

Menopause Awareness Session





Jayne Woodman – Founder
The Menopause Team

Introductions

And what do you currently
know about the menopause?

By the end of
this session
you will have...

- Knowledge of the figures.
- Greater menopause awareness and understanding of its significance.
- Understanding of the legal elements.
- Have insight around signposting.

UK Numbers

- 13 million people experiencing menopause in the UK.
- Women 50+ are the fastest growing segment of the UK workforce.
- By 2025 more than 1 billion people will experience menopause, 12% of the entire world population.



Facts

- Generally, in the UK 1 in 10 women leave work – 330,000 women each year.
- 1 in 5 reduce their hours to try to cope.
- 1 in 5 women do not seek the promotion they deserve.
- Menopause cases at Employment Tribunal are increasing.



Menopause Impact

Direct

Indirect

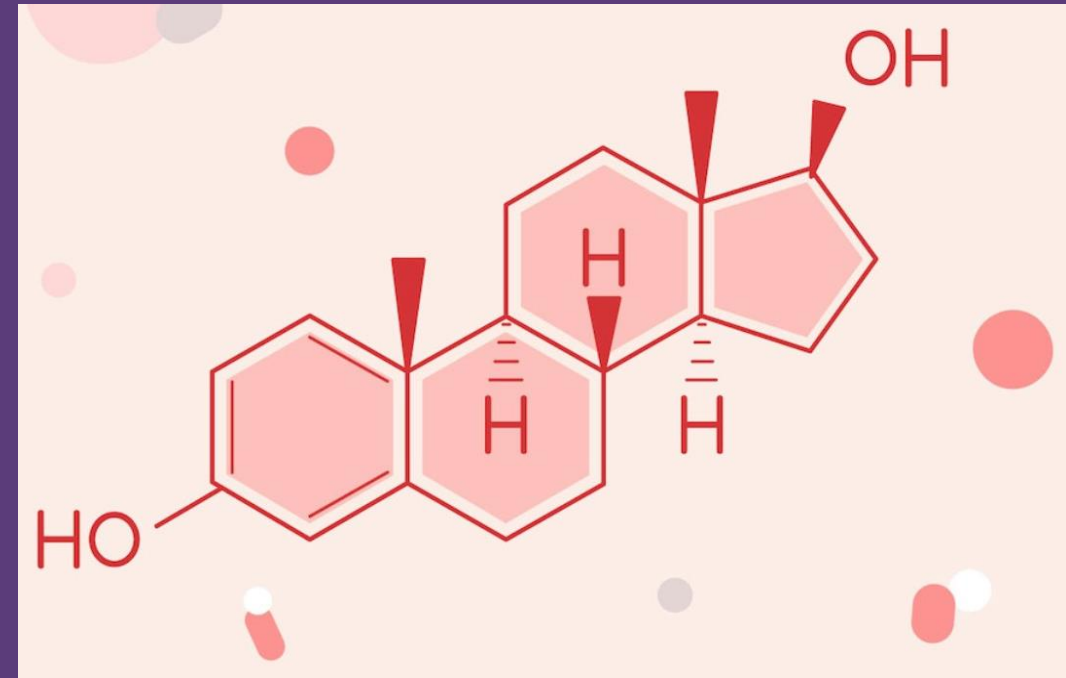
What is the menopause?

Change in **hormone** levels:

- Estrogen (principally)
- Progesterone
- Testosterone

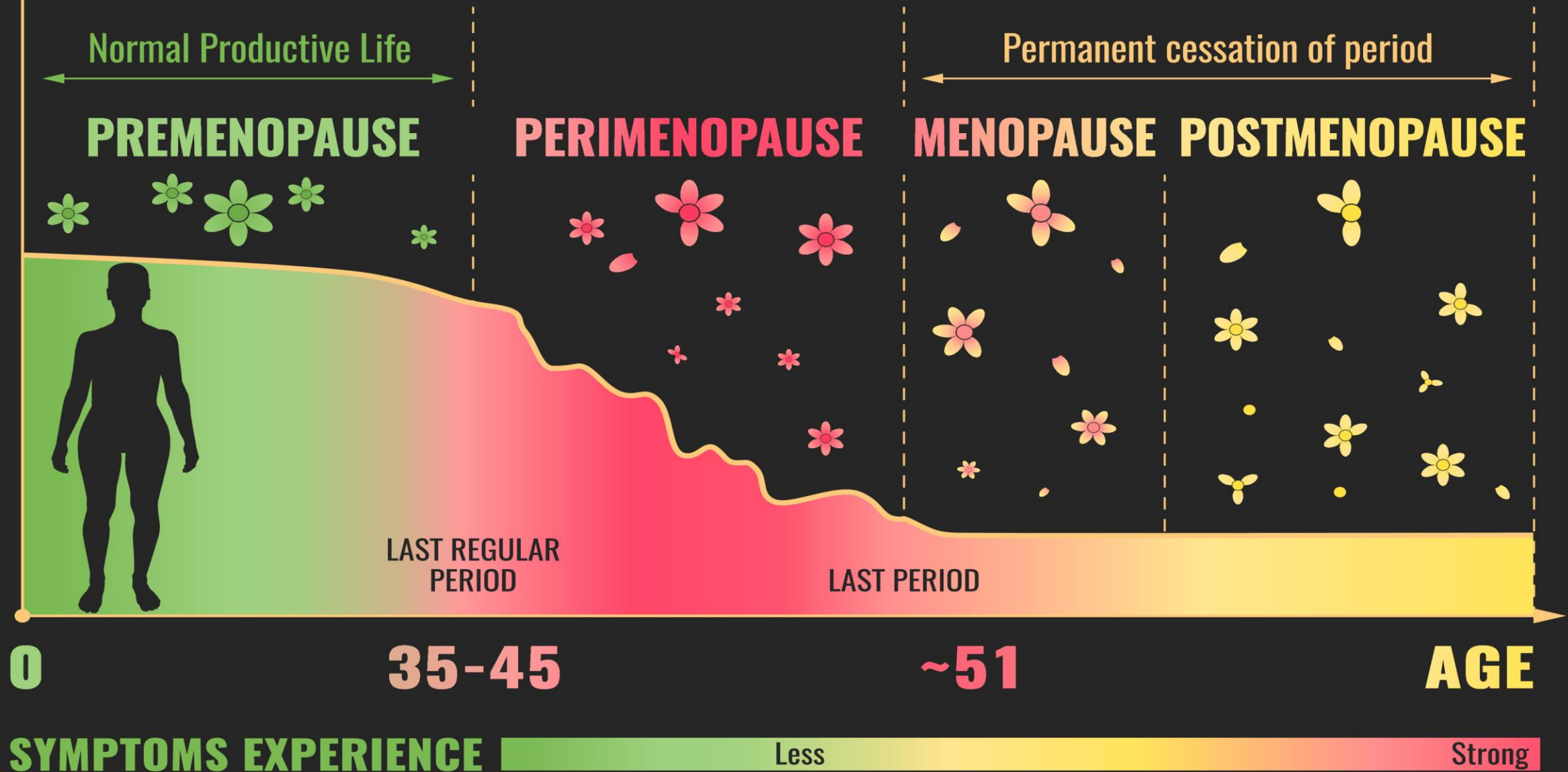
60% - 90% of women experience notable effects.

20% of women can have severe symptoms.



STAGES & SYMPTOMS OF MENOPAUSE

ESTROGEN LEVEL





The UK Medical Profession

- Historical lack of menopause education for UK doctors. 41% of universities offer no mandatory menopause training.
- Not enough accredited menopause specialists in the UK.

The Key Menopause Symptoms				
Acne	Cold Sweats	Frequent UTIs	Joint Pain	Pain during Sex
Allergies	Depression	Gum Problems	Loss of Libido	Panic Attacks
Anxiety	Digestive Problems	Headaches	Lumpy Breasts	Restless Legs
Bloating	Difficulty Concentrating	Heart Palpitations	Memory Loss	Stomach Cramps
Brain fog	Dizziness	Hot Flushes	Metallic Taste in Mouth	Tinnitus
Breast pain	Dry Eyes	Increased Body Odour	Mood Swings	Thinning Hair
Brittle Nails	Dry Mouth	Incontinence	Muscle Tension	Trouble with Driving
Bone Fractures	Dry Skin	Insomnia	Nausea	Vaginal Dryness
Burning Tongue	Electric Shocks	Irregular periods	Night Sweats	Vertigo type symptoms
Burning Mouth	Fatigue	Itchy Skin	Osteoporosis	Weight Gain



2014

Allergy

I am 47 years old



Benefits of engaging with the menopause at work

- Promote wellbeing.
- Reduce sickness absence.
- Reduce labour turnover.
- Retain female talent and the investment made in training and development.
- Promote a more diverse and inclusive workforce particularly in more senior roles.
- Create more resilient employees and a more resilient organisation.
- Avoid reputational damage through potential tribunal claims.

Menopause Awareness =



For individuals and for organisations

What are your thoughts so far?

Legislation

- The Health and Safety at Work Act requires employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees.
- Employers also have a duty not to discriminate under the 2010 Equality Act.



Equality Act 2010



- Negative menopause treatment could amount to a breach of an employment contract.
- Menopause relates to 5 out of the 9 protected characteristics:
 - Age
 - Sex/gender
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender reassignment
 - Disability

Mrs K Farquharson (Anderson) v Thistle Marine (Peterhead) Ltd & J D Clark

Karen Farquharson, worked at the engineering firm Thistle Marine for 27 years.



Mrs K Farquharson (Anderson) v Thistle Marine (Peterhead) Ltd & J D Clark

In October 2023 Karen (age 49) won £37,000 in compensation at Employment Tribunal after her boss, Jim Clark made light of her menopause and dismissed it as “aches and pains.”

She suffered heavy bleeding, anxiety and brain fog as a result of the menopause, which meant she sometimes worked from home. However, company founder Jim Clark dismissed her medical problems and told her to “just get on with it,” an employment tribunal heard.



Absence

- Menopause related sickness absence should be **recorded separately** to general sickness absence.
- It should not trigger disciplinary action.
- Menopause is ONE absence.
- Employers must be seen to be **reasonable**.

What can you do...?

In Your Role as Manager...

Good people management can help support employee health and wellbeing – notice changes and initiate early intervention.

- Provide understanding and support
- Create good conversations
- Help enable the retention of talent
- Signpost to evidence-based information.

The manager's role in supporting those affected by menopause is crucial.



Managers are often...

The first point of contact if someone feels they need to discuss their health and/or changes/adjustments for them to complete their work at their full capacity and potential.

Where available, you could also consult HR and Occupational Health.

Reasonable
Adjustments
& the EHRC

What can you think of?

Starting the Conversation

- Some of the symptoms associated with the menopause can be intimate. Therefore, many feel embarrassed to discuss their symptoms. However, most people would prefer a genuine enquiry about how they are, rather than silence.
- **Don't ask them** directly whether they have menopause symptoms, do not make any assumptions or suggest symptoms
- **Do ask** general, non judgemental, open question about their wellbeing, if you have any concerns.
- Allow them to decide how much information to disclose, respect their privacy
- Approach the conversations with empathy and try not to be embarrassed by the issue.
- Regular one-to-ones are an opportunity to start the conversation in a private and confidential setting, so the employee feels at ease

Confidentiality

- If someone tells you about their health condition, including menopausal symptoms, this should be treated as **confidential**.
- If they want information about their condition to be shared, **consent must be explicit**. You should discuss with them who will be told and by whom, as well as the information they do or do not want shared with colleagues



Performance...

Menopausal symptoms can be (usually temporarily) life altering and so impact the performance of your colleague(s).

If this happens, reasonable adjustments should be discussed and a plan established before you engage in formal processes.

Not addressed, the impact of the issues could turn into sickness absence.

Tips to Manage Performance...

- Have regular, informal catch-ups and approach performance conversations positively and supportively.
- Take health issues fully into account.
- Identify extra support they might benefit from and implement where appropriate.
- Set reasonable timescales for improvements.

To Do...

- Help to break through the culture of silence.
- Understand what it is to have good two-way conversations.
- Sign-post evidence-based information (also HR/Occ Health?)
- Explore issues around performance, including potential menopause challenges too.
- Encourage engagement with a **menopause café** or similar.
- Familiarise yourself with the **legal** requirements.
- **Encourage menopause awareness** through posters, books and leaflets in communal staff areas and via your intranet.



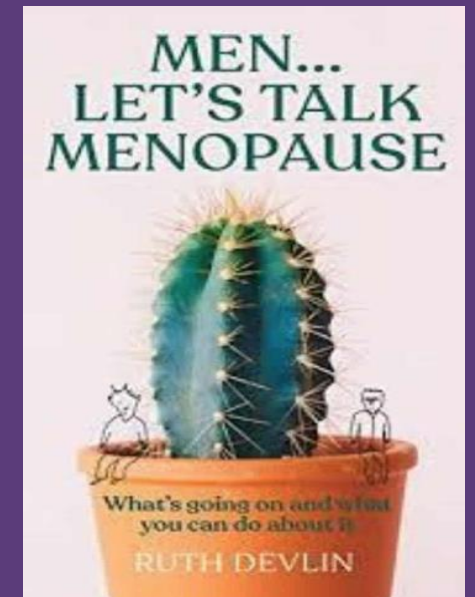
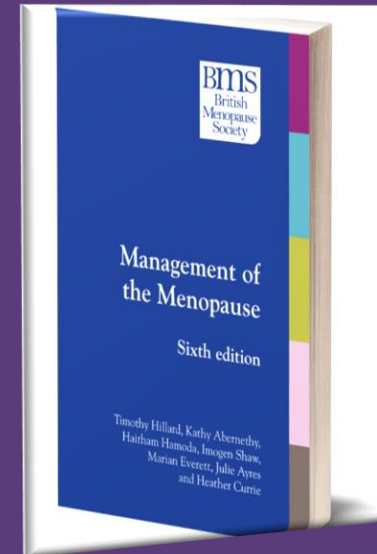
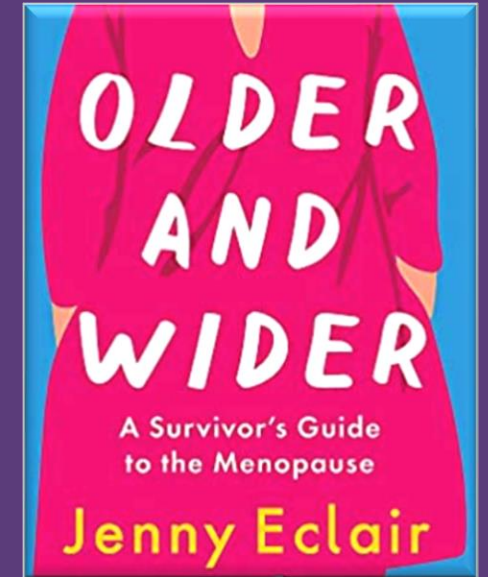
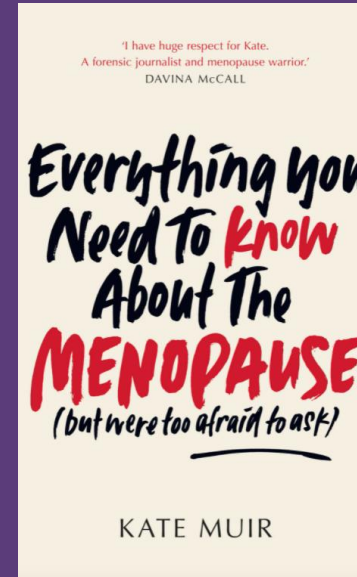


Carolyn Harris MP (Neath and
Swansea East)

Menopause Mandate

Resources

- Books



Resources

- Websites
- TV Programmes
- Radio Programmes
- Podcasts
- Apps (Balance, Calm & Headspace)
- NICE Guidelines
- The Menopause Team Resource List



balance Menopause Library

Dr Louise Newson

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Dr Louise Newson is a GP and Menopause Specialist who works to increase awareness and knowledge of the perimenopause and **menopause**, and campaigns for better menopause care for all women.



Case Study



What next?
What are your thoughts?
Comments?
Further requirements?