



Understanding Menopause

Amanda K Smith

www.akswellbeing.com

Aims of today's session

- Gain insight into the concept of menopause and the evolving medical history and understanding.
- Explore taboos and stigma and identify the four stages of menopause.
- Understand the influential and causation factors of menopause, including hormones that impact.
- Identify the common physical, emotional, and psychological symptoms associated with menopause.
- Briefly explore treatment options, including Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) and alternative/complementary therapies.
- Consider how we can all help?

Quick Quiz..... (keep a note of your answers, as results at the end of the session)

1.Question: What is the average age at which menopause typically occurs?

1. **A)** 40 years
2. **B)** 50 years
3. **C)** 60 years
4. **D)** 70 years

2.Question: What is the term for the transition period leading up to menopause?

1. **A)** Andropause
2. **B)** Perimenopause
3. **C)** Climacteric
4. **D)** Postmenopausal

3.Question: Which hormone decreases significantly during menopause, leading to symptoms like hot flashes and mood swings?

1. **A)** Oestrogen
2. **B)** Progesterone
3. **C)** Testosterone
4. **D)** Insulin

4.Question: True or False: Menopause automatically weakens bones.

1. **A)** True
2. **B)** False

5.Question: What lifestyle factors can help support bone health during menopause?

1. **A)** Regular exercise
2. **B)** Adequate calcium intake
3. **C)** Vitamin D supplementation
4. **D)** All of the above

**Gain insight into the concept of
menopause and the evolving medical
history and understanding.**

**Support and solutions
for you and your employees**

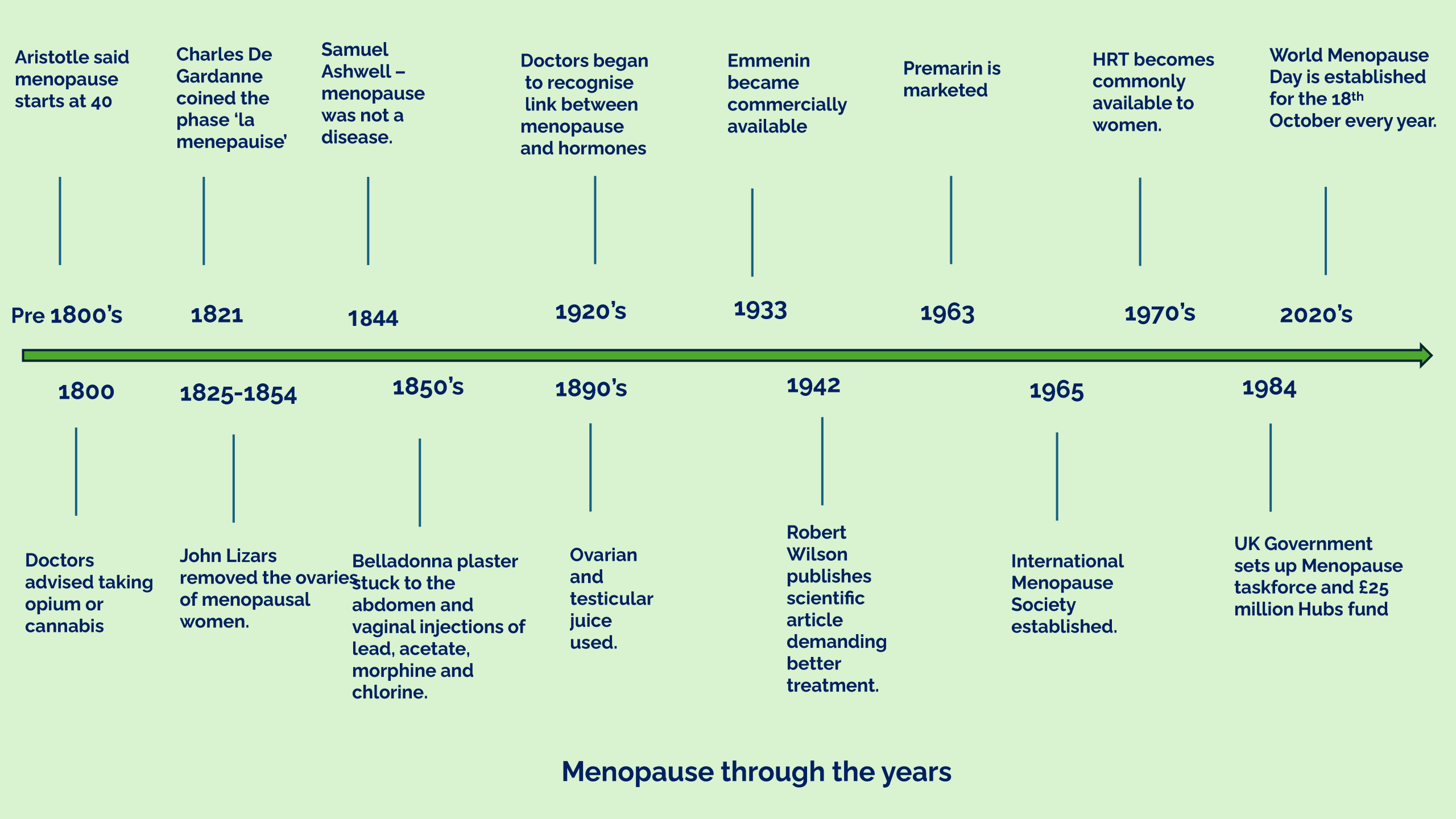


What is Menopause?

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2017), defines menopause as:

"A biological stage in a woman's life when menstruation stops permanently due to the loss of ovarian follicular activity. It occurs with the final menstrual period and is usually diagnosed clinically after 12 months of amenorrhoea."





**Explore taboos and stigma and identify
the four stages of menopause.**

**Support and solutions
for you and your employees**

Group Discussion

Do you feel that there is still stigma or taboos around menopause?

Please put your thoughts into the chat function.



Stigma and Taboo

- Silence and lack of open discussion
- Embarrassment
- Ageism and stereotypes
- Negative perceptions of femininity and sexuality
- Workplace challenges
- Cultural and regional variations
- Religious taboos and associations
- Societal impacts
- Lack of Knowledge



The Stages of Menopause





Premenopausal

Perimenopause

Menopause

Postmenopause

Age: puberty to mid 40's

Age: mid 40s to menopause

Age: average age is 51

Age: menopause onwards

Symptoms: none

Symptoms: intense

Symptoms: mild to intense

Symptoms: none to mild

Fertility: at its highest (some women may experience fertility issues, and this area of women's health needs further support and discussion)

Fertility: declines rapidly

Fertility: officially ends

Fertility: ended

Understand the influential and causation factors of menopause.

**Support and solutions
for you and your employees**

Menopause

Natural menopause

- Occurs when ovaries naturally decrease their production of oestrogen and progesterone
- No other biological or physiological cause can account for this.

Induced menopause

- Brought on by an unusual event e.g. ovaries damaged by cancer treatment or other medication
- Also occurs when the ovaries are surgically removed.

Menopause is a natural phase in every woman's life, which occurs due to aging. The ovaries run out of their egg supply, stop hormonal production and halt reproductive functions.

Menopause – Causes and Types

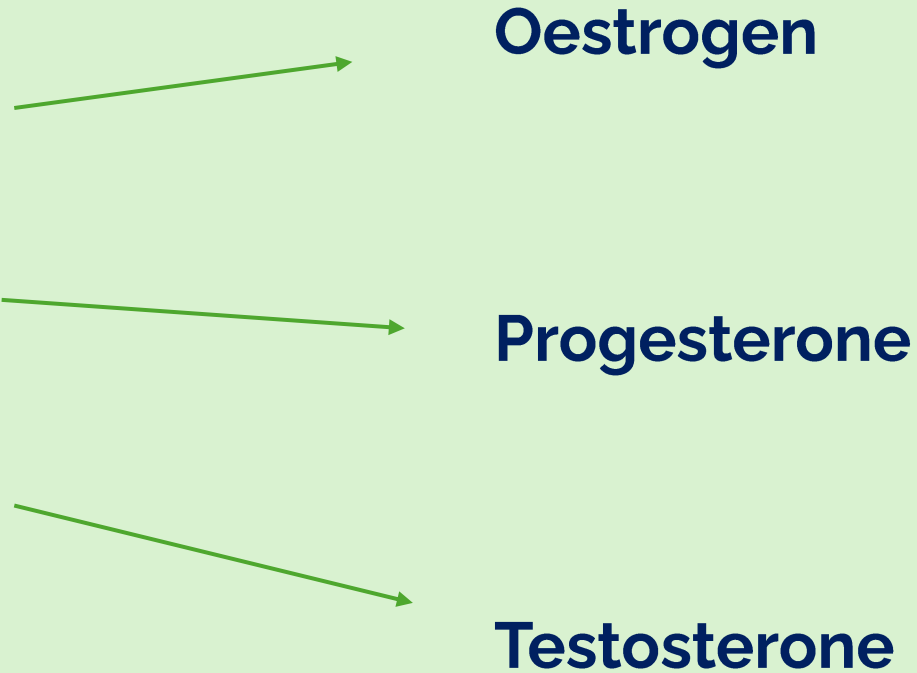
Causes of Menopause

- Aging
- Genetics
- Hysterectomy
- Chemotherapy and Radiation Therapy
- Autoimmune Disorders

Types of menopause

- Natural Menopause
- Surgical Menopause
- Premature Menopause
- Perimenopause

Menopause – The Hormonal Impacts and Symptoms



The Effects of Oestrogen on the Body

Regulates body temperature

Prepares uterus for pregnancy or menstrual cycle

Lowers risk of heart disease by protecting from cholesterol

Causes breast tissue to grow

Enhances memory and libido

Regulates amount of water in the skin and improves collagen

Increases bone strength and density

Lowers blood pressure



The Effects of Progesterone on the Body

Acts as a mild antidepressant by regulating certain chemicals in the brain

Signals body to use fat as an energy source

Lowers 'bad' cholesterol

Prepares breasts for lactation

Counteracts overgrowth of uterus and breast tissue

Maintains the proper amount of water in the body

Increases libido

Increases bone density

Prepares uterus for the fertilised egg



The Effects of Testosterone on the Body



Critical for energy levels

Helps with growth, bone health, fertility and libido

Upholds greater skin collagen content

Crucial role in muscle mass and fat distribution

It stimulates production of red blood cells

Impacts metabolic rate

Influences cognitive function and memory.

Menopause and the Brain.

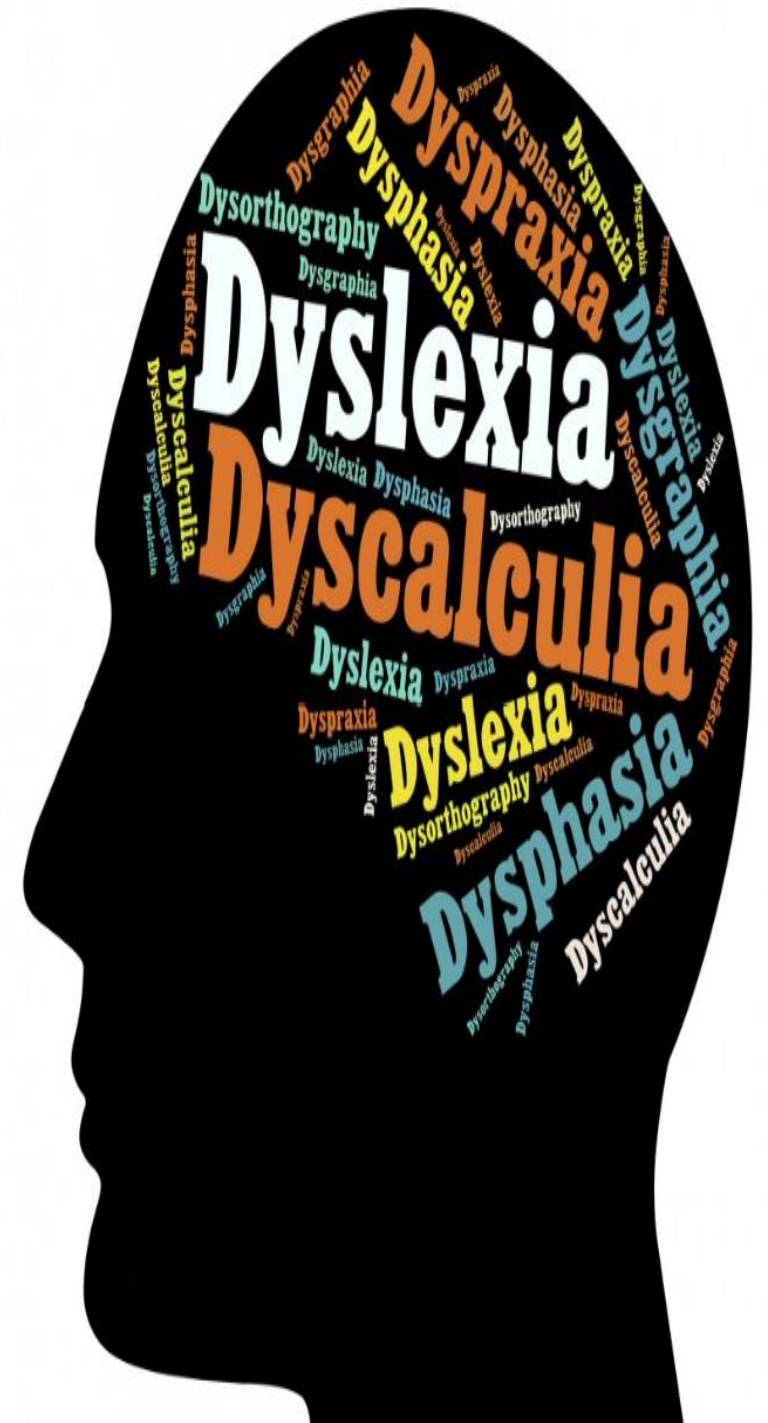


THE BRAIN ANATOMY OF MEN



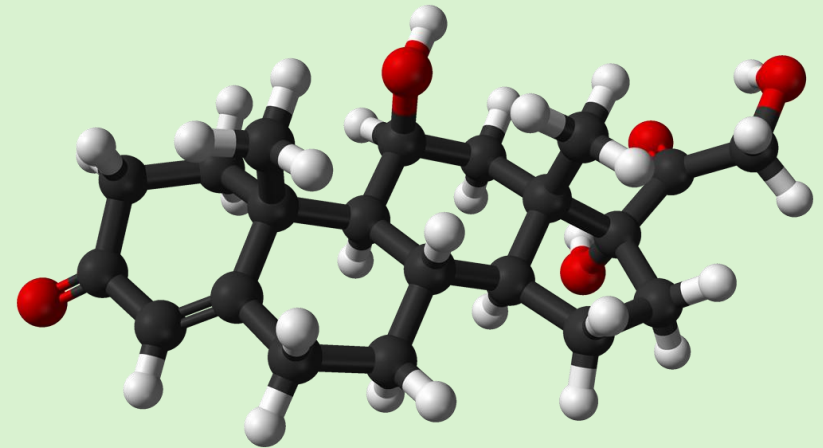
Neurodiversity and Menopause:

- **Increased sensitivity to physical symptoms.**
- **Common challenges: both Menopause and Neurodiversity**
- **Overwhelm, due to sensory changes.**
- **Misdiagnosis or under-recognition of menopause symptoms in neurodivergent individuals**
- **Greater difficulty with emotional regulation and other common neurodiverse symptoms.**



Trans and Non-Binary Menopause

- Hormonal fluctuations
- Symptoms and challenges
- Healthcare access
- Workplace support
- 121-Line Manager support



Cultural Considerations

- Race, ethnicity and cultural beliefs can affect a woman's experience of the perimenopause and menopause due to a variety of factors.
- Language barriers and lack of awareness can impact upon women accessing help and treatment
- Symptoms and onset can vary in different ethnicities
- Ethnicity can impact on pre-existing medical conditions such as pre-disposition to weight gain, impact upon vitamin D levels and osteoporosis.
- The impact of cultural beliefs and accessing healthcare.

Dr Maqsuda Zaman, a GP who works in a practice with a significant number of women from various ethnic communities in Greater Manchester and who is a menopause specialist at Newson Health, says:

'Women of Bangladeshi origin tell me menopause is associated with loss of fertility and youth. A patient of Iraqi Kurdish origin also told me it's generally not discussed in her community as women feel embarrassed about getting older and the loss of fertility.'

**Identify the common physical,
emotional, and psychological symptoms
associated with menopause.**

Oestrogen	Progesterone	Testosterone
Changes in the pattern of periods	Changes in the pattern of periods	Changes in the pattern of periods
Hot flushes/night sweats / itchy skin	Palpitations	Hot flushes/night sweats
Sleep disturbance/ Fatigue	Anxiety	Sleep disturbance/ Fatigue
Memory lapses / poor concentration	Low self-esteem	Memory lapses / poor concentration
Loss of confidence / Depression	Headaches/migraines	Loss of confidence / Heightened fears
Weight gain / changed body shape	Reduced libido	Anxiety / low self-esteem
Digestive changes / Incontinence	Muscle tension	Muscle aches / joint pain
Electric shocks/ Tingling extremities / brittle nails	New allergies	Loss of motivation/self-esteem
Reduced libido/dizziness/incontinence	Dry, itchy skin	Mood impacts /Irritable/snappy
Muscle tension / cyclical breast pain		Weight gain / changed body shape
Frequent urinary tract infections		Tearfulness / Intrusive thoughts
Vaginal dryness and pain		Reduced libido
Burning tongue/gum problems		Hair loss / dry itchy skin
	(NHS, 2022; UK Meds, 2019)	

**Briefly explore treatment options,
including Hormone Replacement
Therapy (HRT) and
alternative/complementary therapies.**

Hormone Replacement Therapy	Lifestyle Changes	Non-Prescription Remedies	Behavioural Therapies	Other Medical Treatments
Used to relieve the symptoms of menopause and restore female hormone levels	Dietary adjustments	Phytoestrogens	Cognitive Behavioural therapy (CBT)	Selective Oestrogen Receptor Modulators (SERMS)
Variety of administration methods.	Regular exercise	Herbal Supplements	Counselling	Medication to support side effects.
Can have a variety of side effects	Stress management	Vitamin and mineral supplements	Mindfulness	Prescription medications i.e. Tibolone
Some medical histories where HRT may not be suitable	Giving up smoking	Acupuncture	Stress management	Antidepressants

Hot Flashes

What do they feel like....

A sudden feeling
of heat
spreading
through your
body.

Sweating,
feeling damp
and hot then
cold.

I have heart
palpitations
when they
occur.

I experience a
lack of
concentration
when they
happen.

A red flush
spreading across
my chest, neck,
face and head, its
embarrassing and
I'm aware of people
looking at me.

Feelings of
anxiety often
accompany
my hot
flashes.

Hot Flushes

What may help.....



Avoid triggers, sometimes caffeine, alcohol, spicy food and stress can trigger.



Lighter fabrics, natural breathable materials and loose styles with layers can assist.



Keep bedrooms cool, layer light bedding with natural fabrics, 100% cotton sheets are cool and comfortable.



Keep a fan in the bedroom / on desk, have a mini battery powered fan or traditional hand-held fan.



Carry a small spray bottle with water to spritz.



If possible, take a lukewarm shower.



Try to lead a healthy lifestyle, can help with other symptoms of menopause too.

Breathing Techniques

Sitali or Sheetali pranayama (cooling breath)



Cold water
dispensers /
taps

Support for
work/life
balance

Cotton /
relaxed
uniforms

Suitable
washroom
facilities

Desk fans

More frequent
/ longer breaks
when needed

Menopause
champions in
the
workplace

Training and
information
for Line
Managers

Female manager
to speak to if
requested

Flexible working
arrangements to
support attending
appointments.

Peer
support
groups

Maybe a form to
complete, to
support discussions
collaboratively?

Quiz Results

1. Question: What is the average age at which menopause typically occurs?

- 1. A) 40 years
- 2. B) 50 years
- 3. C) 60 years
- 4. D) 70 years

2. Question: What is the term for the transition period leading up to menopause?

- 1. A) Andropause
- 2. B) Perimenopause
- 3. C) Climacteric
- 4. D) Postmenopausal

3. Question: Which hormone decreases significantly during menopause, leading to symptoms like hot flashes and mood swings?

- 1. A) Oestrogen
- 2. B) Progesterone
- 3. C) Testosterone
- 4. D) Insulin

4. Question: True or False: Menopause automatically weakens bones.

- 1. A) True
- 2. B) False

5. Question: What lifestyle factors can help support bone health during menopause?

- 1. A) Regular exercise
- 2. B) Adequate calcium intake
- 3. C) Vitamin D supplementation
- 4. D) All of the above

Thank You



www.akswellbeing.com



**Support and solutions
for you and your employees**



References

- ACAS (2022). Managing the effects of the menopause: Menopause at work - Acas. [online] [www.acas.org.uk](https://www.acas.org.uk/menopause-at-work). Available at: <https://www.acas.org.uk/menopause-at-work>. [Accessed 17/10/25]
- balance Menopause. (2021). How does Menopause affect Women at Work [with sign language]. [online] Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17Ol2UGriFg>. [Accessed 23/9/25]
- BBC News. (2020). Menopause added to school curriculum for the first time. [online] Available at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/stories-53938931>. [Accessed 12/09/25].
- Berry, E. (2022). Why is menopause still a taboo subject? [online] Available at <https://newsroom.unsw.edu.au/news/health/why-menopause-still-taboo-subject#:~:text=And%20that%20includes%20after%20Active+listening&&mid=E35DD12F26AF6C3A0D3BE35DD12F26AF6C3A0D3B&&FORM=VRDGAR> [Accessed 27 Sep. 2025].
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. (2022). The Menopause at Work. [online] Available at https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/menopause-guide-2022_tcm18-55426.pdf. [Accessed 09/10/25]
- Connolly, A. (2021). Menopause care is included in GP curriculum, says College. [online] Available at <https://www.rcgp.org.uk/News/Menopause-care-GP-curriculum>. [Accessed 12/10/25]
- Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust. (n.d.). Home : [online] Available at: <https://selfhelp.cntw.nhs.uk/>. [Accessed 2/10/25]
- Day, K. (2019). The roar of the menopause. [online] Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S_LZMzNmghQ. [Accessed 25/09/25]
- Dolgen, E. (2017). A Look At Menopause Through The Ages. [online] Available at https://www.huffpost.com/entry/history-of-menopause_b_6159614. [Accessed 06/9/25]
- Eire, G. (2017). 10 Insane And Awful 'Remedies' For Menopausal Women In The Past. [online] Available at <https://littlethings.com/lifestyle/treatments-for-menopause>. [Accessed 01/10/25]
- Fawcett. (2022). Menopause And The Workplace. [online] Available at <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/menopauseandtheworkplace>. [Accessed 01/10/25]
- Garlick, D. (2018). What do working menopausal women want? [online] Available at <https://menopauseintheworkplace.co.uk/articles/what-do-working-menopausal-women-want/>. [Accessed 09/10/25]
- Garlick, D. (2020). How do hormonal changes affect the trans and non-binary community? – Menopause in the Workplace | Henpicked. [online] Henpicked. Available at: <https://menopauseintheworkplace.co.uk/articles/how-do-hormonal-changes-affect-the-trans-and-non-binary-community/>. [Accessed 25/9/25]
- GOV.UK. (2022). Nation unite to tackle menopause taskforce. [online] Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nations-unite-to-tackle-menopause-taskforce>. [Accessed 12/09/25]
- GOV.UK. (2022). Nation unite to tackle menopause taskforce. [online] Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nations-unite-to-tackle-menopause-taskforce>. [Accessed 12/12/2024]

References

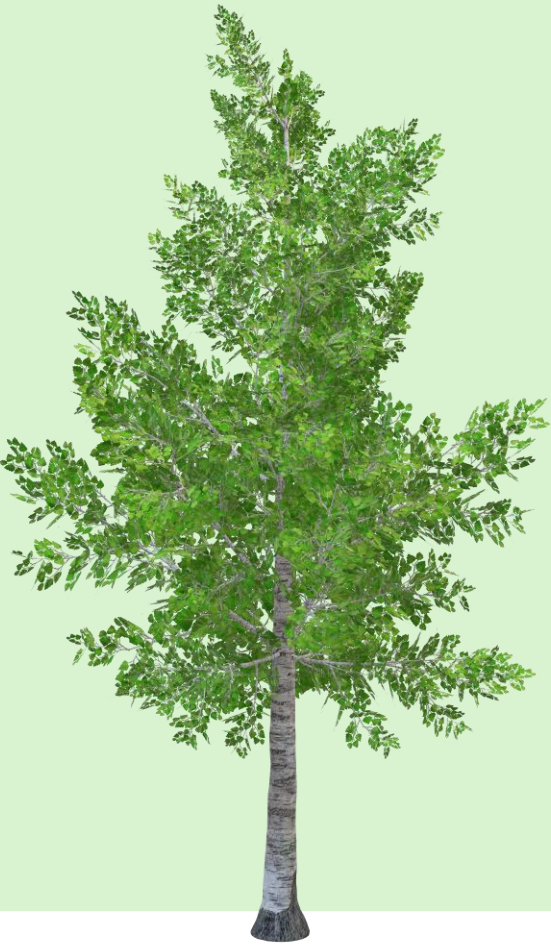
- Grande, S. (2021). How Dr. Isaac Brown Tried to Cure Women of “Lunacy” Through Genital Mutilation. [online] Available at <https://medium.com/history-of-yesterday/how-dr-isaac-brown-tried-to-cure-women-of-lunacy-through-genital-mutilation-48c9ba9369fc>. [Accessed 08/10.25]
- Hardy, C. et al (2017), What do working menopausal women want? A qualitative investigation into women's perspectives on employer and line manager support. [online] Available at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28539167/>. [Accessed 17.10.25]
- Keay, N. (2020). Menopause Hormones – What Are They And How Do They Change? [online] Available at <https://www.forthwithlife.co.uk/blog/menopause-hormones/>. [Accessed 08/10/25]
- McGleenon, B. (2021). Menopause breakthrough as scientists find genes to delay ageing process. [online] Available at <https://www.express.co.uk/news/science/1473735/menopause-delay-reproductive-life-extended-women-gene-editing>. [Accessed 12/10.25]
- Menopause Mastery. (2025). Empowering Workplaces: Unveiling the Impact of Henpicked Menopause Champion Training - Menopause Mastery. [online] Available at: <https://mlrb.net/henpicked-menopause-champion-training/> [Accessed 27.09.2025].
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. (2019). Menopause: What is it? [online] Available at <https://cks.nice.org.uk/topics/menopause/background-information/definition/>. [Accessed 08/10.25].
- NHS (2022). Online self-help CBT techniques - Every Mind Matters. [online] nhs.uk. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/self-help-cbt-techniques/>. [Accessed 2.10.25]
- NHS. (2019). Alternatives-Hormone Replacement Therapy. [online] Available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hormone-replacement-therapy-hrt/alternatives/>. [Accessed 08/10.25]
- NHS. (2019). Benefits and risks-Hormone Replacement Therapy. [online] Available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hormone-replacement-therapy-hrt/risks/>. [Accessed 08/10.25]
- NHS. (2022). Symptoms-Menopause. [online] Available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms/>. [Accessed 08/10.25]
- Nichols, H. (2020). Everything you need to know about estrogen. [online] Available at <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/277177>. [Accessed 08/09/25]
- Onlymyhealth. (2023). World Menopause Day 2023: Experts Explain Menopause In Transgender And Non-Binary Individuals. [online] Available at: <https://www.onlymyhealth.com/menopause-in-transgender-and-non-binary-individuals-explained-1697521919>. [Accessed 18.10.25]
- Pavey, A. (2021). Should menopause policies be a legal requirement? [online] Available at <https://www.peoplemanagement.co.uk/article/1743651/should-businesses-have-a-menopause-policy>. [Accessed 09/09/25]
- Schiff, J.L. and Schiff, A. (1975). Frames of reference. Transactional Analysis Bulletin, [online] 5(3), pp.290–294. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/036215377500500320>. [Accessed 25.9.25]
- SheCares. (2021). Stages of Menopause. [online] Available at <https://www.shecares.com/menopause/stages-of-menopause>. [Accessed 08/09/25]
- Smile Squad Comedy. (2021). What it's like to go through menopause. [online] Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5sy95leLQ0I>. [Accessed 08/10.25]
- Sponsored by MENOPAUSE AND THE WORKPLACE. (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=9672cf45-5f13-4b69-8882-1e5e643ac8a6>. [Accessed 25.9.25]

References

- Sridhar, N. (2016). Views of Menstruation in Religions and Cultures around the world. [online] Available at <https://indiafacts.org/views-of-menstruation-in-religions-and-cultures-around-the-world/>. [Accessed 08/09/2025]
- Steinke, D. (nd). Why Don't We Talk About Menopause? [online] Available at <https://fsgworkinprogress.com/2019/07/11/why-dont-we-talk-about-menopause/>. [Accessed 08/10/25]
- Team MM. (2018). A History Of The Menopause. [online] Available at <https://megsmenopause.com/2018/03/30/a-history-of-the-menopause/>. [Accessed 08/09/2025]
- TUC. (2021). Menopause and the workplace. [online] Available at <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/menopause-and-workplace>. [Accessed 09/10.25]
- UK Meds. (2019). What are the 34 symptoms of menopause? [online] Available at <https://www.ukmeds.co.uk/blog/what-are-the-34-symptoms-of-menopause>. [Accessed 08/09/2025]
- Wellbeing Of Women. (2022). Sign the Menopause Workplace Pledge. [online] Available at <https://www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk/campaigns/menopausepledge/sign>. [Accessed 12/10.25]
- Wellbeing Of Women. (2022). Sign the Menopause Workplace Pledge. [online] Available at <https://www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk/campaigns/menopausepledge/sign>. [Accessed 12/12/2024]
- Womaneze. (2022). Postmenopause & The Freedom It Can Bring. [online] Available at <https://life-after-menopause.com/postmenopause-is-freedom/>. [Accessed 12/09/2025]
- Matysiak, S. (2025). *4 Breathing Exercises for Hot Flashes*. [online] Healthline. Available at: <https://www.healthline.com/health/menopause/breathing-exercises-for-hot-flashes#breathing-exercises> [Accessed 24 Oct. 2025].



www.akswellbeing.co.uk



**Support and solutions
for you and your employees**

