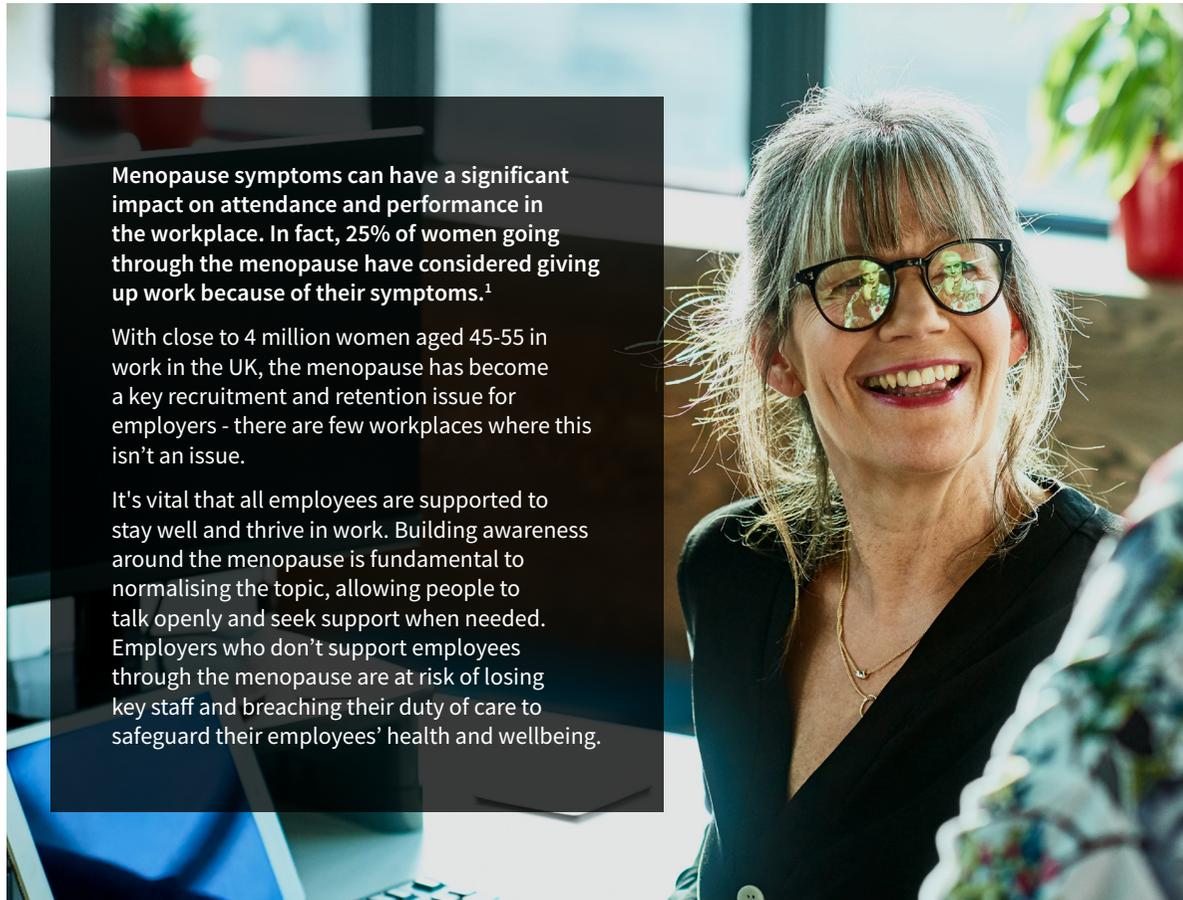


Let's talk about the menopause

How to support
your people
through the
menopause

Guide

How to support your people through the menopause



Menopause symptoms can have a significant impact on attendance and performance in the workplace. In fact, 25% of women going through the menopause have considered giving up work because of their symptoms.¹

With close to 4 million women aged 45-55 in work in the UK, the menopause has become a key recruitment and retention issue for employers - there are few workplaces where this isn't an issue.

It's vital that all employees are supported to stay well and thrive in work. Building awareness around the menopause is fundamental to normalising the topic, allowing people to talk openly and seek support when needed. Employers who don't support employees through the menopause are at risk of losing key staff and breaching their duty of care to safeguard their employees' health and wellbeing.

Menopause in the UK²



4 million

women aged 45-55 work in the UK

30

physical and mental conditions caused by menopause



1 million

have left work due to menopause symptoms

400k

start the menopause each year



25%

consider giving up work due to symptoms



¹ <https://www.itv.com/news/2016-11-23/quarter-of-women-going-through-menopause-considered-leaving-work/>

² <https://www.thephoenixgroup.com/sites/phoenix-group/files/phoenix-group/views-and-insights/Menopause%20Report/Menopause%20and%20Employment.pdf>

What is the menopause?

The menopause is the time when estrogen levels fall and menstrual periods stop. This normally takes place between the ages of 45-55, but can happen sooner. The medical definition is no periods for at least one year.

Understanding the symptoms

Everyone experiences the menopause differently and some can have more severe symptoms than others - the duration and severity varies from woman to woman. On average, symptoms last around four years from their last period, but 1 in 10 women can experience symptoms for up to 12 years.³

Common symptoms include:

- Hot flushes
- Night sweats
- Difficulty sleeping
- Reduced sex drive
- Problems with memory and concentration
- Vaginal and bladder issues
- Headaches
- Mood changes such as low mood and anxiety
- Palpitations
- Joint stiffness, aches and pains
- Reduced muscle mass
- Recurrent urinary tract infections

Around 8 in 10 women will have symptoms before and after their periods stop. They can have a significant impact on daily life.³



³<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms/>

How to support your people

Raising awareness

Building awareness around the menopause is fundamental to normalising the topic, allowing people to talk openly and seek support when needed.

How to raise awareness



Host internal webinars or talks discussing the topic



Provide access to educational material for all staff



Remind staff it's OK to talk about the menopause and share information around its prevalence



Link educational activity to awareness days throughout the year such as World Menopause Day on 18 October



Start including the menopause when talking about other health and wellbeing topics such as mental health



Share our fact sheet with your employees to get started

Line managers and open conversations

Line managers should be encouraged to talk about the menopause with all staff alongside other health and wellbeing issues. This can help normalise the topic and help people come forward for support.

Line managers should be trained to:

- Know how to have conversations about the menopause
- Know what support is available
- Understand the symptoms and how it can affect performance
- Understand policies and their role
- Understand that support needs will vary from person to person



Download our line manager toolkit to learn more

Some staff might not want to discuss the issue with their line manager, so it's important that line managers are equipped to offer a suitable alternative such as a member of the HR team, a wellbeing champion or mental health support service.



Flexibility and making changes

Menopause symptoms can last up to 12 years, so it's important to be flexible and handle any absence from work sensitively.³

Employers should consider:



Making changes to help staff continue to work such as flexible working, working from home and allowing time off for appointments



Taking into account performance issues or absence which might be caused by menopause symptoms

It's important for employers to have procedures in place to help staff affected by the menopause.

Visit the **ACAS website** to understand how the menopause relates to the law.

Menopause policy

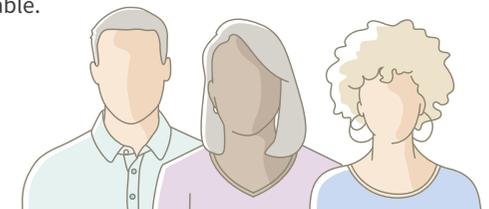
You may want to consider having a policy specifically for the menopause. This can help people better understand the menopause and what support is available. It can also set out the training provided to managers, the main point of contact for questions and show the organisation is taking the issue seriously.



Wellbeing champions

Organisations may already be familiar with mental health champions, but some are now broadening the role to include wider wellbeing issues. Wellbeing champions are nominated individuals in the workplace who can provide a neutral point of contact to discuss wellbeing issues, as well as signposting relevant support.

Employers could consider appointing wellbeing champions who would need to be trained to handle conversations, understand internal processes and signpost the support available.



³<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms/>

Support Services

Your organisation may have access to support services as part of our policy with Canada Life. Visit our [support service page](#) to discover the services available.

For example, WeCare is available with our Group Income Protection and CLASS policies. It provides 24/7 online access to UK-based GPs and mental health support.



Get in touch



If you have any questions or want to know more about the support available, get in touch with your account manager or contact our team on **0345 223 8000**.



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