

Menopause Matters



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University Health Board

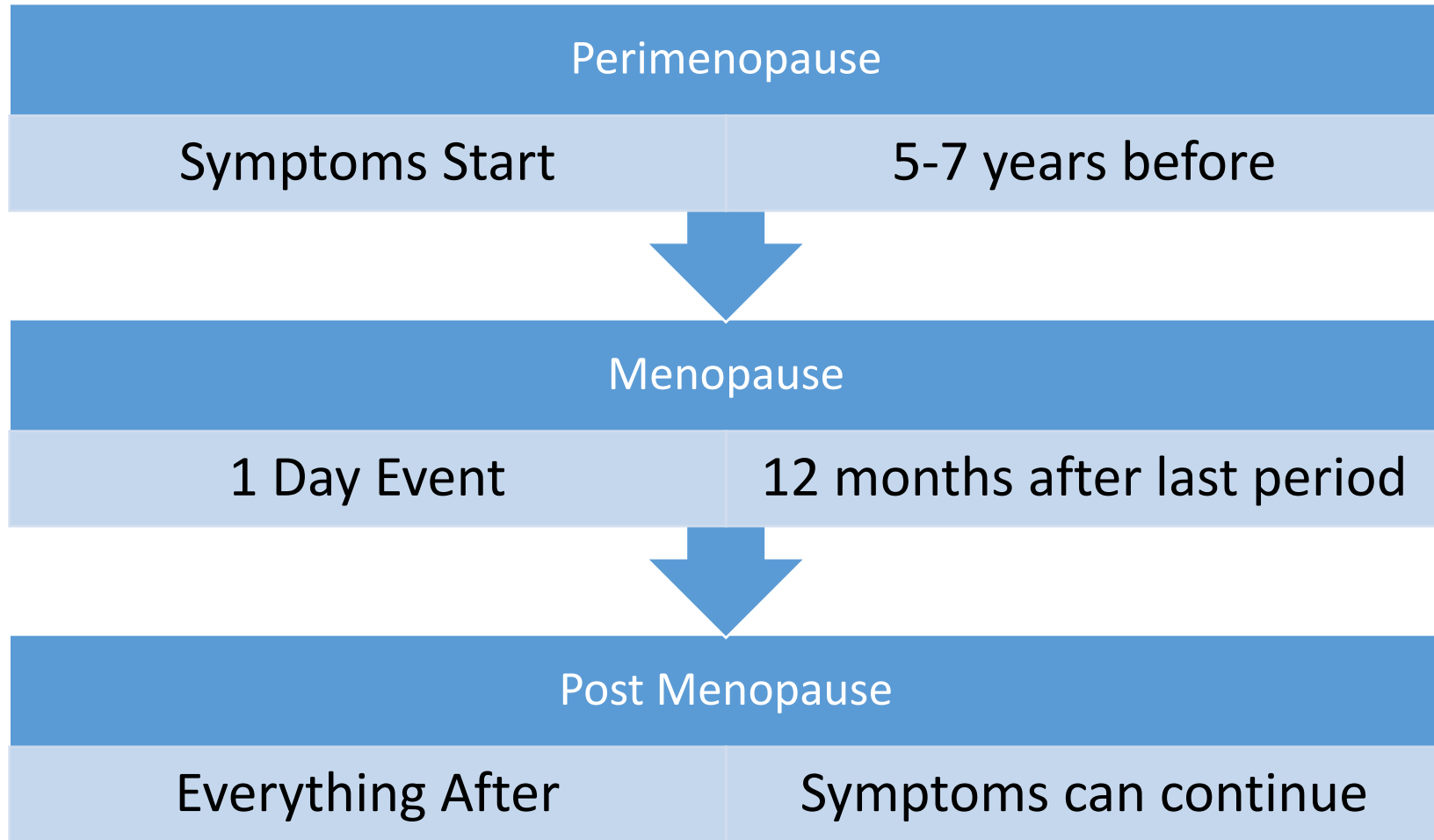
Menopause- Let's Talk About it

So what is the Menopause?

Put simply, menopause refers to the time when you stop having periods and can no longer get pregnant naturally. This occurs because your ovaries stop producing eggs and, as a result, levels of the hormones they produce (oestrogen, progesterone and testosterone) fall.



Stages of Menopause



Types of Menopause

The average age of menopause in the UK is 51 but the general range is from age 45 to age 55.

For those aged 40-45 this is termed an early menopause.

1 in 100 women under the age of 40 and 1 in a 1000 women under the age of 30 experience the menopause, this is termed POI or Primary Ovarian Insufficiency.



Surgical Menopause

Surgical menopause occurs when the ovaries are removed which is done for various reasons. Menopause occurs because the ovary is the source of oestrogen production.

Other reasons for menopause can be due to cancer treatments such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy.



Menopause Symptoms - Expected

- Hot Flashes
- Night sweats
- Mood / irritable/ Mood Swings
- Weight gain, especially around middle
- Forgetfulness/ Brain fog



Menopause Symptoms - Unexpected

- Heavy periods
- Decreased sense of well-being, energy, and ambition
- Depression and anxiety
- Loss of confidence
- Trouble sleeping/ fatigue
- Headaches /Dizziness
- Mental confusion/lack of concentration
- Urinary incontinence
- Increased susceptibility to vaginal infections
- Facial hair growth
- Change in hair texture
- Palpitations/Breathing difficulties
- Emotional / Teary
- Reduced sex drive / libido
- Sore breasts
- Vaginal dryness / itchiness / pain
- Stress incontinence
- Frequent urination
- Change in bowel movement
- Urinary tract infections
- Bloating / digestive issues
- Itching / crawling skins
- Achy joints
- Tinnitus
- Altered skin sensation
- Body odour changes
- Dry Eyes
- Burning mouth
- Dental Issues/Dry mouth
- Changes to taste and smell
- Breathing difficulties
- Hair changes
- Nail changes
- Osteoporosis

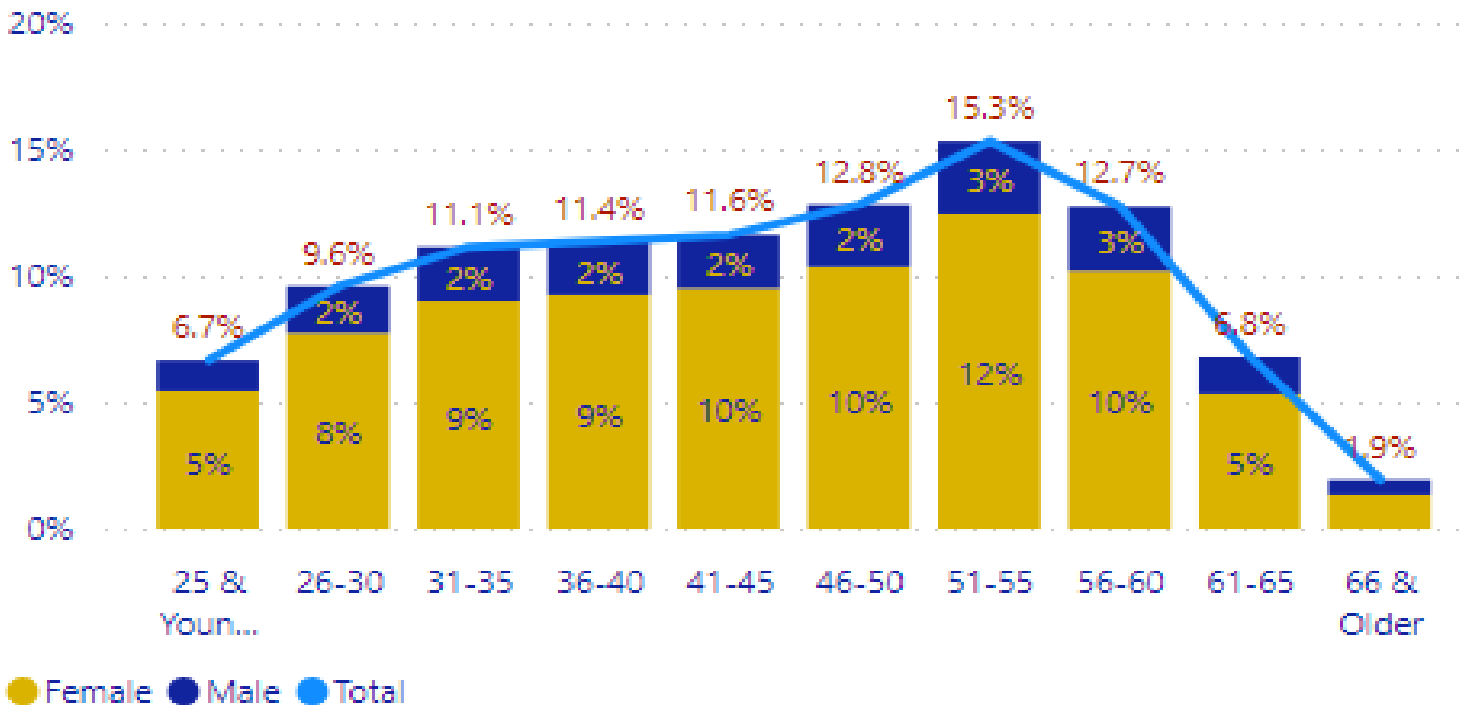


Age Related Fact and Figures

- **80% of the BCUHB workforce are women**
- **Of that group approx. 50% are in the menopausal age group of 40-55**
- **In the UK it is estimated that around 1 in 3 women are either currently going through or have reached the menopause.**
- **88% of women workers who had experienced the menopause felt it had an effect on working life.**
- **Around 6-10 had witnessed the issue being treated as a joke in the workplace**
- **47% of women who have take a day off work related to menopausal symptoms hasn't told their employer why**



Workforce Gender by Age Band (Headcount)



Data on Workplace Impact

Menopause symptoms can have a significant impact at work.

[Research by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development](#) found that two thirds (67%) of working women between the ages of 40 and 60 with experience of menopausal symptoms said they have had a mostly negative impact on them at work.

Of those who were negatively affected at work:

- 79% said they were less able to concentrate
- 68% said they experienced more stress
- nearly half (49%) said they felt less patient with clients and colleagues, and
- 46% felt less physically able to carry out work tasks.

As a result of this, over half of respondents were able to think of a time when they were unable to go into work due to their menopause symptoms.

[Further research by the Fawcett Society](#) found that one in ten women surveyed who were employed during the menopause left work due to menopause symptoms.



Impact on the workplace

Organisation/HR/Managers

- Increased absence
- Management time
- Grievances/conflict
- Reduced productivity
- Loss of expertise
- Direct/indirect costs
- Gender/age bias
- Risk legal Claims
- Reputation
- Employee Engagement
- Allow poor culture

Individual

- Embarrassed/suffers in silence
- Makes a joke of it
- Not coping/unsupported
- Loss of confidence
- Lower productivity
- Increased absence
- Thinks of leaving
- Stress, anxiety & depression
- Considers legal action

Colleagues

- Concern
- Unsure how to help
- Resentment
- Added workload
- Perception of fairness
- Grievance/conflict
- Unchallenged 'banter'/offensive environment



Advice for Staff

If you are experiencing menopausal symptoms that are impacting your ability to work, you can speak to your manager and let them know what you're going through.

Opening up to someone in a professional environment may feel awkward, especially if your manager is someone you don't feel comfortable talking to about personal matters. If you feel like this is the case, you could try speaking to a different member of your management team or human resources (HR).

Before speaking to someone you could try:

- taking notes of your menopausal symptoms and how or when they are affecting you
- preparing what you plan to discuss with a friend
- thinking of solutions that you think could help you



Advice for Managers

There are lots of resources available that can help you understand more about the menopause and the support those experiencing menopausal symptoms in your workplace may need.

There are solutions available to help staff continue to work comfortably during menopause.

Things you might want to consider offering employees:

- Create a safe space for staff to talk about menopause – include everyone in menopause conversations
- People support – training for the team
- Include Menopause in Return to Work forms and other employee support documentation
- Support requests for a lighter uniform
- Moving staff to a cooler part of the office or providing a fan
- Look and support technology where it can help, for example supporting staff to set up reminders on their phone or taking more notes to help with 'brain fog'
- Support flexible working requests, such as changing working patterns or working from home
- Explore options for staff to take more regular breaks
- Provide and support more time for staff to prepare before meetings, appointments or engagements
- Signpost staff to workplace counselling



Our Legal Obligations

A significant proportion of women report that menopause symptoms can negatively affect them at work and in some cases make them feel forced to leave the workforce



Why we need to support our staff

A v Bonmarche

Case background

The Claimant had worked in retail for 37 years and was a high achiever. Her situation at work changed in around May 2017 when she began to go through the menopause.

She contacted higher management regarding her manager's treatment of her, but no action was taken. She suffered a breakdown and her manager was extremely cold and threatening towards her when she returned to work. The claimant felt that she had no other option but to resign.

The tribunal upheld her claims for constructive unfair dismissal, sex, and age discrimination. She was awarded **£10,000** compensation for loss of wages and £18,000 for injury to feelings.

[A v Bonmarche Ltd \(in administration\): 4107766/2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/cases/a-v-bonmarche-ltd-in-administration-4107766-2019)

Latest analysis of court records has shown that the number of tribunal cases which cite menopause increased by 44% in 2021.



Solutions, Support and Adjustments

**Occ Health
Support**

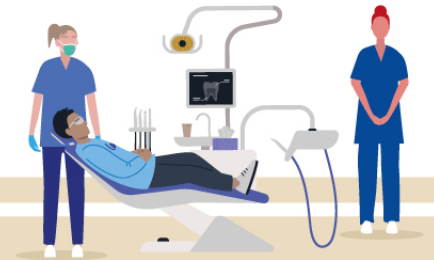
**Menopause
Café/network**

**Adjust
Uniform/PPE**

**Set up Staff
Menopause
Clinic**

**Training for
managers**

**Information
Posters &
Signposting**



What support is available for Betsi Staff?

- [Betsi Menopause page](#)
 - [All Wales NHS Menopause Policy](#)
 - [Nice Guidelines on the Management of Menopause](#)
 - [Menopause Risk Assessment](#)
- [Occupational Health Referral](#)
- Establishment of BCUHB [Menopause Café's](#)
- **BCUHB Menopause Matters Group**
 - BCUHB looking to develop staff menopause clinics
- **TU Menopause support**



Menopause impacts everyone.



External Support

- [Menopause in the workplace: Guidance for employers | EHRC \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](#)
- [Further information about supporting someone through the menopause](#)
- [The Menopause Charity - Menopause Facts, Advice and Support](#)
- [Menopause Inclusion Collective \(menopausecollective.org\)](#)
- [Black women in Menopause - Diverse Minds](#)
- [Menopause Matters, menopausal symptoms, remedies, advice](#)
- [Gather to eat cake, drink and discuss menopause \(menopausecafe.net\)](#)
- [Menopause and Cervical Cancer | Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust \(jostrust.org.uk\)](#)

