

Menopause
Work

The Menopause Space



Menopause at work

A guide on how to
support colleagues
and company culture
with menopause

What is Menopause?

Menopause is a natural event that affects half of humankind, but there is no universal experience.

The natural menopause transition will take place between the ages of 45-55 years. Natural menopause marks the time when menstruation has ceased for 12 consecutive months with no other obvious physiological or pathological cause and without clinical intervention. It is often signified by a range of physical and emotional changes due to fluctuating hormones. It is estimated that the number of menopausal women worldwide will reach 1.1 billion by 2025.¹

Average age of
Menopause is

51



What is Perimenopause?

Women can experience menopause symptoms up to 10 years before their final menstrual period. This is called perimenopause.

Perimenopause is brought on by the fluctuating and decline of the sex hormones estrogen, progesterone and testosterone and can cause a range of symptoms such as poor sleep, night sweats, increased anxiety, depression, weight gain, brain fog and memory loss.

Often these symptoms are mistaken for the midlife juggle of work and family life and do not get the attention and management needed.

This can have a negative impact on a woman's physical and psychological well being affecting their personal, social and work life.

What is Early Menopause?

1 in 100 women² will experience early menopause before the age of 40 and 1% of women have premature ovarian insufficiency below the age of 40.

Other women may be propelled into menopause earlier due to surgical procedures, chemotherapy or radiation.

It is difficult to predict when a woman will experience menopause, therefore education is needed to ensure any woman who enters menopause feels informed and supported.

Angela's Story

Angela is a senior partner at a large law firm and is due to give an important deposition in court. She has been experiencing regular hot flushes recently and is feeling anxious that this might happen during the deposition.

She fears that she might lose the case if the judge, jury and defendant lawyers see this happen and feel she is not prepared, she is losing her touch, or worse,

that she is not up for the job.

This has caused her to lose sleep and concentration with worry.



Menopause Symptoms

There are 34 known symptoms of the menopause transition and each woman will experience symptoms uniquely to varying degrees.

Symptoms women can experience are changes to mood like low mood, mood swings, low self-esteem, anxiety and depression, joint and muscle pain, heart palpitations, tinnitus, migraines, pins and needles, urgency to pee, thinning hair and itchy skin.

A symptom checker can be helpful in identifying the type and severity of symptoms.



The top five most reported menopause symptoms are³:

1. Hot flushes
2. Night sweats
3. Disrupted sleep
4. Poor concentration
5. Poor memory

Symptoms experienced can have major impact on physical and mental health and subsequently, work performance.

75%

will experience menopause symptoms²



25%

describe these symptoms as severe²



1 in 3

women experience symptoms *beyond* the average 7 years²



Possible Long-Term Impact of Menopause on Women's Health

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is the most prevalent disease associated with post-menopausal women. The International Osteoporosis Foundation reports that a 50 year old woman has a 2.8% risk of death related to hip fracture during her remaining lifetime.



Becoming a Menopause Friendly organisation benefits the entire organisation.

Not only does it help the employee going through the perimenopause / menopause transition, it can help with employee morale, team cohesiveness, late & absentee management and talent retention.

Let's create a space where people are not afraid to talk about menopause or ask for changes to cope or manage symptoms at this time.

Cardiovascular Disease

Cardiovascular disease remains the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in women post-menopause. The [British Heart Foundation](#) states that you are twice as likely to get heart disease as a woman than breast cancer. Women who suffer from Premature Ovarian Insufficiency and early menopause are at particular risk of osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease and dementia.

Physical Changes

Body composition changes causing increases in abdominal fat can increase the risk of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and some cancers⁷.

Day-to-Day

Severe menopause symptoms can significantly reduce a woman's quality of life⁷ both mentally and physically

The Impact on Work

These long-term health risks can play a major role in a woman's ability to perform optimally at work, the number of sick days they take and the cost of their health needs on the business.

Impact of Menopause at Work

Women over 50 years of age are the fastest growing demographic in the workplace⁹.

In the United States, the average age of a CEO is 54 years.

With the average age of natural menopause being 51 years, there is an urgent need to develop our understanding of the impact menopause can have on women in the workplace so that they do not have to press pause on their careers, but rather advance into the leadership roles they are capable of.



The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) released a report in 2019, that surveyed working menopausal women in the UK⁹.

59% Say it has a negative impact at work



65%
Less able to concentrate



58%
Experienced more stress



52%



Felt less patient with clients and colleagues



30%

Had taken sick leave because of their symptoms

How Can an Organisation Become 'Menopause Friendly'?

Provide Education and Training About Menopause Symptoms and Symptom Management for Both Employees and Management

Training topics include:

- How physical symptoms such as hot flushes, heart palpitations or bone and joint pain can impact a woman at work
- How the psychological symptoms such as brain fog, memory loss, anxiety and stress can impact a woman at work
- How lifestyle factors such as food, physical activity, sleep, smoking and alcohol can play a role in symptom management
- Appoint key individuals to become menopause advocates so they fully understand and can speak about the impact menopause can have on a woman at work.

Ying's Story



Ying is a top performing Executive Director at a finance company and is tipped to be the next Managing Director.

Recently, she has been struggling with brain fog and forgetfulness. Concerned, she saw her doctor who felt it was stress rather than perimenopause as she's only 46 years old. Ying doesn't feel like it is stress but now she is doubting if she has what it takes to be Managing Director. She thought she was capable, and her past performance definitely backs this, but these new feelings of brain fog and memory loss are worrying her.

“ Does she have dementia like her grandmother? Could it be a brain tumour?

These thoughts are causing sleepless nights, imposter syndrome and increased anxiety. She fears telling her boss or team in case they think she doesn't have what it takes.

Create an Inclusive and Supportive Workplace Environment

- Include menopause within the organisation's health and wellbeing strategy
- Normalise menopause conversations so women feel they can speak to colleagues and line managers if they need help
- Make reasonable adjustments to the workplace environment such as temperature control, healthy snacks, regular breaks, flexible working hours or uniform adjustments



- Sign-post women to professionals within or outside the organisation who can support their physical or mental well-being
- Remove jokes around menopause symptoms such as hot flushes so that women don't feel embarrassed, bullied or that they need to diminish how they're feeling to others

Appoint a Dedicated 'Menopause Champion'

A Menopause Champion can provide education and support to anyone impacted by menopause in both a group and individual setting.

- Menopause awareness workshops
- Menopause campaigns on international health days
- Educational resources on workplace intranets and social areas
- One-to-one menopause coaching sessions
- Small group coaching sessions

Support Employees to Help Themselves

- Provide a choice of foods and drinks that don't exacerbate hot flushes and heart palpitations such as caffeine, spicy foods and alcohol-free options at work or networking events
- Support regular breaks from sitting and screen time
- Encourage employees to fit some movement into the working day e.g. take the stairs instead of the lift, go for a walk at lunch, try a yoga class after the working day
- Provide healthy drinks such as water, smoothies, decaffeinated drinks and herbal teas
- Provide healthy snacks such as fruit and nuts

Menopause impacts **everyone:** women, colleagues, partners, family and children



Women over the age of 50 is the *fastest* growing group in the workforce

Having a strong menopause response in place will continue to support this demographic at work

Five Take Away Tips for Employers

Understanding Menopause

Menopause is a natural stage of life for a woman; however, it's important to recognise that each woman will experience it differently. Understanding menopause symptoms and the impact it can have on one's personal and work life is important for providing an inclusive and supportive workplace.

Education and Training

Providing education and training throughout the organisation can break the stigma around menopause, allowing women to feel supported and avoid pressing pause on their careers.

Reasonable Adjustments

Making reasonable adjustments such as flexible working hours, temperature control, uniform adjustments, providing healthy snacks and supporting regular screen breaks can improve the menopause experience at work.

Menopause Champions

A dedicated 'Menopause Champion' can provide support to the organisation and individual employees who may need it.

Menopause Policy

Each organisation will have different requirements, therefore a tailored menopause policy is needed.



Ready to Become a Menopause Friendly Accredited Organisation?

Book a free consultation to understand the process of becoming a Menopause Friendly Accreditation Organisation

Reach out now at:

 +852 5688 8281 or  info@themenopausespace.com

More info  themenopausespace.com



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