

# mission: empowerment!

WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS THAT EDUCATE, INSPIRE AND EMPOWER

presents

## **Perimenopause, Menopause & Mental Health: What Counsellors & Clinicians Need to Know**

**With Judy Gardiner, NP**

February 27, 2026

## **Instructor Biography**

### **Judy Gardiner, NP**

Judy Gardiner is an Ontario-based Nurse Practitioner with training in Emergency Medicine, Primary Care, Heart Disease, and Midlife Men's and Women's Health. She is the Medical Director of the *Stratford Menopause Clinic* and also operates private midlife health clinics for both men and women.

Judy's passion for menopause care arose from personal experience. After facing severe symptoms and repeated barriers to treatment, she was finally granted a referral in June 2023 to a provider willing to discuss hormone therapy - a referral that is still pending. Undeterred, Judy transformed her frustration into advocacy and action. Since then, she has become *Menopause Society Certified*, completed advanced training in *Testosterone Therapy*, opened two midlife health clinics, and become a sought-after educator and advocate for improved access to care. She also served as a *Top Expert Group Member* in the *Centre for Effective Practice's Menopause Tool* for healthcare providers, which has now been published.

With over 20 years in nursing, Judy describes this chapter - improving midlife health and access to care - as the most fulfilling of her career. She believes sharing her expertise to support others is both an honour and a privilege.

For more information, visit [www.judygardinernp.ca](http://www.judygardinernp.ca).

**PERIMENOPAUSE,  
MENOPAUSE and  
MENTAL HEALTH**

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**JUDY GARDINER**

Nurse Practitioner  
Women's Clinic Medical Director

Brought to you by Mission Empowerment

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**Menopause & Mental Health**

**NP JUDYG: A BRIEF BIO**

**EDUCATION**

- Conestoga College x 2
- Metropolitan University
- Athabasca University
- Menopause Society
- Harvard School of Medicine
- Queen's University
- Cdn Headache Society
- Int'l Menopause Society

**Judy Gardiner**  
Midlife Health Nurse Practitioner

**CAREER**

RN 2004-2019

- SGH ED
- SGH ED Charge Nurse
- Project Lead +++

NP 2019-

- Primary Care
- Heart Disease
- Men's & Women's Midlife Health
- National Menopause Show
- CEP Menopause Tool Expert Group Member
- Founder 2 Midlife Health Clinics
- Education & Advocacy

**AWARDS**  
Healthcare Inspiration  
Exceptional Care  
Heart Disease Clinic (NP Lead)

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HEALTH CLINIC

# SETTING THE SPACE

Open Minds

Safe Learning

Focused Attention

DISCLOSURE

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# THE OVERVIEW

NATURAL

INDIVIDUAL

PROFITABLE

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**THE CONNECTEDNESS**

CULTURAL  
BIOLOGICAL  
PSYCHOSOCIAL

GPS HEALTH CLINIC

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**THE STAGES OF MENOPAUSE**

**PERIMENOPAUSE**  
I just don't feel like myself  
HORMONAL CHAOS  
DISRUPTIONS IN SEVERAL PARAMETERS OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

**Premenopause (180 days)**  
*(Graph showing regular, consistent hormone levels)*

**Perimenopause (180 days)**  
*(Graph showing irregular and fluctuating hormone levels)*

**Postmenopause (180 days)**  
*(Graph showing stable, lower hormone levels)*

**MENOPAUSE**  
I've never been happier  
HORMONAL CONSISTENCY (lower than fertile years)  
DISRUPTIONS SETTLE BUT CHRONIC DISEASE PROGRESSES

GPS HEALTH CLINIC

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# SYMPTOM RELIEF

## THERAPIES

- counselling
- therapy: CBT-A, CBT-i, DBT
- physiotherapy, osteopathy,
- light therapy
- acupuncture




## MEDICATIONS

### Hormone Therapy

- systemic vs local
- estrogens & progestogens
- sexual health medications
- birth control vs MHT
- compounded




### Non-Hormone Therapy

- SSRIs/SNRIs
- Gabapentinoids
- NK3RAs
- DORAs



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# SYMPTOM RELIEF

## PROCEDURES



## SURGERIES



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# BRAIN CHEMISTRY

MENOPAUSAL CONSIDERATIONS

**STRESS**



**ESTROGEN**

**SEROTONIN**

**DOPAMINE**

**TESTOSTERONE**

**SUBSTANCE USE**



CAUTION: AVOID BLAMING EVERYTHING ON MENOPAUSE. THERE ARE MANY, CAUSES FOR SYMPTOMS THAT OVERLAP W MENOPAUSE

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# CHECK-IN & BREAK



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# BEYOND SYMPTOMS: ZOOM OUT

**Childhood** The influence and lens of our past

**Culture** The influence and lens of our environment

**Mindset** The influence and lens we choose now

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# THE IMPORTANCE OF MINDSET

Profoundly affects the way we experience the world.

Women's Health: traditionally emotional, psychological, and physical health ignored in favour of unachievable servitude

Turmoil throughout the lifespan worsens in the midlife transition

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF MINDSET

Profoundly affects the way we experience the world.

Women's Health: traditionally emotional, psychological, and physical health ignored in favour of unachievable servitude

Turmoil throughout the lifespan worsens in the midlife transition

inferior  
ugly  
fat  
dumb  
moody

**PERIMENOPAUSE**

MORE inferior  
uglier  
fatter  
dumber  
moodier

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF MINDSET

Many menopausal Women reject traditions and prioritize emotional, psychological, and physical health.

inferior  
ugly  
fat  
dumb  
moody

**STRIVE**

HCPs

capable  
beautiful  
healthy  
intelligent  
passionate

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# FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTH

SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCES

sleep exercise nutrition  
purpose connection STRESS mgmt

Nothing replaces these  
All Care Plans are Better with these  
Many Care Plans are ONLY these

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# FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTH

SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCES

Education  
Quality  
Quantity  
Timing  
Rest

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# PROVIDERS AS ADVOCATES

A PATIENT WHO CAN  
ACCEPT  
IDENTIFY  
CREATE  
COLLABORATE  
PIVOT

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# NAVIGATING PROVIDERS

**PROVIDERS AND INFLUENCERS ARE OFTEN PROFITEERS**

MULTIDISCIPLINARY CARE IS REQUIRED BUT WITH CAUTION

DO NOT TRUST  
simply because of a credential or education.

DO NOT RELY  
solely on medications and supplements

unreasonable, excessive, or unfair profits, typically by charging high prices for essential or scarce goods/services

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# FINAL PERSONAL REMARKS

**THE MENOPAUSE TRANSITION**  
 natural, not pathological  
 a journey of privilege  
 a phase of opportunity  
 multifactorial

WE CAN serve our families/communities AND look after our health.

The time is now for us to  
 Educate 📖 Advocate 🗣️ Pivot

**WE STRIVE TO THRIVE AND WE DO IT TOGETHER**

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## QUESTION & ANSWER

no personal medical advice questions please

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 <https://www.judygardinemp.ca/>

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