



Menopause

Everything you need to know



Created by Peppy, written by Kathy Abernethy, Director of Menopause Services at Peppy and past Chair of the British Menopause Society



So, what exactly is menopause?

The medical definition of menopause is when periods finally stop. Medically, once you haven't seen a period for one year and you're over the age of 50, you're 'post menopausal', i.e. the menopause has happened.

In everyday use, we use the term 'menopause' or 'perimenopause' to refer to all the changes that happen around the time of your periods stopping. These can start before your periods stop, and can carry on for long after your last period ends.

51

is the average age to reach menopause

75%

of women will experience menopause symptoms

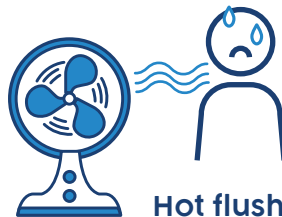
3-5 years

is the average age that menopause symptoms last

Common menopause symptoms



Tiredness



Hot flushes



Heart palpitations



Low sex drive
Vaginal dryness



Poor memory
Brain fog



Difficulty concentrating



Needing the loo more



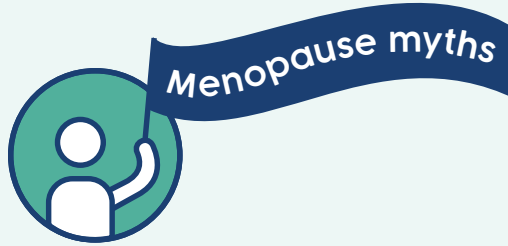
Mood changes
Anxiety



Sleep issues
Night sweats



Joint Pain
Skin itching



'Menopause is a women's issue'

At some point, you will know a parent, daughter, partner, friend or colleague going through menopause. It's not a women's issue, it's one that will indirectly impact everyone – and your business too

'Menopause means you're "past it"'

Far from it! Actually, women of menopausal age are the fastest-growing demographic of the UK workforce – many are your senior teammates, and some even start their own businesses at this stage in life

'Only women in their 50s are affected by menopause'

1 in 100 women under 40 will experience 'early menopause'. Plus, some people will experience menopause symptoms into their 60s or 70s – there is no one "menopausal age"

'You shouldn't talk about menopause at work'

Menopause is a natural life stage that 50% of the population will go through. There's no shame in talking about it as openly as you would a colleague who's expecting a baby

'Menopause is just hot flushes'

As you'll see from the list of common symptoms, it's much more than that – menopause can cause physical, psychological and behavioural symptoms, which differ person-to-person

Menopause in the workplace:

Tips for employees:

Seek help if you need it – if you're struggling, arrange to see your GP or chat to your Peppy practitioner so you can find the treatment that's right for you

Speak up about what you want, whether that's a fan at your desk, a flexible working arrangement or a more breathable uniform.

Remember, there's nothing to be embarrassed about – it's likely that your line manager and HR team have had 'the menopause talk' at work, so this won't be new to them

Tips for managers:

Have an open door policy – if you suspect that one of your team is struggling due to menopause, ask how they are and let them know you're here if they need to talk.

Know the support pathway, whether or not you offer menopause support with Peppy, know what support you have in place – and talk to your HR team if you think it could be improved.

Educate yourself – this is a great place to start! The more you know, the better manager you'll be if one of your team has a problem.



Hear from Kathy Abernethy about why your organisation should offer menopause support

Watch the video

Menopause resources

Here is a list of up-to-date, free menopause resources, chosen by our expert team of menopause practitioners, to help you and your colleagues going through menopause.

Peppy recommends resources that are supported by UK menopause specialists and in line with clinical guidance from the NHS, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), and the British Menopause Society.



Useful websites

- 🗨 **NHS** - www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause
Specific advice from the National Health Service around managing menopausal symptoms, in line with NICE Guidance.
- 🗨 **NICE Guidance** - www.nice.org.uk/guidance
An overview for the public, of the UK NICE Guidance on diagnosis and management of menopause, published in 2015. This covers advice to health care professionals about diagnosing menopause and treating short term symptoms.
- 🗨 **The British Menopause Society** - www.thebms.org.uk
Aimed at health care professionals and has an open-access link to their Register of Menopause Specialists around the UK, both NHS and private.
- 🗨 **Women's Health Concern** - www.womens-health-concern.org
Patient arm of the British Menopause Society. Factsheets written by UK specialists include:

 - The menopause
 - HRT
 - Cognitive behavioural therapy
 - Menopause and hair loss
 - Testosterone for women
 - Contraception in peri-menopause
 - Osteoporosis
- 🗨 **Menopause Matters** - www.menopausematters.co.uk
Written by a UK doctor, lots of information and a forum for discussion.
- 🗨 **Daisy Network** - www.daisynetwork.org
Provides information and support to younger people experiencing menopause and premature ovarian insufficiency (POI). Facebook page and support forums available.



Books

- ▶ **'Menopause, The One Stop Guide'** by Kathy Abernethy
A practical guide to all things menopause, chapters on symptoms, health and lifestyle, HRT, non-HRT options, young menopause, menopause after cancer.
Publisher: Profile
- ▶ **'Men... Let's Talk Menopause'** by Ruth Devlin
A comprehensive guide to menopause, written for men to help them understand this often perplexing topic. It addresses all the important aspects of menopause and gives essential information on the options available.
Publisher: Practical Inspiration Publisher
- ▶ **'Menopause: The Change for the Better'** by Deborah Garlick
With contributions from UK doctors, an overview of menopause and treatment options
Publisher: Bloomsbury
- ▶ **'Managing hot flushes and night sweats: a cognitive behavioural self- help guide to the menopause'**, by Myra Hunter
Written by a clinical psychologist and offering a workbook alongside, this covers self-help strategies for flushes and sweats
Publisher: Routledge
- ▶ **'Understanding BRCA, living with the breast cancer gene'**, by Clarissa Foster
With good information, written from a personal experience, this book is of specific interest to those who inherit the BRCA gene mutation and may be considering risk-reducing surgery
Publisher: Hammersmith





Workplace resources

If you're thinking about starting the conversation about menopause in your workplace, you may find these resources helpful.

🗨️ **Peppy**

Key stats and facts, free webinars and blog posts written by experts, to help you educate and support your colleagues.

🗨️ **Henpicked: Menopause in the Workplace**

Helpful information, top tips, line manager training and events, policy and communications expertise about menopause in the workplace.

🗨️ **Guidance on menopause and the workplace**
(Faculty of Occupational Medicine)

Offers practical guidance on supporting people at work for both people experiencing menopause and their employers.

🗨️ **Menopause friendly accreditation**

Putting diversity, inclusion and your colleagues' wellbeing centre stage demonstrates your dedication to making your organisation a great place to work.

Unions

Several unions also offer useful resources:

- **Unison**
- **The TUC**
- **The RCN**
- **National Union of Teachers**





Tips for colleagues: how to make the most of a GP appointment

If you decide that medical treatment may be an option for your symptoms, make an appointment with your General Practitioner. Find out which practitioner in your practice has an interest in menopause (it may not be your usual GP); you are free to choose which doctor within a practice to see.

- Start the conversation about menopause, be specific about your symptoms and say if you are simply looking for reassurance of what's normal or if you want to be offered treatment
- Plan your questions and be prepared – time will be short so try to keep your questions specific and personal to you
- Be aware of your choices, hormonal and non-hormonal, medical and non-medical and think about which you wish to discuss in advance
- Don't be disappointed if it takes more than one appointment or if you are given information to read before a prescription is given. It helps if you can say you have already read one of the recommended websites
- Remember most people of the average age of menopause (45 yrs+) will not need any diagnostic blood tests for menopause. Younger people experiencing menopause, however, may need them.

Most people will not need to see a specialist. Specialist clinics may be useful for people with complex past or concurrent medical conditions, if the GP is unsure about prescribing or if you are told you are unable to have treatment.



Peppy gives your people access to personalised menopause support, so they can take control of their menopause journey.

[Learn more](#)