

Study: Hormone level predicts end of fertility

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The age-specific blood levels of the Anti-Mullerian hormone (AMH) can predict when women will reach menopause. This makes family planning easier, say fertility researchers from the University Medical Center Utrecht, The Netherlands. Their findings were published online May 26 in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism*.

Generally, [women](#) enter [menopause](#) between the age of forty and sixty. A woman's fertility, however, ends ten years prior to this and in the most unfavorable circumstances occurs around the age of thirty. With regard to family planning and a career, it is extremely valuable for women to know the expected length of their fertility.

Predicting menopause

The study included 257 healthy women who were monitored for as long as eleven years. The Dutch researchers linked AMH levels to the point when the women entered menopause and based on these data constructed a model to predict the menopausal age. Using age and AMH, the age range in which menopause will occur can be individually predicted.

For example, the predicted median age at menopause of a 30 year old woman with an AMH concentration close to 0.15 ng/ml will be 48.8 years. On the other hand, the predicted median age at menopause of a 30 year old woman with an AMH concentration close to 4.38 ng/ml will be 55.3 years. These findings may only be translated into clinical practice after a thorough assay standardisation.

Postpone having children

The research was conducted under the leadership of gynecologists Professor Frank Broekmans and Professor Bart Fauser. "Women often postpone having children until their career has been well established. However they may find that it is difficult to get pregnant at this time. It could therefore be very useful for women to know beforehand up to which age they remain fertile. As far as we know, we are the first researchers worldwide to succeed in making long term predictions for individual women", the gynecologists say.

This knowledge will enable women who are predicted to become infertile at an early age to choose the option of having their eggs frozen. This means that they will still be able to have children if it turns out that they can no longer get pregnant spontaneously. University Medical Center Utrecht, The Netherlands, offers people the possibility of having eggs frozen and stored in a human egg bank

Provided by University Medical Center Utrecht

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