

LIVING

The Middle Years

by Sylvia Saleem



Faye Dunaway at 52

Hormone Therapy

Sometimes a course of hormone treatment is also needed to offset too abrupt a drop in the output of the ovarian oestrogen, or to help the endocrine glands in their effort to establish a new rhythm and balance. Not everybody is a suitable subject for hormone therapy, but when it is in order to have it, then the choice may be thyroid extract and/or oestrogen, progesterone, or androgen in one of the many forms available. Skillfully chosen by an experienced doctor and taken for a limited period under his supervision, these can work wonders in terms of improved health and the easing of emotional tension.

Symptoms

What, then, are the specific symptoms of which some women do experience one or

more during the change of life, and with which they may need medical help?

First, moods. These can be very trying, but in many cases the doctor is able greatly to ease the situation by prescribing treatment to restore the glandular balance. Understanding in the family circle is also tremendously helpful — every effort must be made to bring about any necessary changes in outlook.

Hot flushes are very common and when they are really troublesome, especially at night, the doctor should always be consulted. For with the help of an oestrogen product it is usually possible at least to control them.

Recurring attacks of giddiness and frequent headaches should also be reported, as should aching limbs or tingling and numbness in hands and

feet. The first two may not be due to the menopause at all, but to some other condition such as persistent tension, anaemia, or chronic tiredness. In that case, treatment must obviously be directed at the cause. But if the symptoms are specifically linked with the change, then the appropriate treatment should soon bring relief.

Feelings of tingling and numbness, in common with twitching and nervousness of the limbs, are caused by circulatory disturbances.

There is no danger whatsoever, but as these symptoms are unpleasant, it is a comfort to know that sedatives and oestrogen may be prescribed.

Suitable sedatives medically prescribed will also help those women who, in their middle years, experience what they fear to be symptoms of a heart disorder, although in fact a medical check-up reveals nothing more serious than tension and nervous strain. Such symptoms are a racing heart, or sudden irregularities in the beat — discomforts which tend to occur during rest rather than during activity.

Feelings of exhaustion and malaise should also be reported to the doctor for these, too, can usually be relieved by a small dose of oestrogen, plus a temporary easing of work and responsibilities. Other essentials are a daytime rest, sound sleep at night (aided by medically prescribed sedatives if necessary) and, if a woman is married, a husband's understanding.

These, then, are conditions one or more of which some women experience during the change. But they are by no means inevitable, and dozens of women bypass them altogether. It is also worth remembering that the factors most likely to encourage a trouble-free menopause are good general health, emotional maturity, true contentment and inward calm.

A Woman's Fragile Reputation

by Fayza Haq

WHILE men will boast of their many peccadilloes, affaires de coeurs and even passing flirtations with women of easy virtue, women must always be wary about their private life. A woman with more than two affairs in a row is gossiped about by even her own woman friends. But a male with half a dozen sweethearts in the city is considered chic and a la mode. A woman might just get away with having an admirer but this will never be for long. Soon people around her, from the domestic servants and messengers in the offices to her colleagues, will be whispering and wagging their

— with her mother. Today, as the reports run, while she goes out to dinner with her husband, according to normal routine, and looks ever so ravishing beside her tall husband with his rugged handsome features, she does not pause to hesitate before sailing out to lunches with her boss in the office. People say that sometimes the husband drops in and there is the strange scene with her lunching with two men who both want and crave for her attention. Onlookers, even outside her office, love to talk about Safina and her affair and they do this with measured malice and venom. While

nalists at the office, where Javid her boy friend works. Most of the comments are from the well dressed smart young women who will frankly tell you that they are jealous of all the attention that Javid showers on Zeenat, when once he had compliments for all the other women too.

"She is always leaning over to him and showing off her pretty neck and waist line," these other office girls will remind one. Somehow everybody knows and often discusses about how Zeenat's husband came looking for her at the office, where Javid works, when neither of the courting couple were to be found there.



gifted young women. She is rich to boot and drives her own car around the town. She smokes expensive cigarettes and many of her exquisite western clothes are from the exclusive boutiques or are simply imported. Apart from her gazelle limbs and her statuesque figure what is remarkable about her is the romantic wan look on her face. "She had this tremendous affair with this photographer in the office where she worked. They say her parents had to rush her off to marry the outstaid son of a millionaire just to keep the prattling tongues hushed. It is said that this photographer even threatened to blackmail the father with some of the girl's pictures, the whispers about Farida go on at length. She was a bright student and had a fairly promising career before her but, as reports run on, she "mucked it all up" by losing her heart to this lumbering photographer who had strange stories about working as a questionable secret agent, and having two wives besides. When Farida got married it was one big gala affair with no end of music and feasting. Amidst all this gaiety and glamour was her boy friend clicking away at his camera, continue the tales. "It must be strange to be followed around by your boy friend and husband all at one go on your marriage day," remarked some of the viewers, not caring to hide their snicker and contempt as regards having the giant of the photographer on the scene. "They said that she was a promising writer but surely she could have been little more than a dilettante and given up her career and married some rich character about town. And as for the photographer's young wife, how she sighed and wept and openly cursed her husband when he used to bring home this beautiful girl home for lunch."

Men court one woman and marry another. They pay homage to ten and enjoy the company of the "many, many women" which they discuss without qualms with their sisters, girl friends and wives. The endless queue of women that a man has "conquered" is just another glittering badge that he is so proud to have the world know about. Yet all a woman has to do is to have a soft corner for a man and be seen around with him in public when her reputation is torn to shreds. There are then the endless prying and speculations about her life when people around her grit their teeth and spit out venomous tales.

There is little sympathy for the young woman who is bold enough to go ahead and dare to love a man of her own choice. If she has to fall in love, by all the dictates and decorum about the place, it is compulsory that she should come home with a groom in tow. She cannot have phone calls or secret meetings without a hundred comments of busybodies in the form of neighbours and onlookers. Few stop to realise the needs of the woman and her rights to enjoy the company of a man, like all other human beings around her. There are social and moral taboos of all types to humiliate and stultify the woman as regards her feeling for the man or her endeavours to gratify the affection for the other person. She may be enjoying merely a cup of tea and company of her colleague when others will clamp down upon her and condemn and dismiss her as merely promiscuous, immoral and shameless.

Migraine Menace

by Farhana Ahmad

MIGRAINE is a disorder characterised by episodic headache which is typically unilateral and often associated with vomiting and visual disturbances. The headache may also be temporal or generalised in many people. They may not be associated focal visual or neurological disturbances. The single most characteristic feature is the episodic nature of the headache.

The exact cause is unknown but approximately half of the patients who suffer from migraine have an affected relative suggesting a genetically transmitted functional disturbance of the intra and extracranial circulation. Dietary factors, including chocolate, cheese and alcohol may precipitate attacks, episodes may occur more frequently premenstrually or in patients taking oral contraceptives. Stress and anxiety may initiate attacks or lead to perpetuation of headache and both stress and migraine headache not uncommonly known to coexist.

Migraine may occur at any age but usually, begins between ages 10 and 30, more often in women than men. Headaches often partially or completely remit after age 50. Attacks occur at intervals, which vary from a few days to several months and lasts for hours to days. Premonitory symptoms occur in some patients in the form of zigzag lines, flashing coloured lights, or defects in the visual field.

These symptoms may disappear shortly before the headache appears or may merge with it. Pain is either unilateral or generalised. Symptoms usually follow a pattern in each patient, except that unilateral headache may not always be on the same side. The pain is severe and throbbing and may be associated with vomiting, photophobia, pallor and prostration. The patient is irritable and seeks seclusion lying in a bed in a darkened room. The scalp arteries are prominent, and their amplitude of pulsation is increased.

The principal forms of migraine are:

- (a) Classical migraine: Visual or sensory symptoms precede or accompany the headache.
- (b) Common migraine: No visual or sensory feature. Headache, nausea, or vomiting photophobia.
- (c) Hemiplegic migraine: Prolonged headache lasting hours or days followed by hemiparesis which recovers

slowly over days.
(d) Basilar migraine: Occipital headache preceded by vertigo diplopia, dysarthria with or without visual and sensory symptoms.

Various non-specific medical and surgical procedures have been recommended to decrease the frequency of attacks. Their effectiveness depends largely on the patients confidence in the physician and in turn the physician's efforts to understand the patient. Dietary or other precipitants to attacks should be avoided. These may sometimes be identified by asking the patient to keep a diary of attacks. The oral contraceptive pills should be stopped if the attacks are frequent or if there is associated focal neurological disturbances.

Acute attacks of common migraine usually respond to soluble aspirin (600-900 mg) or paracetamol (1 gm) with or without an antinauseant such as metaclopramide or prochlorperazine. In classical migraine, ergotamine tartrate (0.5-1.0 mg) sublingually, rectally or by inhaler may stop the headache phase if taken as soon as visual or sensory symptoms are felt. Oral ergotamine tartrate and caffeine preparations are often more effective and require a smaller and immediately absorbed dose of ergot. Ergotamine itself causes nausea and vomiting and many patients cannot tolerate it. Physical tolerance to and dependence to ergotamine presents a risk to patients who self-medicate with the drug more often than every 48 hours, creating a high risk of developing vasoconstrictive complications. Ergotamine is contraindicated in pregnancy, ischemic heart disease and peripheral vascular disorders.

If migraine attacks occur frequently enough to disrupt work and social life (e.g weekly) then drug prophylaxis is justified.

Propranolol 20 to 40 mg orally 3 times a day or 4 times a day offers long term relief in about half the patients. Other useful agents are pizotifen (1.5-3 mg nocte), antidepressants like amitriptyline (25-100 mg at night). All these agents have some blocking activity on 5-HT receptors. In resistant cases methysergide 4 to 8 mg/day orally is effective but can cause retroperitoneal fibrosis with prolonged use. It should not be used for more than 3 months at a time with rest periods in between with the renal function carefully monitored.



Chef's courtesy: Seema Iftikhar

COOKERY

Madeira Cake

- 125 g butter or margarine (5 oz)
- 125 g caster sugar (5 oz)
- 3 eggs
- 200 g flour (8 oz)
- few drops lemon essence (thin slices of Citron peel (optional))
- 1. Cream fat and sugar, beat in lightly whisked eggs with a little flour.
- 2. Add essence, then fold in the remaining flour.
- 3. Place mixture in a greased 18-20.5 cm cake tin.
- 4. Bake in a moderate oven, 180°C, 350°F. Gas mark 4 for about 1½ hours. Place peel on top after half an hour in oven.

Cherry Cake

- 125 g butter or margarine (5 oz)
- 125 g caster sugar (5 oz)
- 3 eggs
- 200 g self-raising flour (8 oz)
- few drops almond or vanilla essence
- 100 g glace cherries, chopped (4 oz)
- 1. Toss the cherries in some of the flour.
- 2. Make and bake as Madeira Cake adding cherries to mixture with the last of the flour.

Walnut Cake

- 100 g margarine (4 oz)
- 75 g caster sugar (3 oz)

- 1 x 15 ml spoon golden syrup (1 tbsp)
- 2 eggs
- 150 g self-raising flour (6 oz)
- 30 ml milk (2 tbsp)
- 50 g chopped walnuts (2 oz)

- 1. Cream margarine, sugar and syrup until light and creamy.
- 2. Beat in the eggs with a little flour.
- 3. Gradually add remaining flour, milk and nuts.
- 4. Place mixture into greased and floured 18 cm cake tin.
- 5. Bake in a moderate oven 180°C, 350°F. Gas mark 4 for about 1 hour.

Battenburg Cake

- Basic Victorian Sandwich mixture
- Battenburg icing
- 100 g margarine (4 oz)
- 100 g caster sugar (4 oz)
- 100 g self-raising flour (4 oz)
- 2 eggs
- 1. Grease a 22 x 18 cm Battenburg tin for similar sized tin divided in two by grease-proof paper.
- 2. Place half of mixture into one half of the tin, colour remainder pink and place in the other half.
- 3. Bake in a moderate oven 180°C, 350°F. Gas mark 4 for 30-35 minutes. When cool, cut each piece in 3 lengthways and sandwich together with jam or lemon curd.
- 5. Roll out Battenburg icing on greaseproof paper, sprin-

heads about the strange tall man that visits her so frequently and who calls her on the telephone thrice a day as a rule, even at busy office hours. They will titter and giggle behind her back and sometimes even snicker openly.

Safina is a gorgeous 33 year old woman who works in an advertising agency. She has a very young daughter and a baby boy. There are rumours about her having an abortion when the third child was expected, though this knowledge was restricted to her women friends and her very close associates. Her immediate boss is obviously head over heels in love with her. He gives her perfume and jewellery on her birthdays and on other occasions, as the office girls will instantly inform you, as they go on whispering enviously and maliciously about her. It is so often that one feels that it is women who are a woman's worst enemies. It is the other office girls who sit for hours together and along with other things gossip about Safina's liaison with her boss and the times that they spend together both at office and outside. Her husband is a lawyer and originally come from Kampala. According to more tattle and gossip, the husband Mubashar was having a gay romping romance with a lady lawyer himself and was ignoring his beautiful wife at home, when she decided to take up a job and leave her little girl — who was the only child that she had at that time

nobody thinks or says that Safina's husband Mubashar on her admirer Asif maybe to be condemned too, they sometimes talk of Safina in such uncharitable terms that one would imagine that she is only a little better than the painted girls on the streets. Safina herself comments, "I am ahead of other women. You are slightly medieval in your hesitant approach to love. I hide nothing from my husband and am quite happy the way I am." A woman like that would have to be bold and assertive. But all her unabashed declarations will not alter the fact that the men in her life are regarded as every day mortals while she might have been some goddess of carnal sin.

Zeenat is a delightful diminutive woman of 24 who works as a personal secretary in a foreign firm. She dances well and plays table tennis with a flare. She is very popular in her French classes and many people will tell you about her marvellous Chinese dishes that she cooks from time to time. In between these praises some people will also promptly inform you that she is having a roaring affair with a journalist, while her young and pensive husband works in a local firm, just across the street, where the young woman's boy friend sits. "She dresses up like such a hussy with the plunging neck lines and her midriff showing. Does she not?" Whisper the many secretaries, typists, proof readers and junior jour-

They must have been out-perking and billing in their secret love nest not far from the office" run many of the sly comments. "She wasn't this arrogant before Javid cast his eyes on her when she used to bring her poems and short stories to be published in the magazine. She won him over with her sweet talk and her caressing looks with those Yard-long eye lashes of hers," continue the vicious observations. "She has even got herself interviewed for the women's corner in the other paper across the road. It is interesting how she keeps our Javid dangling on one end, while she has a husband in tow" add the disparaging observations. "They say that her match with her husband too was an old love affair and not at all approved of by her conservative set of parents. Her husband used to be a neighbour of hers when she was at school and college and they were obviously childhood sweethearts. It is remarkable indeed how she has found this young man to become her slave despite being married to an adoring husband. Any other husband might have sued for a divorce. She is definitely enjoying the best of both the worlds. She is one of the few who can blatantly flaunt an admirer and a young faithful husband at one go. You would think that she is a witch," run on the prattling tongues and prying eyes.

Farida is young and beautiful like many other educated and

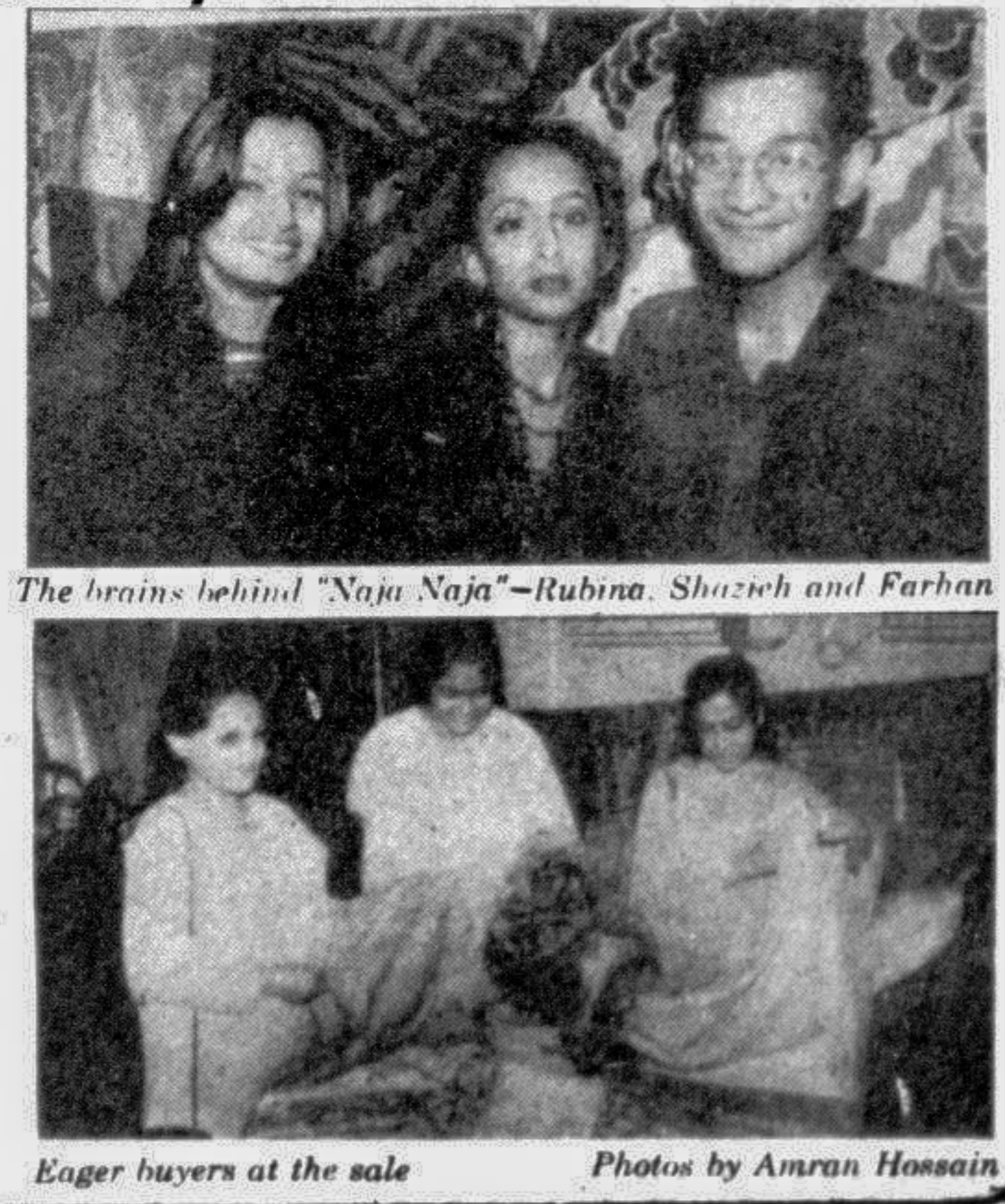
A Unique Blend of Nouveau and Ethnic

"Naja Naja" had its successful sale recently at Gulshan. The "saris" had ethnic designs with vibrant colours contrasting with pasted shades. "People here are reluctant to wear bright colours," the "Naja Naja" proprietors commented. The "saris" had work on the "anchal" and border and were sometimes worked all over. They had psychedelic designs using geometrical patterns, each pattern being individual and unique.

The "dupattas" and scarves were extremely popular and the group is aiming at 'shalwar-kameez' sets for their next venture.

The brightly coloured shawls were collector's items like the rest of the garments sold, and Dhaka buyers were already acquainted with them. The silk "motka" creations were greatly appreciated. The unisex scarves did not get foreign buyers as they were holidaying abroad, but nevertheless there was a good sale.

As for the T-shirts with their unique designs and subtle colours, all sixty of them were sold out at the outset.



Eager buyers at the sale

Photos by Amran Hossain