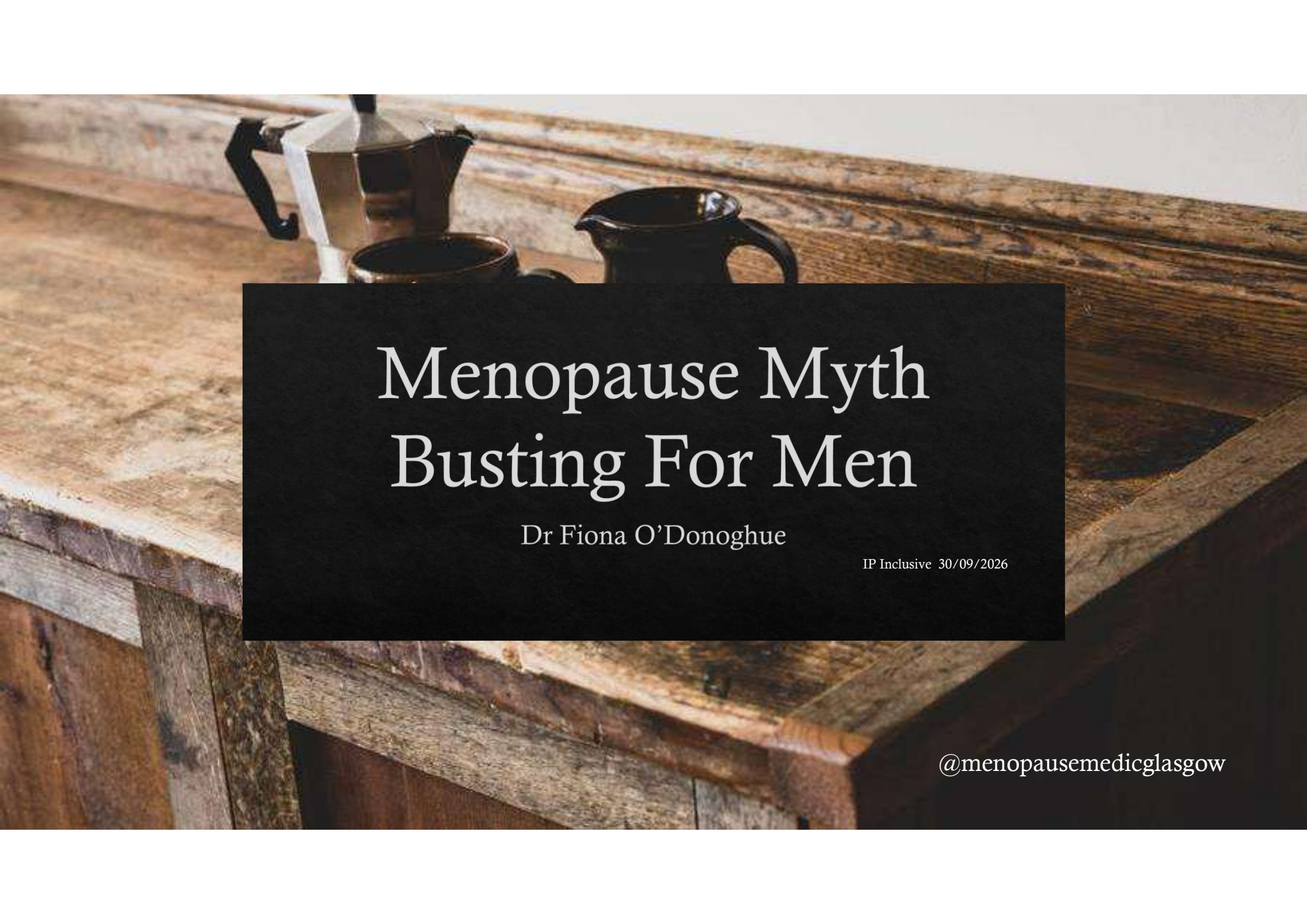


A rustic wooden table with a silver moka pot and two dark mugs. The table is made of thick, weathered wooden planks. The moka pot is on the left, and the mugs are on the right. A black rectangular box is overlaid on the table, containing the title and speaker information.

Menopause Myth Busting For Men

Dr Fiona O'Donoghue

IP Inclusive 30/09/2026

@menopausemedicglasgow



Agenda

- ◆ Why would I want to know about menopause ?
- ◆ What should I Know ?
- ◆ Why does it matter ?
- ◆ Who does it affect ?
- ◆ Busting some myths ?

MENOPAUSE & HRT: WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO BELIEVE?

THE NOISE IS REAL. THE CONFUSION IS REAL.

THE TIMES 8 AUGUST 2026
Brain fog. Anxiety. Insomnia.
Is perimenopause really to blame?
The debate is polarised, the evidence complex and the truth hard to find.

The Guardian 19 JULY 2026
I've heard menopause hormone therapy fixes everything. Should I take it?
From better skin to a stronger heart, is MHT the miracle cure it's claimed to be?

The Guardian 25 MAY 2026
Misinformation about perimenopause on social media 'putting women at risk'
Inappropriate HRT use, misdiagnosis and unsafe advice are all on the rise.

The Economist 17 MAY 2025
The \$600bn menopause opportunity
From apps to pills, big business is moving in.

Daily Mail 12 MARCH 2026
HRT 'significantly increases' risk of breast cancer, study claims
New research reignites fears over the long-term safety of hormone therapy.

The Telegraph 15 FEBRUARY 2026
Why doctors are urging women to think twice before taking HRT
Not right for everyone – and not always the answer.

THE SUNDAY TIMES 23 NOVEMBER 2025
HRT can protect your heart and brain – if you start at the right time
New evidence suggests timing matters more than ever.

Forbes 7 APRIL 2026
Testosterone: The missing hormone?
Is it the key to energy, libido and wellbeing in menopause?

BBC 7 FEBRUARY 2026
The celebrities talking openly about menopause – and why it matters
Awareness is growing. But is the message always right?

New Scientist 1 FEBRUARY 2026
Women given HRT may have higher risk of blood clots
What the data really shows.

Women's Health APRIL 2026
12 ways to feel like yourself again in menopause
Lifestyle fixes that promise results. But do they?

SOCIAL MEDIA IS AMPLIFYING CONFIDENCE, NOT CLARITY

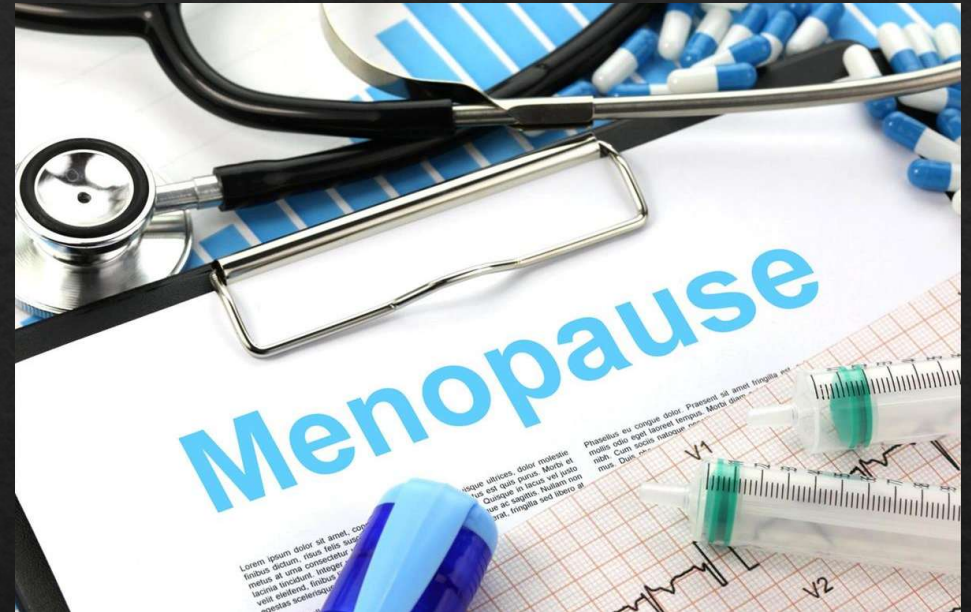
Twitter:
@wellness_warrior 2d
HRT prevents dementia. FACT.
1,234 98
@hormone.balance 3d
Testosterone is the missing hormone. Every woman needs it.
2,876 156
@menopause.mama 5d
HRT will help you lose weight and burn fat.
3,410 201
@holistic.health 6d
Never take HRT. It causes cancer.
1,987 130

No wonder women – and healthcare professionals – are confused.
SO WHAT DOES THE EVIDENCE ACTUALLY TELL US? →

'Davina effect' has changed attitudes to menopause treatment



Fiona O'Donohue



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Media Effects

Anecdotal evidence



WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Global Impact

Workforce Impact

Personal Impact

WATCH: MENOPAUSE EXPLAINED

A short video to watch alongside this session.

Scan the QR code, or search YouTube for the link
below.

youtube.com/watch?v=76CgDBt_WVo



Scan to watch the video

Menopause consequences

Acute symptoms

Bone Health

Cardiovascular Health

Sexual Health

TERMINOLOGY

Perimenopause/menopause

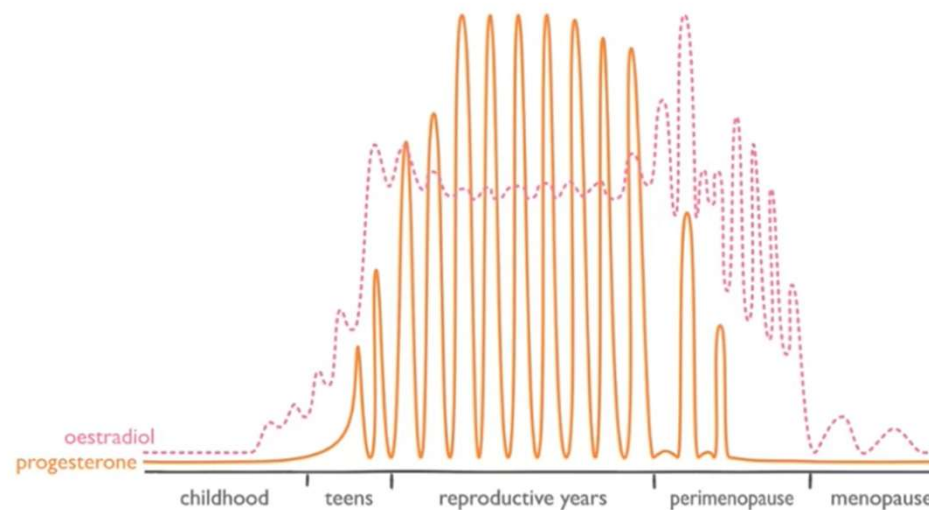
Hot Flashes/Flushes

Brain Fog

My Hormones

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Oestradiol and Progesterone through the lifespan



"First appeared in Lara Briden's book, Hormone Repair Manual. Adapted (with permission) from Prof Jerilynn Prior's 2006 paper "Perimenopause lost -- reframing the end of menstruation."

Menopause Research and Education Fund ©2025



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT ?

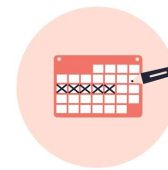
The Work force

Global health

Your colleagues and team

Your family and friends

Symptoms of Menopause



Irregular periods



Vaginal dryness



Hot flashes



Sore or tender
breasts



Chills



Night sweats



Sleep problems



Headaches



Weight gain and
slowed metabolism



Mood changes



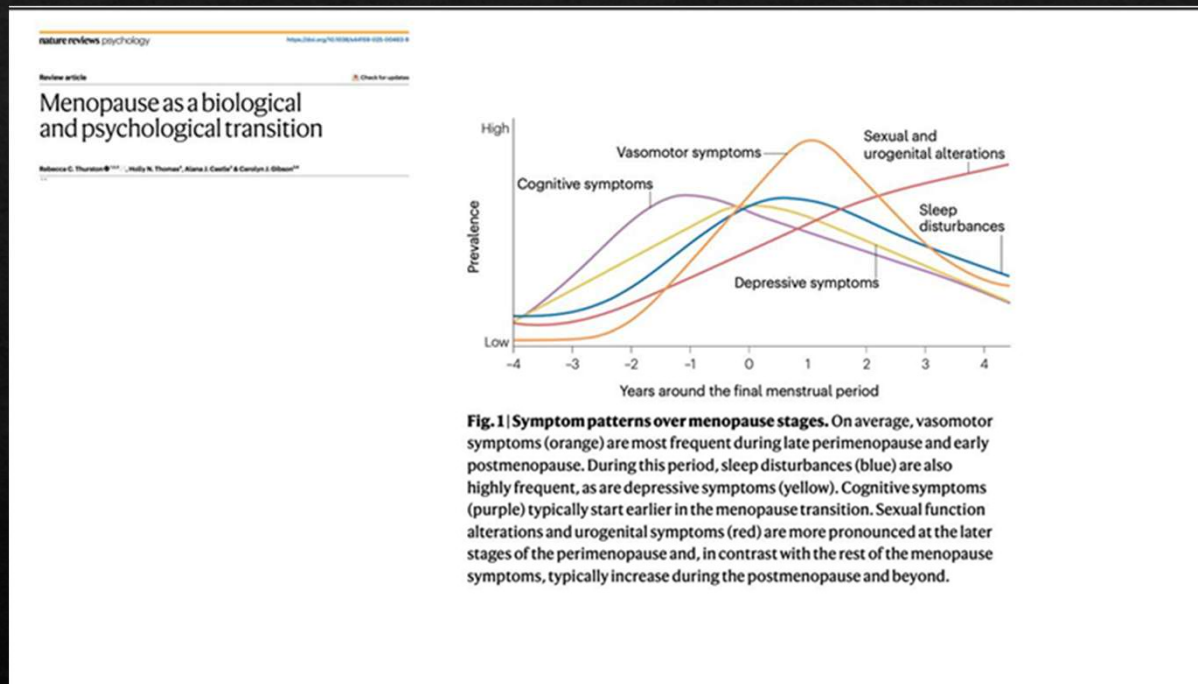
Thinning hair and
dry skin

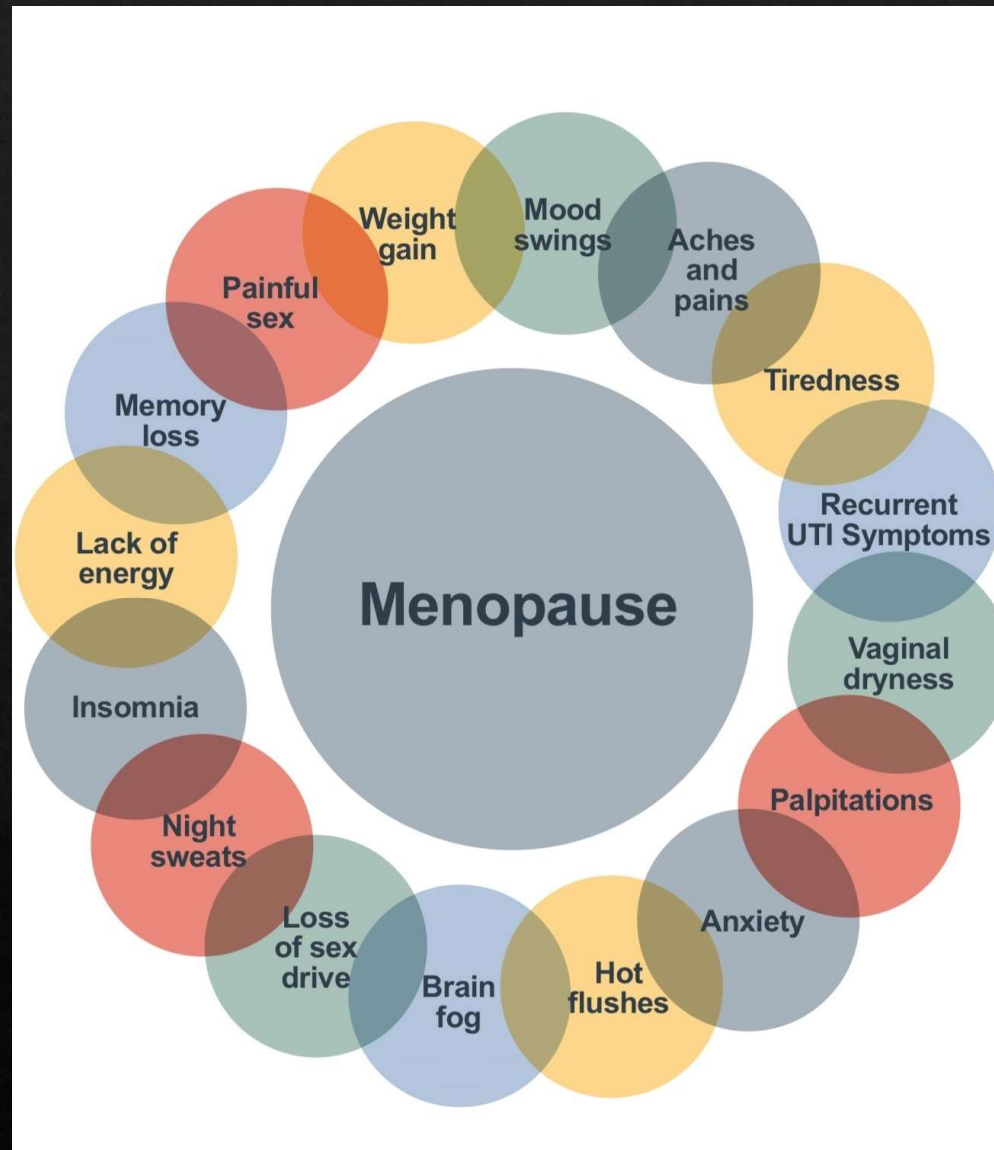


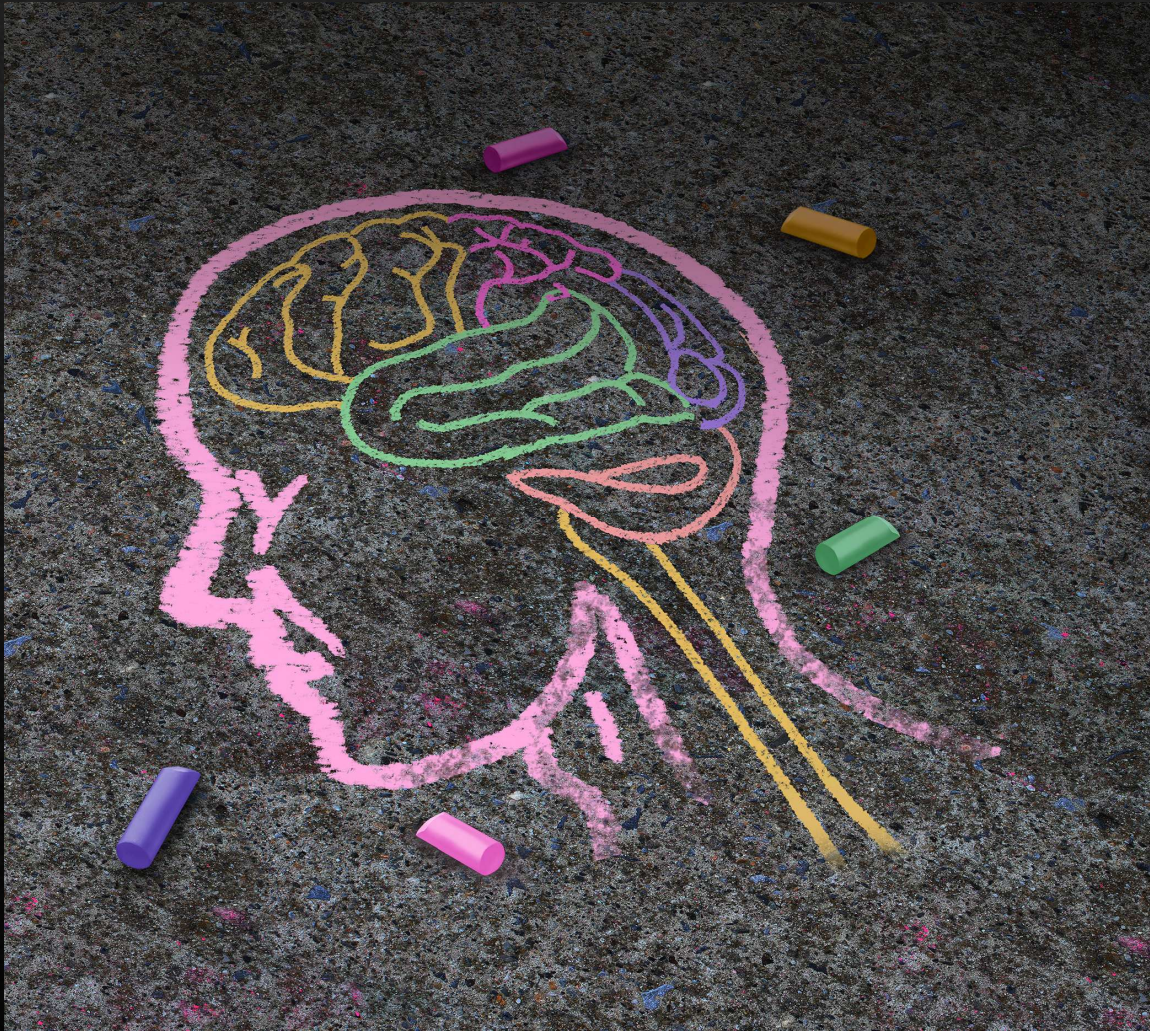
Memory problems

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ORDER OF SYMPTOMS







Google images

ANXIETY

- ◇ LIFESTYLE
- ◇ HRT
- ◇ CBT
- ◇ Anti depressant
- ◇ Combination of all

MEDIA HEADLINES



BRAIN FOG

‘Brain fog’ was recently defined by Gurvich et al⁵ as: Self-reported impairment in one or more cognitive areas (such as memory, attention, organisation, problem solving, word retrieval) in the absence of a significant, objective cognitive decline. Can fluctuate (for example daily or across a menstrual cycle) and cause mild to significant distress and impact on quality of life. Does not result in sustained changes in capacity to perform activities of daily living.

Gurvich C, Spector A, Hickey M. Advances in understanding of cognitive symptoms during menopause. *Lancet Obstet Gynaecology Women's Health*. 2026;2:e335-e345





BRAIN FOG

The most common cognitive symptoms are subjective (or self-reported) symptoms such as:

- losing a train of thought
- word finding difficulties
- loss of immediate focus (what was meant to be done)
- forgetting information
- distraction
- misplacement of items
- difficulties on multitasking

Cardiovascular protection

Window of
opportunity within 10
years of the peri
menopause. HRT is
protective at this stage.



This may not be the
case later in the
postmenopausal
woman



Genitourinary Syndrome of menopause

Urinary Tract Infection

Vaginal Discomfort

Sexual Health Issues

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Key facts and figures

Cultural Nuances

Finding	Key figure / message
UK ethnic diversity	13.8% of the UK population had an ethnic minority background in 2018
Age of menopause	Western populations: ~51 years; Indian women: 46.7 years; Pakistani women: 47.16 years
African & Caribbean women	Mean natural menopause 49.6 years
Vasomotor symptoms	African/Caribbean women have the highest prevalence, longest duration and greater severity
Menopause transition	African/Caribbean women may have a longer transition
South Asian women	Greater burden of metabolic syndrome, insulin resistance, diabetes, central obesity and hypertension during the transition
POI	Prevalence reported in South Asian populations: approximately 1.5%
Knowledge gap	A Pakistani university survey found 78% of women were unaware of menopausal symptoms and their effects on health

MENOPAUSE AND CANCER

Cancer treatment can induce menopause at any age - surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy or hormone-blocking drugs.

Onset is sudden, not gradual, and symptoms are often more severe.

A distinct symptom set, on top of treatment itself.

Long-term implications for bone, heart, urogenital and cognitive health.



Incidence of chronic diseases in relation to a woman's age



Putting It Into Perspective

The power of Oestrogen and the impact of its disappearance

I'M too young for the
menopause !



I'M Too Old For
The Menopause!

My Periods Are
Regular It Can't Be
Menopause!

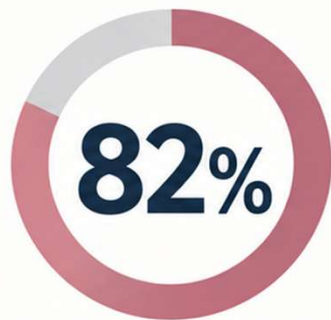
I Can't take HRT!



HRT
CAUSES
WEIGHT
GAIN!

MENOPAUSE IN THE WORKPLACE

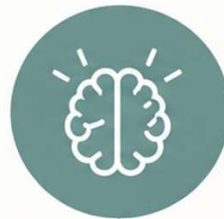
— UNDERSTAND | SUPPORT | UNLOCK POTENTIAL



of women experiencing menopause symptoms say they have at least some impact on their ability to work.

SOURCE: UK GOVERNMENT SURVEY OF EMPLOYEES AND SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS 2024-25

MENOPAUSE SYMPTOMS CAN AFFECT...



61%
Concentration

Less able to concentrate



53%
Stress

Feel more stressed



47%
Confidence

Feel less confident



44%
Relationships

Less patient with others



Reduced productivity

More sick days and difficulty managing workload

HEALTHY PEOPLE | THRIVING WORKPLACES | BRIGHTER FUTURES



Nearly half (42%*) agree that women experiencing menopause face **barriers to career progression and professional recognition.**



*Refers to responses from the general population surveyed in the study.
Menopause Experience & Attitudes Study 2025, fielded in US, Canada, Australia, Germany, Mexico, Brazil.
N=1800 lived experience; 12,000 gen pop.

36% have experienced



some kind of negative impact in the workplace.

Menopause Experience & Attitudes Study 2025, fielded in US, Canada, Australia, Germany, Mexico, Brazil.
N=1800 lived experience; 12,000 gen pop.

Over half (57%) of respondents believe



women are not well supported at work.



10/1/2026

Menopause Experience & Attitudes Study 2025, fielded in US, Canada, Australia, Germany, Mexico, Brazil.
N=1800 lived experience; 12,000 gen pop.

Of people experiencing menopause, approximately



have left their jobs due to menopause symptoms.



Fawcett Society (2022) Menopause and the workplace. London: Fawcett Society.
Available at: <https://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk> (Accessed: 25 July 2025)

Menopause Experience & Attitudes Study 2025, fielded in US, Canada, Australia, Germany, Mexico, Brazil.
N=1800 lived experience; 12,000 gen pop.

The workplace reality: More than just symptoms

The study's findings paint a clear picture of the widespread impact of menopause in the workplace – in fact, one in every dozen women with lived experience of menopause feels they have been discriminated against in their careers because of the menopause¹:

These statistics underscore that the challenges extend far beyond individual symptoms; they touch upon career progression, financial stability, and overall professional well-being. It is also clear that the impact extends beyond the individual, reaching organizations through reduced productivity, increased absenteeism, and the loss of valuable talent.

Sharing experiences is deemed important

Menopause fact file



75% Of women will experience symptoms related to menopause

7 years is the average duration of menopause symptoms



1 in 3 will experience symptoms for 7+ years



Of women will experience severe symptoms

45% Of women say menopause symptoms have negatively impacted them at work

ERSTANDING & NAVIGATING MENOPAUSE: A YES® GUIDE

Stats taken from the British Menopause Society

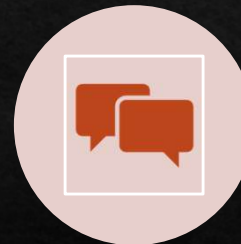
The Menopause Taboo

Makes her feel old

Makes her feel irrelevant

She's hearing the menopause is an excuse

She doesn't understand the treatment options



TALKING ABOUT IT
OPENLY



DIRECTING TO THE
RIGHT RESOURCES

Resources

GOV.UK



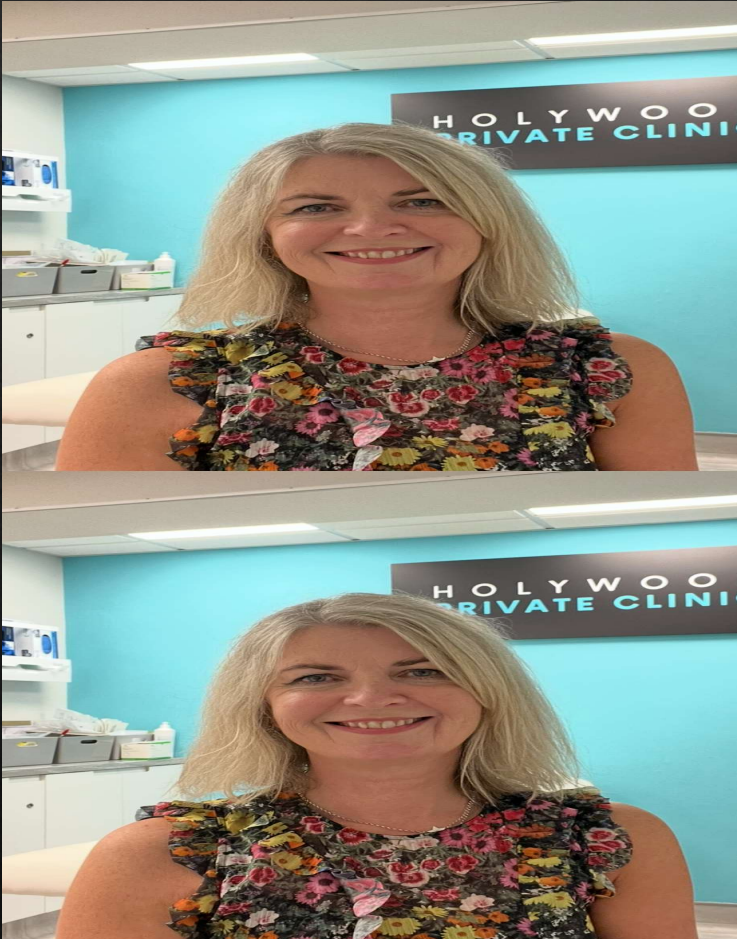
Women's Health Concern



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Thank you

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30/09/2026

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