

Frequently asked questions

These are provided for guidance or quick reference guide only, so always refer to the policy

1. General

1.1 What is the menopause?

The menopause is a natural transition stage for some people. For some it will be medically induced, while others may have a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms whilst experiencing the menopause and perimenopause and may often encounter difficulties at work as a result of their symptoms. People are affected in different ways and to different degrees over different periods of time, and menopausal symptoms can often indirectly affect partners, families, and colleagues as well.

Women and men can both experience symptoms. Some trans people may experience natural menopausal or pseudo-menopausal symptoms related to their hormone therapy treatment. Some non-binary people may experience menopausal symptoms.

People living with those experiencing the menopause or Perimenopause, can also be impacted.

1.2 When can I expect to experience symptoms?

This will vary and will not start at the same age for everyone. Symptoms could also be medically induced following surgery/a procedure or treatment of an underlying condition. Some people may experience the perimenopause, which normally coincides with a hormone decline. Some will experience symptoms for longer periods than others. Therefore, it is important that should you experience a change and start to experience symptoms, to seek support from your GP or healthcare professional.

1.3 What are the typical symptoms of the Menopause?

Typical symptoms may include:

- Hot flushes – a very common symptom that can start in the face, neck, or chest, before spreading upwards and downward, may include sweating, the skin becoming red and patchy, and a quicker or stronger heart rate
- Heavy and painful periods and clots, leaving those affected exhausted, as well as practically needing to change sanitary wear more frequently. Some affected may become anaemic
- Night sweats, restless leg syndrome and sleep disturbance
- Low mood, irritability, increased anxiety, panic attacks, fatigue, poor concentration, loss of confidence and memory problems
- Urinary problems - more frequent urinary incontinence and urinary tract infections such as cystitis. It is common to have an urgent need to pass urine or a need to pass it more often than normal
- -Skin irritation – including dry and itchy skin or formication, and dry eyes. Also, genital symptoms of dryness, itching and discomfort
- Joint and muscle aches and stiffness

- Weight gain
- Headaches and migraines
- Menopausal hair loss
- Osteoporosis - the strength and density of bones are affected by the loss of oestrogen, increasing the risk of the bone-thinning disease osteoporosis

1.4 Where can I access or signpost for more information on the menopause?

www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause
www.nhs.uk/conditions/early-menopause
www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/About-this-information
www.menopausematters.co.uk
www.womens-health-concern.org
www.daisynetwork.org
www.menopause-exchange.co.uk

1.5 Can I still access support if I am not personally suffering symptoms myself?

You may be impacted as the spouse or partner of somebody suffering with the menopause or a child, living at home. You may also be Transgender or Non- Binary experiencing symptoms or pseudo symptoms as a result hormone treatment for example.

If so, you may want to raise this with your manager, either for awareness, or if it is/may impact your work performance in any way, for example timekeeping etc. You can use the Personal Support Plan, to discuss how it may be impacting you, and to explore what we are able to do to help. In some circumstances where medical intervention is required for the person with the menopause, talk to your manager to see how we can best support you.

Most of all it is important that you talk about it, regardless of needing any direct support.

1.6 What support can I seek if experiencing symptoms or impacted by the menopause?

If you feel you are experiencing symptoms or impacted by the menopause, you should consider the following:

- Speak to your manager about how you are feeling
- Use the [Individual Support Plan](#) to initiate a discussion with your manager
- Use the [Tailored Adjustment](#) tool to initiate a discussion with your manager
- Speak to your GP or healthcare professional in addition to the above
- Speak to your Menopause Champion

1.7 How Best Do I support My Team Members Who are Experiencing the Menopause?

If you have a member of your team who is experiencing symptoms or impacted by the menopause, you can find support and guidance from the NHS England comprehensive pages [here](#). It is important to have regular health and wellbeing conversations with your team member, and support them to consider any reasonable adjustments they may need implemented to support them to remain in the workplace. Use the [Individual Support Plan](#) as a guide to your conversation and encourage open and honest dialogue.

For guidance, see [NHS England, Guide on Menopause and the Workplace](#) and [The Menopause at Work](#)

2. Policy Approval and Review

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