

Employee Wellbeing

A guide for employees on managing menopause in the workplace

Guidance on managing menopause in the workplace

It is important to be aware that the menopause is a natural and temporary stage in women's lives and that not all women experience significant symptoms. The menopause has been regarded as a taboo subject. But this is changing as employers gradually acknowledge the potential impact of the menopause on women and become aware of the simple steps they can take to be supportive.

The menopause is a natural part of ageing for women. The medical definition of the menopause is when a woman has her last period. It usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age, although it can occur any time up to a women's mid-60s. A premature menopause can occur, with periods stopping before the age of 40, either naturally or as an effect of a medical condition or its treatment. Around 1 in 100 women will experience a premature menopause and this of course can be at a time when still planning to conceive.

For some, symptoms include hot flushes, night sweats and related symptoms such as sleep disruption, fatigue and difficulty concentrating. Hot flushes are short, sudden feelings of heat, usually in the face, neck and chest, which can make the skin red and sweaty. Severe flushes can cause sweat to soak through clothing. Mood disturbances, anxiety and depression are also reported. Symptoms on average continue for four years from the last period, and 1 in 10 women experience symptoms for up to 12 years.

For women who find their menopausal symptoms are affecting their wellbeing and their capacity to work:

- Find out more about the menopause from available sources of information (factsheet)-
[NHS - Menopause](#)
[British menopause Society](#)
- See your GP for advice on available treatment options.
- Discuss your practical needs with your line manager, HR or another manager you feel comfortable talking to.

- Use technology where this is helpful, e.g. for reminders or note taking.
- If there is an occupational health service available, make an appointment to discuss support and possible work adjustments.
- If those you work with are supportive, this can make a big difference. Talk about your symptoms and solutions with colleagues, particularly those who are also experiencing symptoms, use humour to deflect embarrassment, and work out your preferred coping strategies and working patterns.
- Avoid hot flush triggers (such as hot food and drinks) especially before presentations or meetings.
- Consider relaxation techniques such as mindfulness and other potentially helpful techniques such as cognitive behavioural therapy, as these can help reduce the impact of symptoms:

[Wellbeing Support Service](#)

[MIND](#)

[Time to Change Wales](#)

- Consider lifestyle changes such as weight reduction, smoking cessation and exercise –

[NHS - Conditions](#)