

Menopause Support At Work Booklet for Colleagues

This guide is to help you find the right support as you approach or go through your menopause journey.

Menopause is a natural transition, however when it happens and the impact that it has, can vary significantly. Some people might experience mild symptoms while others experience very debilitating symptoms that have a negative impact on their lives.



Only recently, national research showed that 10% of women leave their jobs, and many more are reducing their hours of work or passing up promotions, because of their menopause symptoms.

The guide is for women and also for those who do not identify as a woman, who are approaching, or going through the menopause, and are employed by University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust.

Menopause and perimenopause facts

- Menopause is when you have not had a period for 12 consecutive months. This usually happens between the ages of 45 and 55 years old.
- Menopause can sometimes happen earlier naturally, or for reasons such as surgery to remove the ovaries (oophorectomy) or the uterus (hysterectomy), cancer treatments and medications, or a genetic reason.
- Menopause and perimenopause can cause symptoms like anxiety, mood swings, brain fog, hot flushes and irregular periods. These symptoms can start years before your periods stop and carry on afterwards.
- Menopause and perimenopause symptoms can have a big impact on your life, including relationships and work.
- There are treatments depending on a person's personal and family medical history, which may include Hormone replacement therapy (HRT).

Tips to help

- Get plenty of rest, including keeping to regular sleep routines
- Eat a healthy diet
- Have calcium-rich food like milk, yoghurt and kale to keep bones healthy
- Exercise regularly, try including weight-bearing activities if able where your feet and legs support your weight like walking, running or dancing
- Do relaxing things like yoga, tai chi or meditation
- Talk to other people going through the same thing, like family, friends or colleagues
- Talk to a doctor before taking herbal supplements or complementary medicines

Symptom tracker

Use the grid below to help you to track your symptoms. The trackers can be used for your own use, but they are also useful when you are talking to your GP or other healthcare professionals. There is space for you to add other symptoms.

Symptoms that are assumed to be caused by menopause could in fact be masking other conditions. It is important that you contact your GP if you are experiencing menopausal-like symptoms.

Physical Symptoms	Mild	Moderate	Severe	How are they affecting you at work?
Hot flushes/night sweats				
No energy/fatigue				
Sleep problems				
Change in periods				
Dry (itchy skin)				
Stiffness/Aching joints				
Weight gain or bloating				
Breast tenderness				
Heart palpitations				
Recurrent urinary tract infections (UTI), urinary frequency and leakage				

This guide is for any member of staff at UHB that is experiencing the menopause. Which could also include staff who do not identify as female such as our Trans or non-binary staff who may also experience menopausal symptoms.

Psychological Symptoms	Mild	Moderate	Severe	How are they affecting you at work?
Memory problems				
Brain fog				
Headaches and migraines that are worse than usual				
Reduced ability to concentrate				
Worry or anxiety				
Mood swings				
Low mood or depression				
Panic attacks				
Low self-esteem/ lacking in confidence				

Other Symptoms	Mild	Moderate	Severe	How are they affecting you at work?

To request additional trackers please email womensnetwork@uhb.nhs.uk

What support is available?

UHB's Menopause Passport

The Menopause Passport has been designed by Wendy Madden following her own experience working as a nurse at UHB, while going through the menopause.

The Menopause Passport recognises that every woman's menopause is a unique experience, and it helps to ensure that you get the right support for you.

As well as fast-tracking help and advice, it can also be used to request adjustments to your working environment, such as wearing a lighter uniform or a change to working patterns.

The Menopause Passport follows you if you change roles in the Trust and it stays valid even if your current manager changes. You can download the Passport and its supporting information by visiting the Trust's intranet and searching for 'Menopause Passport'.

Additional Information

The Inclusion Team can provide advice and guidance to staff and managers in relation to reasonable adjustments, menopause awareness moodle training, and the support available through the wellbeing offer. To contact the team email inclusion@uhb.nhs.uk

M Club

Our peer-to-peer support group is called the M Club. These are held monthly in the wellbeing hubs on all sites and are exclusively for UHB staff. The M Club is a great way to meet others who are approaching or going through the menopause. We offer support and signposting. There is no need to book, just turn up on the day. For dates and times email mclub3@uhb.nhs.uk

Menopause Champions

We have Menopause Champions in the Trust, who are members of staff who offer UHB staff a listening ear, and practical help and support. Champions would also advise and signpost men and or partners who are looking to support their wives, partners or colleagues. Contact with a menopause champion is confidential. To get in touch, check the Women's Staff Network page under menopause and you will find a list of our champions' contact details or email inclusion@uhb.nhs.uk

Women's Network

UHB's own Women's Network is a great place to network with other women who work at UHB. Meetings are held bi-monthly, on Zoom and you can stay the full hour or just pop in. Staff networks offer staff a safe and confidential space to stay connected with one another, raise awareness and reduce stigma and work with the Trust to enable positive change. You do not have to identify as the group to join, the Women's Network welcomes allies. Email womensnetwork@uhb.nhs.uk for the link.

Flexible working

Flexible working can be a great way to support anyone experiencing the menopause. There is a wide range of flexible working choices available that could help a member of staff continue to work and manage their symptoms. Knowing they have the option to work from home if they are experiencing overwhelming menopause symptoms, or the option to come in a bit later if they have had a sleepless night due to night sweats or insomnia. If they are on a flexitime contract this could make a real difference. These are just two examples, but there is so much more to explore with flexible working that can really help. If you need some further support with flexible working options, contact: organisationaldevelopment@uhb.nhs.uk

Information sessions

The Women's Network regularly sets up information sessions for people affected by the menopause. To keep updated, you can be added to the distribution list by emailing womensnetwork@uhb.nhs.uk