

## **INFORMATION ON MENOPAUSE**

Information received from Dr Dowsett

1. The menopause is separate from ME.
2. Treatment for the menopause does not treat or cure ME.
3. The patient has to show she is menopausal (normally between 45-55 years of age, but can start earlier [eg. after hysterectomy] and may last five years).
4. The menopause is due to ovarian failure – this must be proved before starting any treatment and requires a test for PLASMA FOLLICLE STIMULATING HORMONE (FSH) and a test for OESTRADIOL LEVELS (one cannot make a diagnosis on symptoms as these are variable and may be insignificant).

Dr Dowsett suggests you speak to an expert about treatment as these are wide-ranging (including patches, depot injections or ovarian hormones and drugs (some drugs now show a dangerous tendency to cause heart problems). Also many drugs cannot be given if the patient still has a uterus.

Dr Dowsett advises, it may be worthwhile to contact your local Women's or Family Planning Clinic as more about the various drugs available could be explained to you by GP or practice nurse.

Dr Dowsett recommends a book on the subject, entitled: "Key Topics in Obstetrics and Gynaecology" – SLADE RJ, LAIRDE, BEYNON G – PICKERS GILL A BIOS Scientific publishers Oxford and Washington DC. We are not sure of the price, but we think it may be around £14-15.