

MENOPAUSE – what is it?

You may not think that information about the menopause is relevant to you. However, everyone can be affected by it.

This cheat sheet will give you a better idea of what the menopause is, and isn't, whether you are the partner, son, daughter or workmate of someone who is going through the menopause, or the woman herself.



What Is It?

The **menopause** is when your periods stop. It is influenced by a change in hormone levels, namely oestrogen and progesterone, which can cause a number of symptoms.

Perimenopause refers to the time when you experience menopausal symptoms, but continue to have periods. It has nothing to do with spicy chicken, but it can make you sweat as much.

THE MENOPAUSE

The menopause experience is unique to every individual. There are some myths and facts though, which it's helpful to understand.

Busting menopause myths and knowing the facts

FACT Menopause is not an illness, but for many women it can be a very challenging time mentally and physically, impacting on self-esteem, work and personal relationships. It isn't something that we should just put up with.

FACT Up to a quarter of women do sail through the menopause, largely unaffected. Don't hate them for it.

FACT Transgender women and men can experience menopausal symptoms.

FACT The average age of UK women to experience the menopause is 51, but many of these women are perimenopausal in their 40s.

FACT Premature menopause (although less common) can and does occur in even younger women. Menopause can occur immediately after some surgeries or cancer treatments.

MYTH The menopause causes weight gain. The change in hormones can affect the way fat is stored, but there are no proven direct causal links between menopause and weight gain.

MYTH You have to be a woman in her fifties to experience the menopause.

Finally...

If you think you may be menopausal or perimenopausal...

Make an appointment with your GP, if your symptoms are troubling you.

Find out more by visiting websites such as:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/>

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

Remember that the menopause is a perfectly normal process. Let's talk about it, let's cry about it, let's laugh about it. Let's empower ourselves, friends, family members and colleagues to find out what treatment options and coping strategies help, so that we can all feel the benefits.