



JEWISH CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE
Strengthening Lives in Keeping with Jewish Values

MENOPAUSE MATTERS

What your Mother didn't tell you -We Will!

By Harriet Berkal

Baby boomers are a very different generation to deal with. By and large, they are more educated than our ancestors and research extensively using the Internet. One can Google almost anything and find information, often varying and divergent and so how does one filter through it all?

Maybe the mothers who raised us would have loved to look up recipes online given the chance. Or perhaps, they would still just taste to see if it needed a little bit more of this or a dash of that other secret ingredient, which remained undefined.

Hardy as they were, when it came to the "Change in Life" they mostly suffered in silence and in my house at least, I never saw evidence of neither a hot flash nor a kvetch about vaginal atrophy. Hell, I never heard the word vagina or sex at all.

Can you relate thus far?

When I hit 51, my periods stopped. I was initially thrilled and thought: "Wow, what a pleasure to not have another period EVER." But if you asked me 6 years later if menopause was a liberating bridge to a life free of sanitary napkins and cramps- I'd be forced to say: "NO".

Hot flashes I fully expected, but it was all the other symptoms of menopause that left me feeling like a stranger in a foreign land.

I was shocked that I could not find any support groups in place as a turnkey solution to my pleas for help. That's when I approached Jewish Child and Family Service to bounce the idea off them. Happily, they saw the merits of this idea and are offering a "Menopause Matters" 5-week support group, which embarks starting September 15 – October 13th, to bring those of us together to speak openly about the challenges, as we sort through these hormonal plummetts.

The goal is to share experiences, solutions and hear from the experts out there about real options that assist with this transition that can go on for over a decade.

Some of the topics will include; painful intercourse, vaginal atrophy, bladder infections, mood swings, weight gain, migraines and of course hot flashes.

Menopause can happen naturally or be brought on surgically at various ages. And how many of us have heard that whatever ails you is related to menopause? It's not a black hole that sucks up all illness and so it's important to know what might be related and to educate oneself about other potential alarms going off in your body.

Pause for a second and take the time to hear from such specialists as a pharmacist, acupuncturist, gynecologist, etc. Share in the stories of others and most of all feel the warmth of the sisterhood of those that are all going through this passage. Menopause – it's truly not that simple- PERIOD!

To find out more and to register please contact:
Jewish Child and Family Service
(204)477-7430

This program is just one of the many programs offered by JCFS including, Bereavement and Early Memory Loss.