

PRELIMINARY NOTE

THE CLIMACTERIUM AND ITS MEANING FOR WOMEN*

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In the literature various different concepts have arisen about the climacterium, they present a similarity between them and plurality of comprehension.

Since 1968, the FIGO (International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics) defines the climacterium as the women life period which comes from the end of reproductive phase (FR) considering its beginning at the age of 45, to the beginning of senility (IS) at the 60's. In this context, the menopause arises between the ages of 50-51 (MELLO, 1989).

The limits of age both for climacterium and menopause are quite variable and controversial. The beginning, as its end, is variable because it is extremely diverse considering individual characteristics, racial influences, hereditary, constitutional and social-economical factors. Another important factor to be considered is the number of ovarian follicles present on the ovary.

Most of the studies developed about climacterium are strongly related to the biological-disease, in which women themselves are not considered as human beings, having expectations, worries, desires, particular peculiarities of their age.

The reading associated to the professional experience increased my uneasiness facing the discovery of women experience in climacterium period and stimulated the research of those few studied nuances.

Facing the present considerations, this study aims to comprehend: how women define the climacterium experience and the mental processes experienced in this period, as to develop a theoretical model of women experience in climacterium.

There will be considered in this investigation women between 45 to 60 years old, patients of a climacterium service centre in the city of São Paulo.