

The menopausal transition: does it induce women's worries about aging?

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This study examines whether patterns of worries about aging change in women during the menopausal transition. Design A population-based sample of 261 Australian-born women aged 45-55 years at baseline participated in a longitudinal study. Data were collected at baseline and in the 5th year of annual follow-up interviews. Measures included the Attitudes to Aging Scale which is based on a scale developed by Kaufert and Syrotuik and contained the six-item version which examines worries about specific losses. Menopausal status was determined by menstrual status as follows: late reproductive, early menopausal transition, late menopausal transition, and postmenopause. Results Data analysis carried out by cross-tabulation found that 36% of participants did not change their attitudes over the 5-year follow-up period, 30% became more worried and who became less worried and there was no significant difference between those who had or had not experienced the menopausal transition. There was no significant association between the scores on the Attitudes to Aging Scale and changes in the self-rated health, work status and marital status. Conclusion The menopausal transition does not induce an overall increase in worries about aging.