

# THE ANATOMY OF A MOOD SWING?

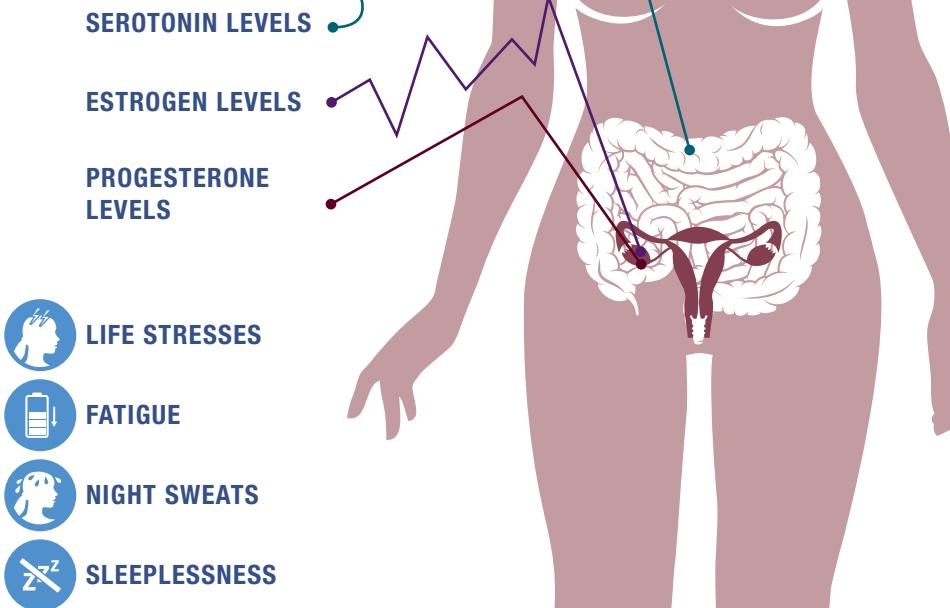
You're laughing with your friends one minute and close to tears a few moments later. You feel tired, overwhelmed, and out of control. You're not crazy—it's one of the common symptoms of perimenopause (the first stage of menopause, usually in the early 40s): mood swings. And there are ways to cope. Visit [endocrine.org](http://endocrine.org) and [menopausemap.org](http://menopausemap.org) for more information.

## WHAT CAUSES MOOD SWINGS?

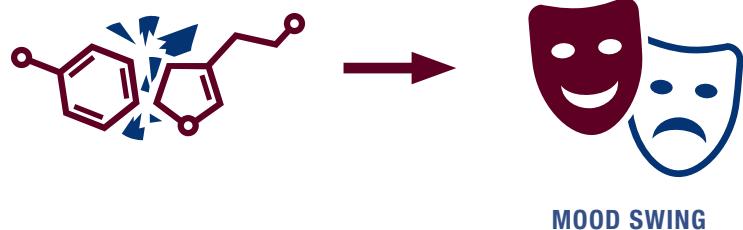
As a woman ages, **estrogen levels** are fluctuating from one minute to the next, and erratic. Less progesterone is produced (but stabilizes at low levels in postmenopause, around age 55). **Estrogen is related to production of serotonin**, a mood-regulating neurotransmitter.



Fluctuating estrogen and progesterone levels, plus other factors, cause **serotonin production disruption**, leading to **more mood swings**.



## SEROTONIN PRODUCTION



MENO PAUSE  
LET'S TALK ABOUT IT.

WHERE ARE YOU  
IN THE MENOPAUSE  
JOURNEY?

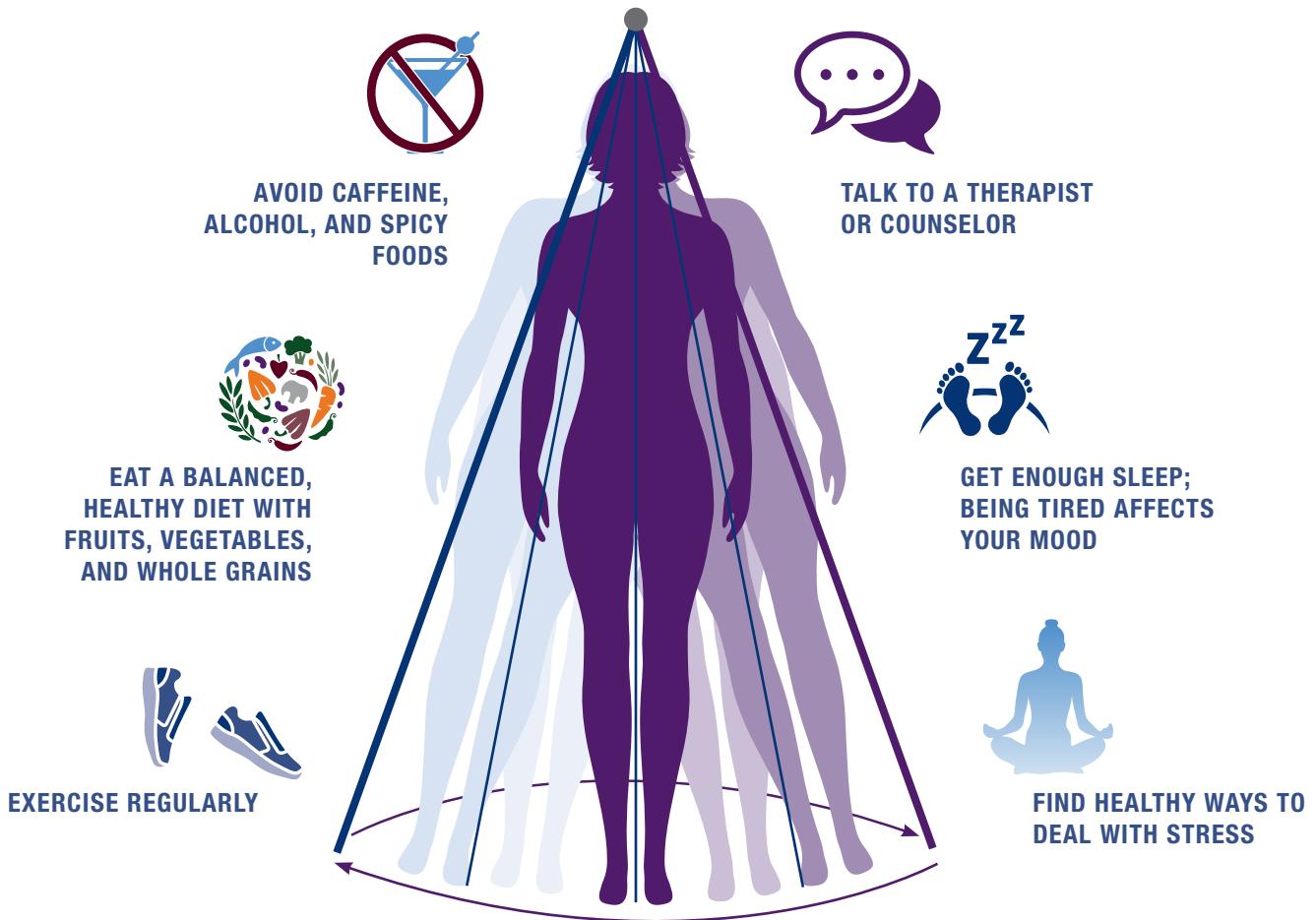
Visit [menopausemap.com](http://menopausemap.com)  
to learn more.

Visit [endocrine.org/menopausemap](http://endocrine.org/menopausemap) for more information.

Editor: Mary Jane Minkin, MD

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# DEALING WITH SYMPTOMS OF MOOD SWINGS



**HORMONE THERAPY:** May help severe mood swings; usually lowest dose for shortest amount of time prescribed (there is no increased risk of breast cancer until after three years of therapy; very few women use therapy for any longer).

**SSRIS (SELECTIVE SEROTONIN REUPTAKE INHIBITORS):** Can be effective in treating mood swings and other symptoms, such as hot flashes and sleep issues, but have side effects; some doctors suggest effectiveness is increased when a woman is first treated with estrogen.

Always talk with your health care provider about medications, hormone therapy, and before using CAM supplements.

**COMPLEMENTARY ALTERNATIVE MEDICINES (CAM)** such as black cohosh, deep breathing, and soy in some cases; includes treatments such as acupuncture and mind-body therapies such as yoga, tai chi and meditation.

**LOW DOSE BIRTH CONTROL PILLS:** Shuts down the ovarian fluctuation that takes place during perimenopause; offers a fixed dose of estrogen and progestin every day.



**Patients have questions. We have answers.**

Endocrine Society is your trusted source for endocrine patient education.

Our free, Menopause Map™ My Personal Path is available at [endocrine.org/menopausemap](http://endocrine.org/menopausemap).

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