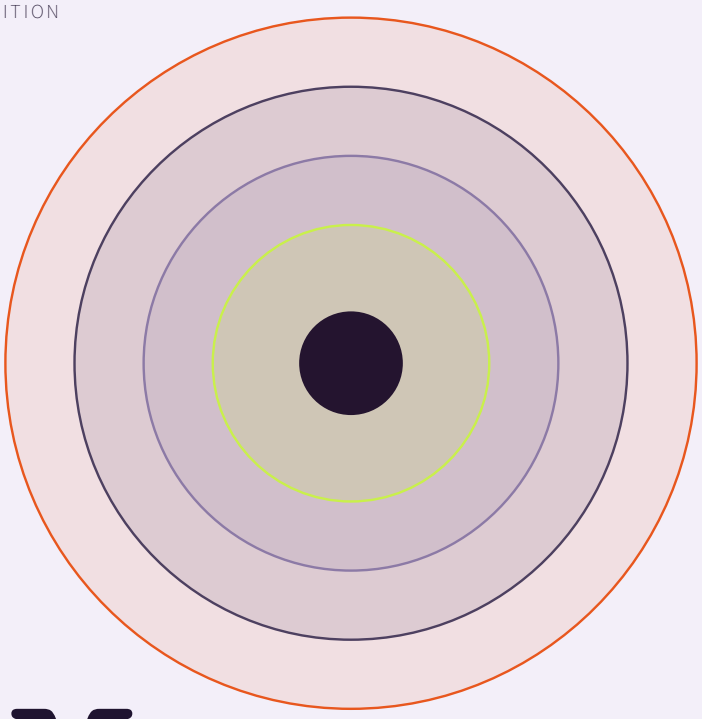


The Menopause Manifesto: Own Your Health with Facts and Femi-nism

A reading of the book by Jen Gunter (2021)

1. ACTION BOOK

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of The Menopause Manifesto: Own Your Health with Facts and Feminism, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

Jen Gunter is a Canadian-American obstetrician and gynaecologist and the author of The Vagina Bible. In The Menopause Manifesto she explains the biology of the menopause transition, from perimenopause through the final period to the years after it, and argues that women have been badly served by both medicine and the wellness industry. She walks through what changing oestrogen levels do to the body: hot flushes, sleep, mood, the genitourinary syndrome of menopause, bones and the heart. She reviews the evidence on menopausal hormone therapy, including how the Women's Health Initiative results were reported, and on non-hormonal treatments, diet and supplements. She writes as a doctor and a feminist, frankly and with humour, and treats myths and marketing as things to be checked against the evidence.

Below are the 9 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Menopause is one day: the point twelve months after your final period.

Gunter is precise about the words. The years of change before it are perimenopause, and everything after that one day is postmenopause. Getting the terms right makes it easier to describe what is happening to you and to be taken seriously when you do.

2

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Perimenopause is less a slow fade than a few years of hormonal turbulence.

Oestrogen does not simply drift down. It can swing high and low from cycle to cycle while ovulation becomes irregular. That is why symptoms can come and go, and why periods can get heavier or closer together before they stop.

3

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

A hot flush is a thermostat problem in the brain, not a weakness of character.

Gunter explains hot flushes and night sweats as a change in how the brain regulates body temperature as oestrogen falls. Seeing them as physiology rather than nerves takes away some of the shame, and points toward treatments that are actually tested.

4

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The way the Women's Health Initiative was reported scared a generation away from hormone therapy.

Gunter argues that the 2002 headlines lumped every woman together, when age and time since menopause change the balance of benefit and risk. In her view, many healthy women with troublesome symptoms near menopause have been denied a reasonable option. Guidance has kept changing since the book came out, so the right choice for you is one to make with a clinician.

5

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Dryness, pain with sex and bladder trouble have a name, and they are treatable.

The genitourinary syndrome of menopause is common and tends to get worse without treatment, yet many women are never asked about it. Gunter covers moisturisers, lubricants and low-dose vaginal oestrogen, which acts locally. Naming the condition is often the first step to getting it looked at.

6

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The neglect of menopause in medicine is a feminist issue, not an accident.

Gunter points to how little many doctors are taught about menopause and how often women's symptoms are brushed off. She connects that to a long history of treating women's bodies as less worth studying. Her answer is information: a patient who knows the facts can push for better care.

7

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

The supplement aisle sells reassurance, and the evidence rarely follows.

Gunter is sceptical of herbal remedies, wellness products and compounded so-called bioidentical hormones that are sold with big promises and little testing. Her test is simple: what does good research show, and who profits from the claim? Natural does not automatically mean safe or effective.

8

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Bones and the heart are the long game after menopause.

Lower oestrogen speeds up bone loss and is linked with changes in cardiovascular risk. Gunter treats the menopause years as a good time to look at blood pressure, cholesterol, bone health, strength training and smoking. These are the quiet parts of the transition that matter for decades.

9

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

A blood test usually cannot tell you that you are in perimenopause.

Because hormone levels swing so much, a single result can look normal one week and not the next. Gunter explains that for most people over their mid-forties, age and the pattern of periods and symptoms say more than a lab value. Tests still have a place when something else needs ruling out.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] Start a symptom log
- [ ] Write down your period history
- [ ] Book an appointment just for this
- [ ] Know your heart and bone numbers
- [ ] Audit your supplement shelf

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Lift something heavy twice a week
- ◯ Log on the same day each week
- ◯ Keep the bedroom cool

30 days · Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

- [ ] SETUP 1

Start a symptom log

Use the tracker on this page or a notebook.

Once a week, rate hot flushes, sleep, mood, bleeding and the rest from none to severe, and keep it going for at least four weeks.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 2

Write down your period history

Note the date of your last period and how your cycles have changed over the past year: length, flow, spotting.

If you have gone twelve months without a period and then bleed, book a doctor's appointment.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 3

Book an appointment just for this

Ask for an appointment about menopause alone, and a longer slot if your practice offers one.

Bring your log and three questions, written down.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 4

Know your heart and bone numbers

Find out your latest blood pressure and cholesterol.

Ask your clinician when a bone density scan makes sense for you.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 5

Audit your supplement shelf

List every supplement and remedy you take, with doses.

Take the list to your clinician or pharmacist and ask what the evidence is for each, and whether any interact with your medicines.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Lift something heavy twice a week

Put two short strength sessions in your calendar: weights, bands or bodyweight.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Log on the same day each week

Pick one evening and spend two minutes rating the week.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

Keep the bedroom cool

Turn the heating down at night, use layers you can throw off, and keep water by the bed.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
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30 ○						

December 2026

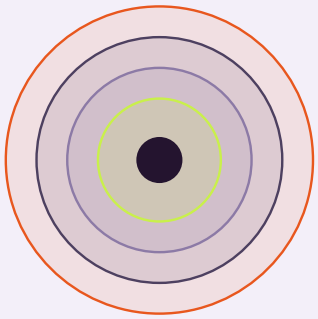
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



Menopause is not a failure or a disease to be ashamed of. It is biology, and you are owed the facts about it.

HOURLIFE NOTE AFTER JEN GUNTER