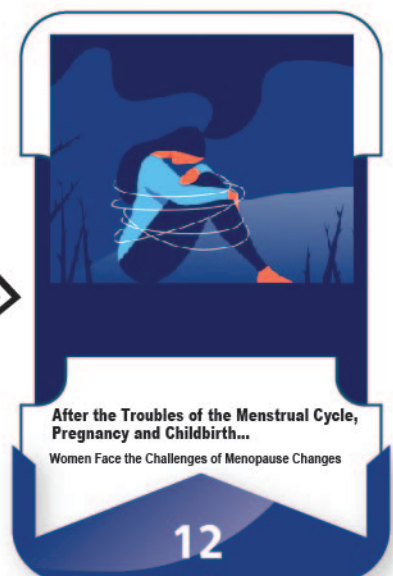
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Psychiatrist Ammar Mahdi for "FAMILY COUNSELING":

**A Man Must Be Aware of What Is Happening
in The Hormonal Change Periods in Women**

The Hormonal Changes and Men's Unawareness

Women... between Two Fires

It is said, "behind every great man is a great woman," and the poet of the Nile, Hafez Ibrahim, also said in his poem "Science and Manners": "The mother is a school that is if well-raised, then you have raised a people of a good race" Women are resembling schools in his opinion. Although women may not need preparation, in fact, they need support and appreciation from the man for their psychological condition women in all their different life stages undergo different hormonal changes, affecting her psychological state and taking her out of her normal psychological state without her will.

These changes begin to happen to them when young at the time they reach puberty and move on from childhood to maturity. At this stage, psychological and social changes occur to them due to the physical changes accompanying puberty they are more vulnerable to depression, isolation, introverted behavior, mood swings, severe stress and irritability, etc. Physical changes may represent an additional psychological burden on the girl this is when maturity occurs early. The occurrence of menstruation at an early age makes the teenage girl engage in adult life without being psychologically ready.

After maturity, women continuesuffering monthly, for a week or less from the psychological changes they experience before their menstruation. This is a result of the hormonal changes in her body during this period, which ultimately affects her psychological and mood state.

The suffering does not stop here womenare also exposed to other psychological changes throughout the "pregnancy" duration. It is when they feel anxious, tense and fearful that their fetus might be deformed, if not dead. After giving birth, they may enter a new stage of psychological changes "postpartum depression", which happens as a result of their fear of the inability to take full responsibility for their child, in addition to many other reasons.

When menopause, the so-called "time of life", women enter another stage of psychological changes, which also exposes them to many psychological disorders.

All those psychological changes that occur to women against their will atdifferent stages of their lifemay affect theirfamilies and social life and cause them a lot of

problems.If men and all those around are unaware of the situation and the psychological suffering women are going through, then women are among the fires of the hormonal changes and the men's unawares of this suffering. While, on the other hand, if man and all those around are at the required level of awareness, understanding, comprehension and appreciation of the exceptional psychological condition that womenare going through during these periods,then it is undoubtedly many family problems will disappear. Therefore, Islamic Sharia forbids divorcing the wife duringthe menstruation period.In a summary, the woman is the mother, sister, daughter and wife, and she is half of the society, and she does not hesitate to serve and care for everyone around her; therefore, men must support women during their suffering from these exceptional

changes and this is the time when women are most in need for support.

Finally, many family problems depend on the level of men awareness of the hormonal changes that occur to women, and this awareness is the key to solving them.



By the Founder Chairwoman
Dr. Bilqis Mohammed Jubari

From Childhood to Adulthood

An Exorbitant Transition Paid by the Girl's Psyche

Family Counseling Report

The transition of a girl from childhood and adolescence to maturity has a severe impact on her psyche, because of the changes that occur in her body, which usually exceed the physical changes that occur to a male adolescent when transitioning to maturity.

But how big are those psychological effects on the girl? How can it be dealt with at this stage?

The stage of a girl's transition from adolescence to maturity is one of the most important distinguishing stages in her life, in which great changes occur, both at the physical or psychological level. This stage is accompanied by psychological confusion, due to the onset of menstruation, as well as the physical changes that appear on. The latest study on the psychological impact on girls who reach puberty earlier than their peers, published in the *Journal of Pediatrics*, indicated that these girls are more likely to be depressed, isolated and withdrawn.

Researchers pointed out that the occurrence of early maturation represents an additional psychological burden on the girl, because the occurrence of early menstruation makes adolescents engage in adult life without being psychologically ready. They pointed out that adolescence is the basic period in what can be called the educational structure of individuals, as it is the criterion upon which the student's academic level is determined later. Since the hormonal change occurs without the girl's prior awareness, the negative psychological impact occurs, which in turn affects academic achievement, and can lead to failure in education, which increases psychological pressure on adolescents.

On the other hand, a number of social and emotional problems face the girl when she enters the stage of early maturity. For example, early maturity in girls causes embarrassment, turmoil around menstruation, the growth of their breasts before other girls of their age, or the appearance of acne or pimples. These changes psychologically affect the girl and reduce her self-confidence, and sometimes make her avoid interactions with people, especially of the opposite sex, and therefore she desires introversion. She may also need long periods of sleep because she feels unbalanced, and this may also be accompanied by the emergence of behavioral and



emotional changes on the girl. She suffers from irritability and moodiness, and here the girl must be supported by all family members, especially the parents.

Psychological Changes

The stage of maturity is accompanied by psychological changes that are reflected in the behavior of adolescents, which are natural changes. Some go through these changes without realizing them, and some may be disturbed for a while, and most of these changes occur as a result of the change that occurs in the secretions of the glands.

Abdullah Al-Baadani, a psychotherapist at Family Counseling & Development Foundation, says that in the phase of a girl's transition to maturity, hormones play a key role in forming the personality, which is characterized by mood swings, tension, lack of self-confidence, feelings of frustration and sadness, a decrease in interest in activities and work, an inability to focus, increased sleep, and a clear change in appetite from lack to increase. He added that during this period, feelings may become stronger and more intense. One moment a teen may feel happy, and in the next moment she may feel depressed and frustrated, so she needs to talk to her parents or other adults she trusts for support.

Social Changes

When a girl enters the stage of maturity, social changes occur that are greatly affected by the conditions of normal upbringing within the family environment. The girl also resorts to forming her own independent group, where she wants to build groups of friends outside the family and family, and tries to form great social connections.

At this stage, teenage girls begin to have an interest in external appearance, as they always try to appear in the form of a beautiful female and reject all manifestations of childhood.

The Role of the Family at this Stage

The family must respond appropriately to all these changes that occur to the girl during her transition to the stage of maturity. They affect positively or negatively on the girl's attitudes, self-concept and social behavior. Therefore, it is not possible to use the method of strict orders and coercive instructions. On the other hand, it is not appropriate to leave adolescence at its whim. So that she does not get herself into problems that may affect her life path, convictions and ideas.

The adolescent no longer accepts ready-made instructions that must be implemented as they are taught, but we must use the method of discussion and persuasion and explain each situation separately in terms of its effects, and the girl must be persuaded of the need to be responsible. Parents should always know the interests of the girl this is to protect the girl and not to harm her and negatively affect her behavior.

In all cases, the family must understand the importance of this stage, treat girls with respect, and give them the necessary confidence in themselves; this is to ensure that this stage does not negatively affect their future. They must understand the nature of the stage they are going through in order to help them pass it safely, to reach maturity in a good psychological and social level.



Premenstrual...

"At the same time every month, my psychological state worsens, and I feel depressed and stressed. Therefore, I find myself sad and anxious, I can't stand talking, and my tears stand on the doorstep of my eyes, ready to go down to any evoking situation. I even become sharp-tempered and a time bomb that explodes in my husband's face, which causes me a lot of family problems. However, at the same time I desperately need psychological care, especially from my husband, which I need a lot these days."

This is how Munira described the suffering she faces every month, due to the psychological changes that precede menstruation.

Munira's suffering is not much different from the suffering of many women, which has become an obsession for them every month and affects their social and family lives, especially in light of the ignorance of many men about the suffering caused by hormonal changes in a woman's body before menstruation, which exacerbates their suffering and makes it more complicated.

"Family Counseling" sheds light on this topic to closely learn about women's suffering from these monthly changes, their impact on marital and family relationships, how to deal with women during this period and absorb the hormonal changes that occur to them. Family Counseling has come up with the following report:

Menstruation is the date of a woman's "menstrual cycle," a situation in which she suffers silently from psychological or organic pain, yet everyone around her demands the same performance without considering her suffering. However, she is at a time when she is most in need of support and care, and to stand next to her closest people to understand her psychological and physical condition. It is from here that came the divine orders that a man should not divorce his wife while she is menstruating, and that is a kind action to the injured and suffering soul.

Every month, a large proportion of women suffer a week or less from the premenstrual crisis, due to the hormonal changes that occur in the woman's body, which negatively affect her psychological state, mood and affection. This reflects to affect her social life significantly, as she is exposed to a lot of quarrels and problems with family members; the psychological changes that a woman faces are more difficult than the physical pain caused by menstruation.

Maysa says that what she suffers the most during this period is agitation, tension and instability of mood, which affect her social life greatly, and cause her a lot of embarrassment, whether at home or at work, during which time a lot of quarrels and problems with family members occur. She adds that she used to spend two weeks a month fixing what she had spoiled in the previous week, from quarrels with those close to her, neglect of the cleanliness of the house and poor performance in the job, and in the end, she discovered that these recurring symptoms are related to the menstrual cycle.

She pointed out that the husband is the person closest to the wife, and therefore he must understand this suffering and stand by her by avoiding the problems that often raise her nervousness. "It is not easy for others to understand the changes that this woman is going through, but at the same time she must try to adapt to them in a way that does not cause an increase in her accumulated troubles," she said.

As for Maimouna, she says: "despite everything I do with dedication to my family, when I fail to serve them during my period, I find many questions in their looks towards me, and my feelings become intense. I cry for no reason. I also feel depressed and distressed, which I find it much more painful than the physical pain. Unfortunately, my husband always accuses me of exaggeration, anxiety, lack of endurance and impatience, despite what I do of doing the matter of my husband, my house and my children, but this is how men want women as a machine that does not feel anything, and if she feels something, she should not submit, as if the pains or trouble is subject to advice or choice."



Monthly Suffering that need support

"Umm Tariq" is similar to her in suffering when she tells her situation, and she says: "sometimes this period goes through very difficult, as it exhausts me psychologically and physically, and since I live with my husband's family who depend on me for cooking and home affairs, they cannot give up a few hours in which I rest. And I work for them for continuous days, and I need to rest in a few hours, and I do not find, and not even to complain to anyone or tell them about my situation until I used to work with illness, and often in that case I need someone to comfort me and wipe away the traces of suffering, so I find nothing but silence even from the closest people to my husband."

Psychological Changes

Although many women go through this suffering, the psychotherapist at FCDF, Safwan Al-Jalal, explained that there are women who do not experience changes in their feelings, emotions, thinking and behavior before the onset of menstruation, and they go through this period even without others noticing any changes in them. In her behavior and mood.

He said that the psychological changes that occur during the menstrual period are many and different, and they are often represented by tension, anxiety, mood instability and irritability, in addition to some pain. Depressive symptoms also recur in the week prior to the start of the menstrual period.

According to the fifth edition of the American Society of Psychiatrists (DSM5), "The Statistical Diagnosis of Mental Disorders," the diagnosis of psychological symptoms associated with the menstrual cycle depends on the presence of a number of symptoms, including a depressed mood, a feeling of hopelessness, pessimism, mood instability, a sudden feeling of sadness, crying, excessive sensitivity and lack of enjoyment in daily life activities. A marked decrease in appetite with craving for specific foods, lethargy, tiredness, lack of energy, insomnia or increased amount of sleep, a feeling of anxiety, tension, restlessness, a feeling of irritability, anger, increased conflict with other people, a feeling of loss of control and difficulty concentrating.

Many women usually experience at least one of these symptoms, with the most vulnerable being those in their late twenties to forties.

These psychological symptoms may cause problems in women's lives. Under the title "My period almost ended my marriage," an article in the newspaper "Daily Mail" examined the problems that psychological symptoms may cause in women's lives, as many studies revealed that a man is a major factor in overcoming that period. stressful monthly. A study published on the "Net Doctor" website showed that 48% of women suffered

from problems in their intimate relationship due to premenstrual syndrome.

The Relationship between Female Hormones and Psychological State

These symptoms occur to women due to hormonal changes, but what is the relationship between female hormones and the psychological state?

Female hormones, especially estrogen, play a clear role in influencing a woman's mood and psychological state, especially in periods of low estrogen, which are represented by several periods, the most important of which are: (the period before menstruation by several days, pregnancy, postpartum period, and the period after menopause or the so-called age Hope).

This is due to the effect of estrogen on a group of neurotransmitters in the brain responsible for mood and psychological state, which increases psychological problems related to stress and depression.

To eliminate this suffering, the spouses should cooperate to get out of it by tracking and knowing the exact time per month for these hormonal changes to occur, and for the woman to receive psychological support, so the couple can talk calmly that these feelings are not realistic, but rather stem from severe hormonal changes and with a little support they can overcome that.





The Risks of Psychological Changes During Pregnancy

How Can They Be Avoided?

Family Counseling Report

Pregnancy is one of the stages during which a woman faces psychological changes that affect her and her fetus and those around them as well. For a woman, pregnancy represents a new life in which she gets ready to live nine months with a new spirit being created inside her body. During these 9 months, she faces many fears of new responsibilities and duties she will later bear.

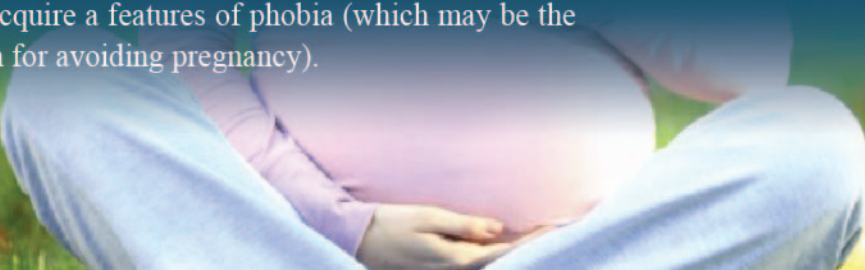
Pregnancy includes psychological and social changes, in addition to physiological and physical changes. Pregnancy, especially for the first time, represents a strong psychological event that affects the psyche of a woman, and it may lead to pregnancy depression.

Pregnancy is always associated with changes in psychological functioning of pregnant women. It is usually associated with ambivalence, frequent mood changes, varying from anxiety, fatigue, exhaustion, sleepiness, depressive reactions to excitement. During pregnancy, changes include body appearance, affectivity and sexuality, whereas the position and role of women attains a new quality. Even thoughts of pregnancy can bring about numerous worries about its course and outcome, and especially of the delivery itself, which may be so intense that they acquire a features of phobia (which may be the reason for avoiding pregnancy).

Change Stages in the Psyche of the Pregnant Woman

Hormones during pregnancy affect the psychological state of the pregnant woman, leading to many mood swings, in which couples at this stage fear the new responsibilities and roles. These changes occur during different stages of pregnancy and they are normal compared to the big life change caused by pregnancy.

In the first trimester of pregnancy, many psychological changes occur from the moment a woman learns that she is pregnant, as in the first weeks she may not look different from the outside, but she begins to feel some changes inside her body.



During the first three months, the pregnant woman suffers from more sensitivity than before due to hormonal changes, and these severe emotional changes may be similar to the changes she experiences during menstruation. Also, she is being nervous, depressed and feels angry at herself and maybe at those around her. Tears are also shed for no reason. However, these psychological changes decrease during the second trimester of pregnancy.

After the second trimester, pregnant women begin to prepare for childbirth, both physically and emotionally. The changes in the psyche of the pregnant woman during this period are the emergence of feelings of fear and anxiety about childbirth, in which these feelings can be alleviated by the proper education on how to prepare for the childbirth.

In general, pregnancy is accompanied by many feelings affecting the psyche of the pregnant woman, such as feelings of anger that arise as part of hormonal changes during pregnancy. Also, the discomforts associated with pregnancy and heaviness affect the development of these feelings. Excessive thinking about pregnancy, fear and anxiety from the birth of a sick or disabled child, or even anxiety about dying during childbirth causes lots of fears to appear.

Pregnancy Depression

Pregnancy depression occurs for various reasons, including stressful life events. Pregnancy can be tiring enough for depression to occur. Pregnancy may be a trigger for more serious depression in women who have low self-esteem.

Complications for the Psychological State of Women

The psychological state of the pregnant woman affects the fetus, and it may make the fetus's movement more active due to the entry of hormones through the placenta and thus this reduces the stability of the fetus movement. This may later make the fetus a very nervous child and then it is difficult to calm him. It may also lead to repeated miscarriages without a clear organic reason, or it may cause premature birth or other complications.

How to Deal with the Psychological Changes of the Pregnant Woman

It is almost unavoidable for pregnant women not to go through some stresses and psychological changes. Therefore, they need to follow the below tips that may help them in alleviating the severity of these stresses and psychological problems and thus preserving the fetus:

- consulting with female friends who faced the same situation.
- consulting with the husband about the possibility of changing some things as the pregnant woman deems appropriate.
- Resting as much as possible, especially in the first trimester of pregnancy. This will make pregnant woman feel that she will not be at risk of miscarriage, which will cause her anxiety and increases bad psychological changes.
- Accompanying positive friends, and going out with them for a walk every now and then.
- Exercising, doing yoga and practicing deep breathing are preferred, as they may contribute to reducing the stress and anxiety of the pregnant woman.
- Consulting doctors in case the changes in the pregnant woman's psyche are very severe, and have reached the point of depression.

Psychological Changes after Childbirth

Constant suffering

Family Counseling Report

After childbirth, mothers think that they have gotten rid of the psychological changes that they experienced during pregnancy, without knowing that they may be exposed to a new stage of those psychological changes after childbirth, which is known as "postpartum depression", a form of depression that is usually more intense and longer. But how do these changes affect the mother after childbirth? And how dangerous is it to the newborn?

Most postpartum mothers experience postpartum blues within two or three days after giving birth, and it can last up to two weeks. Symptoms of postpartum blues include mood swings, anxiety, sadness, irritability, tiredness, crying, decreased concentration, appetite problems, and trouble sleeping.

Psychological depression differs from postpartum depression, as the latter is more serious and may last for several months or longer if not treated, and symptoms usually appear within the first few weeks after birth. Symptoms may start early, that is, during pregnancy, or may appear up to a year after birth. Symptoms of postpartum depression include feeling depressed or

suffering from severe mood swings, crying excessively, difficulty clinging to the baby, withdrawing from family and friends, irritability, anger, hopelessness, and possibly having thoughts of self-harm or harming the baby.

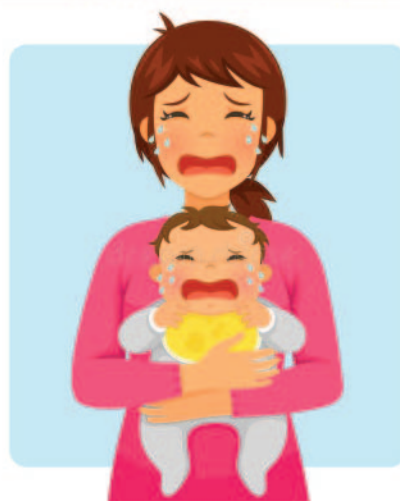
Complications

Some postpartum mothers may not realize that they are depressed; or admit that they feel depressed; they may not be aware of the signs and symptoms of depression.

The problem exacerbates and increases when a woman does not reveal her pain, feelings and psychological problems in the first three months of childbirth, especially new mothers, and does not seek psychological advice or disclose to

her husband or one of her relatives to help her resort to a specialist.

Postpartum depression, if left untreated, can affect the bond between the mother and her newborn, and may lead to family problems. For mothers, postpartum depression may last for months or longer, and sometimes it may become chronic depressive disorder. Despite treatment, postpartum depression may increase the risk of future episodes of depression in mothers who have had it.





Studies

Studies confirm that postpartum depression affects women extensively around the world without looking at those cases, which do not meet the basic condition that makes postpartum depression a pathological symptom. A woman who gave birth to her child should remain in a state of clear depression for three months. Then it can even be confirmed that she suffers from postpartum depression. Studies also indicate that childbirth depression is not related to the fact that childbirth is the first or the last, as a woman may give birth for the third or fourth time and be exposed to postpartum depression.

Recommendations

- Talking with people close or in the health field about feelings during pregnancy or after the birth.
- It is important to share a spouse.
- Taking advantage of the child's bedtime to rest and sleep, even during daylight hours as well.
- Refraining from or postpone non-essential activities and works.
- Maintaining regular and varied meals and drink plenty of fluids.
- Doing physical activity every day.
- It is recommended to go out every day with the husband only or with a girlfriend.
- Taking care of a newborn baby can be a stressful job. It is preferable to get suggestions for help, and also to ask for help.



After the Troubles of the Menstrual Cycle, Pregnancy and Childbirth...

Women Face the Challenges of Menopause Changes

Family Counseling Report

Once the menstruation stops, women are safe from the troubles of the menstrual cycle, pregnancy and childbirth, but at the same time they enter a new stage of psychological changes that they are exposed to during the so-called "age of hope". But what is the reason for the occurrence of these psychological changes for women despite the interruption of their menstrual cycle? And what is its effect?

How can it be dealt with to mitigate it?

Most women go through a difficult phase with many changes after the menopause phase, or as it is called the "hope age," which is an age when a woman is unable to have children. This stage is not pathological, but rather a natural biological transitional stage, like puberty, pregnancy and childbirth. This stage is considered a necessity because it is not reasonable or likely for a woman to continue to have her period and be able to get pregnant throughout her life, as she needs to rest from pregnancy and childbirth in the second half of her life.

The menopause occurs in women during the period between the age of forty and fifty, although it tends in the majority to be in the late forties and beginning of the fifties; it may be interrupted once, but in most cases interruptions occur and then return to be completely interrupted. In some women, menstruation may stop at an early age (in the thirties, for example) due to a health crisis or severe psychological trauma.

The period of menopause is accompanied by many psychological changes such as symptoms of anxiety, tension and fear. The psychotherapist at FCDF, Saddam Bahir, attributes the occurrence of these psychological changes during the period of menopause to the decrease in estrogen levels, and all this may lead to some psychological and nervous harassment that may develop into pathological symptoms, he said.

Bahir added that these symptoms make the woman feel that she is in a continuous state of the menstrual cycle, indicating that if a woman cannot cope with these symptoms, she may become depressed.

Psychological Symptoms of Menopause

Emotional changes experienced by menopausal women can include:

Nervousness and outbursts of anger, aggression, sadness, mood changes, anxiety, difficulty concentrating or making decisions, feelings of guilt or worthlessness, loss of interest in activities that were previously enjoyable, lack of energy, sleeping too little or too much, appetite changes, and unexplained physical pain.

The Impact of Childhood Suffering on Women during Menopause

The period of "menopause" represents a great challenge for many women, but for others it is something that can pass smoothly and does not have a significant psychological impact. However, the results of recent scientific research indicate that the occurrence of severe psychological disorders in some women is due to their suffering in childhood or in the corresponding stages of life; thus, traumatic experiences in childhood may raise the incidence of diseases and psychological and mental disorders to double in later stages of life, according to some studies.

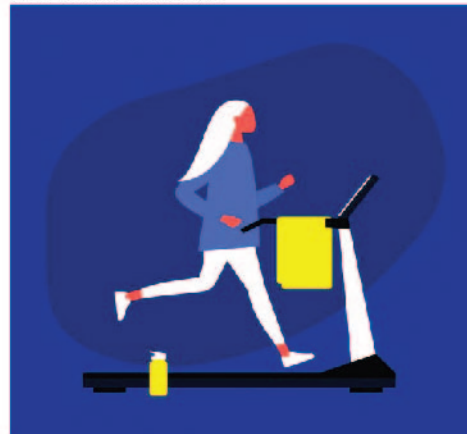
The first study of its kind in this context described traumatic experiences, such as cases of deliberate neglect in childhood, verbal or physical abuse, or perhaps the divorce of the father and mother.

Experts who supervised the study at the American University of Pennsylvania confirmed that psychological stress at an early age may leave a permanent impact on the region responsible for mood in the brain, as some suffering in childhood causes an increase or a doubling of the dark psychological symptoms in the period of menopause for women.

How Can a Woman Overcome This Difficult Stage?

In order for the woman to overcome this difficult stage, the psychotherapist, Saddam Bahir, stressed out the importance of allocating time for herself and her requirements, trying to think about herself and her goals that she could not achieve in advance, considering this stage a favorable opportunity to start a new beginning, being aware that this stage The nature of all women.

Bahir stressed out that the practice of motor activities has a very positive impact on the psychological state of the person in general, stressing out the need for the life partner and the entire family to try to support the woman when she passes this stage by showing their understanding of the mood swings she is going through and immersing her in feelings of love and attention.



Hormonal Changes and Their Impact on Women's Mental Health

Family Counseling Articles

Zaynab Al Tarriq



In recent years, the number of studies examining the relationship between the nervous system and the endocrine (hormonal) system has increased, and our understanding has become better about how hormones and neurotransmitters affect mental health. Hormones are chemical vectors produced in the endocrine glands and released into the bloodstream. These hormones, in turn, control most major bodily functions such as hunger to complex systems such as reproduction and agitation.

The relationship between hormones and mental health is complex and needs more understanding and studies. This imbalance affects both men and women; however, women are more likely to have natural hormonal changes during different stages of their lives, such as the

menstrual cycle, pregnancy, childbirth, and menopause. The most important of these hormones affecting women's mental health are female hormones, mainly (estrogen). When estrogen's levels are disturbed, a woman may feel more emotional changes, and also high levels of estrogen exhibit very similar symptoms of these emotional changes. When estrogen levels are low, the effect on neurotransmitters leads to mental disorder and increases the risk of depression, stress and insomnia, because estrogen generally affects the following:

Levels of serotonin - the hormone of happiness - which Dr. Sarah Gottfried described in her book *Hormone Cure*, as "nature's Prozac" the natural antidepressant, dopamine, epinephrine, and norepinephrine, the hormone melatonin

responsible for Regulating sleep and the body's biological clock.

When this hormone is out of balance, many psychological repercussions occur, such as loss of pleasure and motivation, decreased cognitive functions, memory impairment, anxiety, and sudden mood swings; high levels of estrogen also produce similar symptoms.

Likewise, the female hormone progesterone is a sedative hormone that helps with sleep and cognitive functions, and when disrupted, women are more likely to experience sleep problems, anxiety, irritability, depression, and stress.

For women, each of these symptoms worsens during the menstrual cycle, at childbirth, after childbirth, and when menopause. This is why hormonal imbalance is more common in women, as they experience more severe fluctuations for women suffering from mental and psychological disorders, and these fluctuations only make their condition worse.

Hormones and Moods... Problem and Effect

Family Counseling Articles



Mohammed Al Asta

Many biological, psychological and social factors together play a large and essential role in the emergence of psychological and mental disorders in women, which may cause the occurrence of many family problems. For example, levels of sex hormones such as estrogen, progesterone and testosterone change during the menstrual cycle, which negatively affects the chemicals in the brain that are responsible for a woman's thoughts, behaviors, emotions and moods.

The effects of low estrogen may appear in several times, the most important of which are: a few days before menstruation, the postpartum period, and the menopause period.

This is due to the effect of the hormone on a group of neurotransmitters in the brain responsible for mood and psychological state, increasing psychological problems related to stress and depression. These symptoms usually include severe mood swings, fatigue, nervousness, irritability, depression and anxiety, appetite changes, sleep disorders, concentration problems, and feelings of worthlessness and guilt.

The symptoms of these hormonal changes may cause many family problems and disputes may arise. The main cause of which is the lack of understanding of these changes, and this requires us to understand them and try to deal with them positively to avoid the exacerbation of these problems.

At the same time every month, a woman is exposed to some psychological changes that make her in a volatile and bad mood. This is not only limited to that, but she is also exposed to psychological changes during the different stages of her life, which raises many questions, most notably the type of symptoms and the reasons behind her exposure to these changes, their impact on women's life, and how their suffering can be alleviated and dealt with.

In order to answer these questions and more, "Family Counseling" met with the psychiatrist at FCDF, Ammar Mahdi, and had the following dialogue with him

Psychiatrist Ammar Mahdi for "FAMILY COUNSELING":

A Man Must Be Aware of What Is Happening in The Hormonal Change Periods in Women

■ **In the beginning, please tell us of the reason behind the hormonal disturbance in the woman's body every month?**

Every month, a woman's body goes through a cycle that is considered normal in the absence of pregnancy; it is known to everyone as the menstrual cycle. The changes, motive and main driver of this cycle from the growth of the uterine wall to its degeneration are the hormones resulting from several organs in the human body luteinizing hormone (LH), and the follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), estrogen and progesterone. Without going into details, a group of hormones throughout the month is in a normal state yet these hormones increase and decrease due to certain factors. You can expect that these hormones and their changes in the normal state or in the event of a defect extend their effect to all parts of the body, not just the reproductive system of women. Also, I need to mention some psychological changes during this period: depressed mood, a noticeable decrease or increase in appetite, severe lethargy, and an increased desire to sleep or insomnia, tension, anger for trivial matters and a feeling of loss of self-control,

weakness in concentration, in addition to some physical symptoms, such as, pain and swelling in the chest, headache, joint and muscle pain, weight gain and a feeling of bloating, sometimes swelling in the ankles, feet and fingers, and this occurs as a result of fluid retention in the body.

■ **What is the relationship between female hormonal changes and a woman's psychological state disorder during the different stages of her life, starting with her stage of puberty and her transition to maturity, through the psychological changes that occur to her during the premenstrual period and ending with the stage of changes that occur to her during pregnancy and after childbirth, as well as when her period stops, menopause?**

Hormonal changes have a long history in influencing the psychological state of humans. Scientists are still discovering more and more in this field. It becomes clear to us that human hormones have more than one function and more than one effect, and the effect of the hormone varies according to the organ that receives it. Accordingly, women are considered to be affected more than men in terms of hormonal changes. This is always followed by effects on her psychological state, because throughout her life a woman gets a lot of changes unlike men, while the journey begins equally between them in the stage of puberty and the high level of hormones, and of course, girls in particular have the largest share in the psychological confusion associated with puberty, due to the onset of the menstrual cycle. It is also because changes in appearance are more pronounced in the female than in the male. Whenever puberty occurs at an early age, the impact of these psychological changes on the girl is greater and more severe.

Women continue to experience changes as we mentioned with regard to the menstrual cycle. It then comes another stage, which is in the event of pregnancy, and here the changes include the body, psychological and social status and at all levels, followed by the lactation stage to reduce the percentage of hormones that were driving pregnancy and the milk hormone comes to be the leader and influencer also causes effects on the woman's menstrual cycle, as breastfeeding is one of the methods of natural family planning.

After the end of pregnancy and breastfeeding, the woman returns to her menstrual cycle or to a new pregnancy, until she reaches a certain age before the menopause, where the percentage of hormones are disturbed and until the age of complete cease of the menstrual cycle, with a significant decrease in hormones and the associated effects on the woman's body and

II. Psychological changes during the second trimester of pregnancy:

From the beginning of the fourth month until the end of the sixth month, this is the stage of safety and happiness for the pregnant woman, as blood flows heavily to the pelvic area, which reduces the feeling of nausea, and the possibility of abortion becomes out of the question. In general, the pregnant woman's fears decrease, her desire to engage in marital relationship returns, and she becomes more receptive to the exciting experience of motherhood.

III. Psychological changes during the third trimester of pregnancy:

Starting from the seventh month until the birth, the pregnant woman goes through a new stage of mixing feelings between fatigue, lack of patience and sadness because of the end of this

enjoyable stage, in addition to psychological tension due to many concerns such as thinking about the pain of childbirth, and the general shape of the child and his safety from distortions and mental and physical disabilities, and the idea of the death of the pregnant woman. Or the fetus during childbirth is one of the most common concerns. In addition to these thoughts, the pregnant woman

experiences a tiring physical stage. The weight that the mother carries and the movement of the fetus are reflected in her comfort day and night.

The stage of menopause and despair of childbearing is a biological fact, and we must deal with it and understand it within its limits, not more or less than the hormonal shifts that accompany this period, the severe decrease in the proportion of estrogen and menopause with the loss of the ability to reproduce, all of this may lead to some inconveniences Psychological and neurological, which may develop into pathological symptoms, the most famous of which are:

- Rapid feeling of fatigue, exhaustion and stress.
- Nervousness, jitteriness and sleep disturbance.
- Loss of appetite and unwillingness to do any work, even if it is routine.
- Stress and psychological anxiety, which may increase and reach the point of depression.
- Some women suffer during this period of increased suspicion and obsession.
- About 50% of women at least suffer from a disorder in the blood vessels and blood circulation, which causes a feeling of high temperature and then the feeling of coldness follows. There is no doubt that the occurrence of these heat attacks increases the woman's sense that something abnormal is happening to her, and even those attacks are her main problem During that period.

■ Do all women experience the same symptoms caused by these changes, or do symptoms differ from one woman to another? What is the reason for that difference?

Of course, psychological and physical changes differ from one woman to another, where genetic and social variables play a role in determining the size of the hormonal influence on the body and psychological state.

■ But some men think that women exaggerate their behavior during these changes?

The man's feeling that women are an exaggeration stems from men's ignorance of what women are going through. Unfortunately, there are customs and traditions that are alien to our Arab societies that made talking about the natural changes that happen to women a shame and a secret that must be hidden, while originally the Arabs were aware of a wide and comprehensive culture that does not detract from modesty.

Are there medications that will alleviate those

■ psychological disorders caused by the hormonal changes of a woman? What kind?

Yes, of course, but medicines are not considered the first line in dealing with these changes. If there is a need for medicines, then taking advice from a specialized doctor is obligatory, and then some hormonal alternatives or even antidepressants can be used.

■ How can a woman deal with these changes?

Dealing with changes that occur at any stage depends on knowledge of these variables. Learning, educating, and understanding what is going on are very essential and relieves a lot of the accompanying anxiety in each period. Knowledge makes it easy to deal with physical and psychological changes, and allows an appreciation of what is normal and what is different from It is normal and when to visit a specialist to seek advice.

■ What should a man do when a woman goes through these changes? What are the consequences that may arise from a man's ignorance of the status of women and the changes that occur to her?

Society, the family, and the man in particular, must be understanding of what is happening in periods of change in women. Understanding is the cornerstone on which much is built, and it may be sufficient in some cases. Women must also receive support, not criticism, alienation and punishment because of its negative effects that may The condition worsens on all social, physical and psychological levels, and what was a transient phase has turned into harm that may even reach some psychological diseases such as depression.

■ What would you conclude to end this dialogue?

I would like to conclude my talk by emphasizing the importance of getting to know what a woman goes through during the stages of her life and understanding and fully supporting her. As for what we talked about, it is only a small part, and there is much left that we do not have time to talk about, and we will have another meeting. Thank you very much.



condition Mental.

■ What is the size of psychological changes caused by hormonal changes in a woman's body?

Well, let's briefly divide the psychological effects that occur and for each of the stages we mentioned;

1. Puberty

The stage of puberty is accompanied by psychological changes that are reflected in the behavior of the adolescents. Periods, depression - mood swings - excessive anxiety and psychological instability. Spirit of contemplation and reflection on religious issues. Desire to challenge parents and teachers and rebel against their authority. - Indulging in daydreams. Paying a lot of attention to outward appearance. Initiation of inclination and interest in the opposite sex. Indulging in some wrong behaviors - keeping pace with peers and imitating their right and wrong behaviors - not paying attention to and not accepting parents' advice - being isolated from people and family.

2. Pregnancy

I. Psychological changes during the first stage of pregnancy:

This stage, from the beginning of pregnancy until the end of the third month of it, the pregnant woman becomes hypersensitive as a result of the sudden and large secretion of pregnancy hormones, and subsequently suffers from the morning sickness "morning sickness" in addition to constant stress and a feeling of dizziness or "dizziness", and mood swings from joy to Sadness and crying to laughter within minutes!

Suffering from Postpartum Depression Yasmine from Happiness to Sadness

Yasmine (a pseudonym), 23, dreamed of having a child that would fill her life with joy and happiness, and indeed she gave birth to her first child; however, her happiness in having this child did not last long, and turned into a nightmare and severe suffering, as a result of her postpartum depression.

A success story

(Yasmine) says: I gave birth to my first child when I was 23 years old, and that coincided with the exams of the last year in my college. I was feeling great tension and pressure beyond my ability; because of that, I missed a number of subjects, and I was not able to take care of my child and breastfeeding, which increased my feeling of guilt and badness. I did not find anyone to help me in this difficult time. My father does not care about such matters and does not feel that it is a problem; my mother is busy at home, taking care of my father who he was not allowed to stay with me much. My husband was busy with his work all day and comes back at night. He used to go home exhausted and he would leave me with my child and go to sleep in another room. I found myself alone with my young child and confused. I was not aware of many things related to my new situation,

I also did not understand myself and my feelings and I could not explain that bad feeling to those around me. I did not want to talk or communicate with my sisters or friends. I felt upset, anxious and confused, my sleep was disturbed, my desire to eat was almost zero. I prefer to be alone, and I hated my child, my husband and everyone around me. I lost enjoyment in everything. Frustration and despair seeped into my heart until it reached its climax. With all that, I could not explain what I am suffering from. I never knew that symptoms are because of postpartum depression, and that my child has nothing to do with what I'm going through. For a moment, I felt that I needed help; my condition became worse, so I asked for my husband's help so that I could overcome all the negative feelings I feel. He tried to support me with words,

but he was not understanding what I felt. I was complaining about my shortcomings to my daily errands, the child and the home, perhaps because I could not communicate what I felt to my husband. Unfortunately, he was also unaware that there was a disorder called postpartum depression, although he is educated. This was the case of many members of my community even the educated and uneducated person is ignorant of a lot about mental disorders and their symptoms.

After suffering for nearly five months, and by chance, I heard an announcement by a local radio station by FCDF. In my first session with the psychiatrist, I felt great relief, and hope returned to me as soon as I found someone who could explain my condition,

and I understood that what I suffer from is (postpartum depression), as well as my husband was present with me, understood my situation, and supported me with patience after he knew what I suffer from, and that it is not petting or neglect as he thought.

The doctor prescribed some anti-depressants to me and referred me to psychotherapy sessions. I was taking medicines and attending therapy sessions. I was moving towards improvement day after day and week after week until I reached a state of recovery, and indeed I returned to my daily life, taking care of myself, my child, my husband and my home. I took college exams of some of the subjects I had not passed and completed my studies. Now I am a successful housewife and mother, and I have become stronger and more knowledgeable to deal with life's stresses and difficulties.

