



One minute guide to...

MENOPAUSE

What is it?

Menopause is a natural ageing process that occurs in women when there is a change in the balance of the level of hormones usually between 45-55 years old that may also be earlier or later due to medical, surgical, or genetic reasons. The hormonal changes start before this is called the Perimenopause, before periods stop, when a variety of symptoms can occur.

Why is it important to consider in the workplace?

Menopause and Perimenopause may have a big impact on social and family life, relationships, and work. The experience is different for every woman in terms of length of time, type, and number of symptoms.

Considering the number of women who go through the menopause it has been found to be rarely discussed and even hidden, which makes the symptoms even more difficult to manage. These can include tiredness (through lack of sleep, night sweats), brain fog, poor concentration, irritability, and poor memory leading to feeling anxious or depressed, mood changes and feeling less confident. Hot flushes, muscle aches, dry or itchy skin can also make any workplace uncomfortable.

What to do?

It is very important to get advice and support early from GPs, Practice Nurses, or Pharmacists to learn how to manage symptoms to reduce the impact on life. Their advice may include information about CBT, complementary medicines, or HRT (hormone replacement therapy).

General practical actions can include:

- get plenty of rest, including keeping to regular sleep routines.
- eat a healthy diet and to keep bones healthy include calcium-rich food (milk, yoghurt etc.), avoiding spicy food, reducing alcohol intake and stop smoking.
- exercise regularly, try including weight-bearing activities where the 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.

As menopause can affect staff directly or indirectly workplace actions could be considered:

- layers of light clothing to keep cool during the day, and drink plenty of fluids (if having hot flushes)
- ensure comfortable room temperatures through fans/ventilation.
- discuss with your Head Teacher regarding any temporary workplace adjustments that might be necessary.

Further Information:

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

<https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/>

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/for-the-public/browse-all-patient-information-leaflets/menopause-diagnosis-and-management/>

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Working for Cumberland Council and
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