

How to Win at Menopause

Congratulations! You have reached one of the most significant stages of a cis-woman's life. Some people will try to tell you menopause is an uncomfortable nuisance that will make you feel irrelevant and less like a woman. Well... kind of. Not that menopause is always a picnic, but there are some advantages, and if you do things right and with a good attitude, you can absolutely win at menopause.

Take advantage of your invisibility

You should find that you now have the power of near invisibility. (You may have felt this coming on in the last few years, as fewer and fewer people acknowledge your presence.) You'll find that gathering with your fellow menopausal friends will magnify this effect, rendering your group all but imperceivable to everyone. Feel free to go out in public and laugh, cackle, make plans to take over the world — whatever you want — in complete obscurity.

Since no one can see you, be sure to wear what you want, do your hair the way you want and wear your makeup the way you want—or don't wear any at all. I decided to color my hair purple a few years ago, and it was one of the best decisions I've ever made, because it makes me happy and I no longer give a shit what anyone else thinks about my looks.

Use your newfound rage for good

You also now possess more power than you ever will in your entire life. See, by the time you're this age, you're pretty much over being endlessly accommodating to others. You should notice your hormones have shifted away from your younger days of being weepy and timid at certain times of the month, to raging fury at the drop of a hat. You will likely find you have zero patience for bullshit, and you

won't be bothered by making a scene when your small reserves of patience are gone. So, when you let loose your temper — which you will—people will subconsciously associate you with their mother, or a particularly frightening teacher or nun. In an instant, you'll find you can go from unseen and unnoticed, to a real force to be reckoned with. Be sure to wield this new power with justice in mind: Speak up against bullies for those who are younger, weaker, or less advantaged than you. If you are a middle-aged white woman, speak out to the cops if you see them treating someone badly. Older white women are the only group of people who can mouth off to cops and get away with it (usually). It's our super power, and we should wield it accordingly.

Make no mistake — middle aged women are intimidating. We do not have time for anyone's nonsense, and we're no longer afraid.

Be prepared for sweat

I'm sure that by now, if you're not experiencing it yourself, you've heard the stories about menopause and night sweats. But wait! There's more! You may also experience coffee sweats, wine sweats, beer sweats, doing housework sweats, eating spicy food sweats, after shower sweats and sitting around doing nothing sweats. To combat this, I have taken to carrying hand fans with me everywhere, just in case. Some women prefer the battery-operated variety, but I don't care for the noise, which is too close to that of a vibrator. Besides, I like to coordinate my fans with my outfits. Don't be shy about pulling out your fan in public, either. Wield it with the confidence and dignity of a woman in church. Throw out the occasional "Amen!" if the spirit overtakes you, as you create your own breeze. No one will pay any attention, anyway.

It's also a good idea to carry hankies, bandannas and/or tissues in your pockets or purse to mop up the overflow when the sweating is really out of control. If you're a makeup wearer, carry some extra foundation for touch-ups when necessary.

Get comfortable with your body & embrace your sexuality

Once in menopause, your body will stop producing some hormones and increase production of others. One of the casualties in the hormone shift will be your skin, which will be drier, but ironically, may begin pumping out teenage levels of oil (sebum) to combat the dryness. On top of that, your skin will lose buckets of collagen, the