

## 4 Tips for talking about menopause in the workplace



# Navigating menopause at work: Essential advice from Bodyline



Content reviewed February 2024  
By Health Shield's Wellbeing Team

**Menopause is a natural part of life, yet it often remains a silent topic in many workplaces. As part of our commitment to fostering a supportive work environment, we've partnered with Bodyline, renowned experts in menopause advice, to shed some light on this often overlooked subject.**

The menopause transition brings about physical and emotional changes that might impact an individual's ability to perform at their best. Understanding these changes and how to manage them is vital for everyone, regardless of gender or age. That's why we've partnered with Bodyline, a leading authority on menopause advice, to provide you with invaluable insights.

Let's demystify menopause together and ensure you have all the support you need during this natural phase of life.

## Expert Tips from Bodyline

### Know what to expect

The menopause is about more than just a woman's periods stopping. Usually occurring between the ages of 45 and 55 and lasting around 7 years, the average age for a woman to reach menopause in the UK is 51, although symptoms can start in the mid 30s with perimenopause and continue well into the mid 50s. Menopause is reached when a woman hasn't had a period for 12 consecutive months and is no longer able to get pregnant naturally.

The menopause experience can differ greatly between women, with symptoms varying in duration and severity. There are 48 associated physical and psychological symptoms with the more widely known including fatigue, hot flushes, night sweats, difficulty getting to sleep and sleep disruption, headaches, weight gain, brain fog, loss of libido, mood swings and anxiety.

Potentially less commonly recognised symptoms can include itchy skin, cold flushes, sore breasts, muscle and joint pain, loss of bladder control, frequent UTIs, thinning hair, acne, dry eyes, heart palpitations, changes in vision, hearing and taste, burning sensations in the mouth, new allergies, dizziness or vertigo and tingling in the hands and feet.

## Start the conversation

Engaging the entire workforce, regardless of gender or age, is crucial in starting the conversation around menopause in the workplace. By organising meetings and webinars, and recognising events like World Menopause Day, employers can break the ice and create an open and inclusive environment for discussing menopause, ultimately fostering understanding and support among employees.

As a male manager, the more approachable you make yourself and the more knowledgeable you are about menopause symptoms and how they can affect a woman's health and work life, the easier it will be for a female colleague to talk to you about her menopause and for you to identify what kind of support she might need in the workplace. Most people, even in a potentially embarrassing situation, would rather have an issue addressed than ignored.

## Lead by example

Traditionally, menopause is not something that men have felt comfortable talking about, however in a workplace scenario, it's a subject that everybody needs to know about. If a male manager is comfortable openly discussing menopause, then other staff will follow their lead, therefore creating a safe and supportive environment crucial for raising awareness and facilitating understanding.

## Approach the subject as you would any other

It's important to deal with the subject as you would any other sensitive, work-related wellness issue. You don't have to be a menopause specialist, rather your role is to provide the tools and support to help staff with their health and wellbeing at work.

Book a meeting room to ensure privacy and avoid unwanted interruptions, turn your phone off, be calm and empathetic, ask open-ended general questions but encourage the staff member to explain the situation from their perspective, listen to what's being said, don't make assumptions, remain non-judgemental, and foster empathy and understanding by shifting the focus towards the person involved rather than solely on the problem itself.

## Implement a menopause policy

Promoting an open and supportive culture around menopause in the workplace by implementing an inclusive menopause policy - that also includes trans and non-binary staff members - is something that every organisation should be doing to help make the topic more mainstream. This can cover flexible working, menopause leave, guidance and support packages, and alterations to the physical working environment to help manage menopause symptoms.

Making sure that your staff knows that the policy exists, inviting feedback and acting on it will all demonstrate a commitment to a menopause-friendly workplace culture.

At Health Shield, we understand that menopause can be a challenging phase, but with the right resources and support, it doesn't have to affect your work life. Our health cash plan is here to help you manage your symptoms. Offering money back on everyday healthcare costs, our plan covers a range of treatments that can alleviate some of the symptoms associated with menopause.

From optical and dental expenses to mental health resources like the Thrive Mental Wellbeing App, our cash plans are designed to meet your health needs.

**Remember, you can always explore our [FAQs for more information](#) if you would like to learn more about a Health Shield Cash Plan.**

# Make the most of your *my*wellness benefits

Don't miss out on the range of wellbeing services included in your health cash plan - access them easily online to support your health.

[Discover your benefits](#)

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