PBC THROUGH MENOPAUSE

PBC Through Perimenopause & Menopause — a conversation guide to help you organize questions and coordinate care across your healthcare team.

Perimenopause and menopause can bring changes in sleep, energy, mood, cognition, sexual health, bone health, and overall well-being. PBC can also affect quality of life and may involve symptoms that overlap with, or complicate conversations about, midlife health. This guide is designed to help women organize questions and coordinate conversations across their healthcare team.

Name _____ **Date** _____

This guide is educational and does not replace individualized medical advice. Talk with your healthcare team about your specific situation. In an emergency, call 911.

A COMMON QUESTION

“Is this PBC? Is this perimenopause? Is it both? And which clinician should I ask?”

1. Understanding the Life Stage

Midlife changes deserve discussion. You do not need to diagnose the cause of a symptom yourself.

Changes I have noticed

2. The Symptom-Overlap Conversation

A symptom can have more than one possible explanation. Rather than deciding the cause on your own, use patterns and impact to help the appropriate clinicians evaluate what is happening.

What I’m Experiencing	Who May Need to Be in the Conversation	☐ Me	My Notes
Fatigue	Hepatology + primary care / women’s health, as appropriate	☐	
Sleep changes	Primary care / women’s health + hepatology when relevant	☐	
Mood changes	Primary care / behavioral health + care team	☐	
Cognitive concerns	Care team	☐	
Itching	Hepatology	☐	
Bone-health concerns	Hepatology + primary care / women’s health	☐	
Sexual-health concerns	Women’s health / appropriate clinician	☐	

3. Bone Health

Bone health is an important topic to discuss in both PBC care and midlife women's health. Individual screening, prevention, and treatment decisions belong with your healthcare team.

1. Should we discuss my bone health now?

2. Do I need a bone-density assessment or other evaluation?

3. Are there lifestyle considerations appropriate for me?

4. Do any of my medicines affect bone health?

5. Which clinician is taking the lead on this part of my care?

4. Fatigue, Sleep & Emotional Wellness

A short diary can help show patterns without asking you to determine the cause.

Day	Energy 0–10	Sleep Quality	Mood / Stress	Important Symptoms	Impact on My Day
Mon					
Tue					
Wed					
Thu					
Fri					
Sat					
Sun					

5. Medication & Treatment Conversations

Medication decisions should be individualized. Use these questions to ask the right clinicians the right questions.

1. What options are appropriate for managing my perimenopause or menopause symptoms given my liver disease?

2. Should my hepatologist be involved before I start, stop, or change this medicine?

3. Are there prescription medicines, over-the-counter products, or supplements I should discuss with my liver team?

4. Could any of my current medicines contribute to symptoms I am experiencing?

5. Who should coordinate decisions if more than one clinician is involved?

6. Build a Connected Care Team

Care Area	Clinician / Practice	What They're Managing	What Needs to Be Shared
Hepatology			
Primary care			
OB/GYN / menopause care			
Pharmacy			
Bone health			
Behavioral health			

7. “I Wish Someone Had Told Me...”

Write what you have learned, or what you wish you had known, about navigating PBC and midlife health.

8. My Midlife + PBC Conversation Planner

Prompt	My Notes
The three things affecting my quality of life most are...	
Changes I have noticed...	
Questions for hepatology...	
Questions for women’s health / primary care...	
Medicines or supplements I want to discuss...	
Something I do not want to forget to ask...	

Acknowledgment

This toolkit was made possible through an educational sponsorship from Ipsen. The Community Liver Alliance gratefully acknowledges their support in empowering patients and caregivers affected by Primary Biliary Cholangitis (PBC).