



UNDERSTANDING MENOPAUSE: HEALTH & WORKPLACE IMPACT

SR. MMAPHUTHI KEKANA

A Life Stage and
Workforce Challenge

LET'S DESTIGMATIZE MENOPAUSE AT THE WORKPLACE

Talk openly: include menopause in health talks, policies and manager training.

Create supportive policies: flexible hours, uniform and temperature adjustments, private rest spaces.

Train managers: confidence to discuss symptoms, agree reasonable adjustments, protect confidentiality.

Normalise support: EAP, counselling, peer/menopause champions and HR support clearly signposted.

Zero tolerance for jokes or discrimination about menopause or ageing.

WHAT IS MENOPAUSE?

Menopause is the permanent cessation of menstruation and fertility in a woman's life.

Clinically, it is diagnosed after 12 straight months with no menstrual period, with no other cause such as pregnancy or illness.

Natural menopause is a normal ageing process, most commonly occurring between 45 and 55 years, with an average around 51–52 years.

As life expectancy increases, many women now spend roughly 30–40% of their lives in the post-menopausal stage

With age, there is progressive depletion of ovarian follicles, which reduces production of estrogen and other ovarian hormones.

The decline in estrogen leads to loss of negative feedback on the hypothalamic–pituitary axis, causing elevated FSH and LH and ultimately permanent cessation of menses

MENOPAUSAL TRANSITION & SYMPTOMS

Perimenopause is the transition, lasting several years before menopause-mid-40s, though some may experience it as early as their mid-30s.

Perimenopause marks a gradual shift in hormone production that influences almost every system in the body., and how you handle pain.

Menopause- 51-52-Menopause is reached when you haven't had a period for 12 consecutive months. Technically, you are in menopause for just 1 day

Post menopause-This stage begins the day after menopause and lasts for the rest of your life.

Pregnancy possible during perimenopause; contraception advised until 12 months without periods

HOW ESTROGEN DECLINE AFFECTS THE BODY & WHAT YOU CAN DO

Body System	Role of Estrogen	What Happens When Estrogen Declines	Common Symptoms	What You Can Do (Pre- & Perimenopause)	Relevant Tests
Cardiovascular (Heart & Vessels)	Keeps blood vessels elastic Improves good cholesterol(HDL) Reduces inflammation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arteries stiffen- increases Higher risk of heart disease LDL ("bad cholesterol") increases Blood pressure rises 	Palpitations, high BP, chest discomfort	Aerobic exercise (brisk walking, cycling) Reduce salt & ultra-processed foods Eat healthy fats (olive oil, avocado, nuts) Monitor BP & cholesterol early • Stop smoking	BP check, Lipid profile, ECG
Skeletal (Bones & Joints)	Maintains bone density	Bone loss accelerates → osteoporosis	Back pain, fractures, joint pain	Weight-bearing exercise • Calcium & Vitamin D • Early bone screening	DEXA scan, Vitamin D
Muscular	Maintains muscle mass & Supports strength and recovery	Muscle loss and fatigue	Weakness, slower recovery	Resistance training • Adequate protein intake	Muscle strength assessment
Nervous System (Brain)	Memory & concentration Serotonin (mood regulation)	Brain fog, mood changes	Forgetfulness, anxiety, irritability	Mental stimulation • Stress reduction • Good sleep hygiene	Cognitive screening, B12
Endocrine (Hormonal balance)	Regulates temperature & metabolism	Hormonal instability	Hot flashes, night sweats	Layered clothing • Avoid triggers (spicy food, caffeine) • Discuss HRT if severe	FSH, LH, Estradiol

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Reproductive	Maintains vaginal tissue & lubrication	Vaginal thinning & dryness	Painful intercourse, low libido	Vaginal moisturisers • Pelvic floor exercises • Open conversations	Pelvic exam, Pap smear
Urinary System	Maintains urethral tone	Weak bladder support	Urgency, leakage, UTIs	Pelvic floor exercises • Hydration • Prompt UTI treatment	Urinalysis
Digestive System	Affects gut motility	Slower digestion	Bloating, constipation, weight gain	High-fiber diet • Regular meals • Physical activity	HbA1c, LFTs
Respiratory	Influences airway tone indirectly	Increased sleep disturbances	Snoring, fatigue	Weight management • Sleep assessment	Sleep study
Integumentary (Skin, Hair, Nails)	Produces collagen & skin hydration	Thinner, drier skin & hair loss	Wrinkles, brittle nails	Hydration • Sunscreen • Iron & protein intake	Iron studies, Vit D

MENOPAUSE IN THE WORKFORCE

Over 1 billion menopausal women globally; menopause affects 1 in 5 working women

Women aged 45-55 are a fast-growing workforce segment

Symptoms impact productivity, mental health, confidence, career progression

WORKPLACE IMPACT STATISTICS

61% lost motivation,

52% drop in confidence,

69% anxiety/depression

26% take time off;

10% leave jobs due to symptoms;

14% reduce working hours

Global economic loss exceeds \$150 billion yearly

BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES AT WORK

80% report inadequate workplace support

Stigma and lack of education lead to silence and misdiagnosis of symptoms

Need for better inclusion in health policies and workplace accommodations

BUILDING SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACES

Inclusive policies with menopause-specific guidelines and paid leave

Training managers and senior leaders to recognize and support menopause

Practical adjustments: flexible hours, workplace environment changes, health check-ups

THE IMPORTANCE OF AWARENESS & EDUCATION

Normalize conversations to reduce stigma

Educate both employees and employers about menopause

Promote sexual and overall health awareness during transition

CONCLUSION & CALL TO ACTION

Menopause is a natural life stage with major health and workplace implications

Supporting menopausal women benefits individuals, organizations, and society

Foster open dialogue, inclusive policies, and health-positive cultures

Key Preventive Message - Menopause symptoms don't start at menopause — they often start years before
Early lifestyle changes can significantly reduce severity later.

Top 6 Things to Start Early

- Move your body – especially strength training
- Eat for hormones – protein, fiber, healthy fats
- Protect sleep – it regulates hormones
- Manage stress – cortisol worsens symptoms
- Know your numbers – BP, cholesterol, bone density
- Seek care early – don't “push through” symptoms

THANK YOU