

**THERE'S  
SOMETHING  
SPECIAL  
ABOUT THE  
HEALTH OF**

the  
**AFRICAN  
AMERICAN  
COMMUNITY**

## Roll with the change: Reduce your post-menopause health risk

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, African American women experience menopause differently than women of other races. They have more estrogen-related symptoms, such as hot flashes, mood swings, disrupted sleep, and weight gain. Unfortunately, the symptoms can last up to several years. However, these aggravations mean little when compared to the greater health concern for women *after menopause*.

Menopause generally occurs around age 50. Afterward, a woman's body produces less estrogen than it did prior to menopause. This hormonal change increases the risk for osteoporosis, heart disease, stroke, and certain cancers. That's why women should be especially vigilant in protecting their health during this time in their lives.

Experts agree that there are ways to take care of yourself after menopause:

- **Schedule regular check-ups.** Your doctor will help you determine which preventive tests you should have based on your and your family's health history.
- **Follow a healthy diet.** Eating well can lower your risk of heart disease and help you to maintain a healthy weight.
- **Make time for exercise.** Exercise can help you manage your weight and lower your risk for heart disease, osteoporosis, and even some forms of cancer.
- **Get sufficient calcium.** You can get calcium through non- and low-fat dairy products, calcium-enriched foods and juices, or a daily vitamin.

**Independence Blue Cross members can also call a Health Coach at 1-800-ASK-BLUE (1-800-275-2583), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for information about many common health issues, including questions about menopause. Health Coaches are a prime example of how we're here for you every step of the way.**



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