

# Shorter menstrual cycles may indicate earlier menopause and worse symptoms

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Since menopause symptoms can significantly affect a woman's quality of life, much research has focused on identifying risk factors associated with menopause symptoms. A new study suggests that menstrual-cycle

length may predict the severity of menopause symptoms, as well as the age at menopause. Study results are published online today in *Menopause*.

The menopause transition is often accompanied by symptoms such as hot flashes, depression and anxiety, cognitive changes, and disturbances of sleep duration and quality. Traditional [risk factors](#) for [menopause symptoms](#) include demographic (age and ethnicity) and several modifiable lifestyle factors such as [body mass index](#) (BMI), smoking, and [physical activity](#).

Emerging data suggest that reproductive traits and conditions during reproductive age may be associated with menopause symptoms, although study results are contradictory. For example, compared with postmenopausal women with regular menstrual-cycle lengths, a history of irregular cycles was associated with reduced late-life depressive symptoms in Chinese and higher severe depressive symptoms in French [postmenopausal women](#).

Researchers in this new study involving more than 600 women sought to investigate the extent to which self-reported menstrual-cycle length during the reproductive years is associated with menopause symptoms in midlife women. Compared with women with normal menstrual-cycle length (26-34 days), those with short menstrual cycles (

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