

View this article online at: patient.info/news-and-features/how-to-support-someone-during-the-menopause

How to support someone during the menopause

From hot flushes to night sweats and mood swings, the menopause can be a very challenging time. But many people close to the person going through the menopause do not know how best to support them. Here we look at what you can do to help a partner, friend or relative cope with the menopause.

Menopause is when your periods stop due to lower hormone levels. This usually happens between the ages of 45 and 55, although it can happen earlier. Perimenopause is when you have symptoms before your **periods** stop.

Menopause and **perimenopause** can cause a variety of mental and emotional symptoms, like mood swings, **anxiety**, **low self-esteem** and problems with memory or concentration (**brain fog**). Common physical symptoms include hot flushes, difficulty **sleeping**, palpitations, headaches, migraines, aches and pains, dry skin, reduced **sex drive**, vaginal dryness, and urinary tract infections (UTIs).

Although three quarters of women experience some or all of these symptoms¹ – and one quarter say they are severe – research suggests many partners don't know how best to support them².

Jane, 57, says she felt uncomfortable working in an office environment when she went through the menopause as she struggled with hot flushes, but didn't feel like she could speak to her manager about it. She also felt exhausted as she couldn't sleep, which made work and socialising more difficult.

"I felt like I just wanted to hide at home, where I could open the windows and relax without worrying about what people were thinking," she says. "When I finally chatted to friends about my symptoms, I realised I wasn't the only one struggling – and it really helped me. I felt like I didn't have to cover up what I was going through."

Holli Rubin, a psychotherapist who is head of multi-disciplinary therapies at private mental health clinic [The Soke](#), says the symptoms can have a significant impact on your life, including your relationships and work.

"The psychological impacts of those symptoms often affect [confidence](#), self-esteem and whether women feel able to show up at work or to social events," she says. However, the right support – and interventions to ease symptoms – can make a big difference.

What you can do to support a partner, friend or relative as they go through the menopause?

Provide a safe space for them to talk

Despite the majority of women experiencing symptoms of [menopause](#), many feel unable to talk about their experiences due to stigma or embarrassment, so they struggle in silence³.

"In order to best support women going through the menopause, it's important to start conversations and provide a space to talk," says Rubin. Although talking about night sweats and hot flushes won't stop them from happening, sharing a problem with someone you trust can often lessen its emotional impact.

"It's also important to check in regularly to see how they are and what further support they need," she adds.

Help with everyday tasks

Some symptoms, such as memory issues or brain fog, can make day-to-day tasks more difficult. "Offering to carry out basic tasks, such as preparing food or doing household chores, can give someone more time to rest and provide much-needed breaks from their regular daily responsibilities," says Rubin.

Help them make lifestyle adjustments

[Exercise](#) and good nutrition can help to ease menopause symptoms and improve mood. You can support your loved one in making healthy changes by doing it together. It can be daunting to join a gym, but joining your partner or friend for an [exercise](#) class can make it more fun for the both of you.

You could try stress-relieving activities such as [yoga](#) or [meditation](#), or go on regular walks together.

Make practical changes

If your partner is struggling with hot flushes or [night sweats](#), putting a fan in the bedroom may help keep them more comfortable. It may help to suggest other small changes, like swapping to thinner bed sheets, turning down the thermostat or opening the windows at night.

Be reassuring and understanding

Menopause marks the end of [menstruation](#) and fertility, which can be psychologically difficult to accept. As hormone levels decrease, your partner's sex drive may drop and their body may change shape. These changes can be difficult to cope with and trigger negative emotions, so support your partner by giving them compliments and reassurance. Be understanding if they are less interested in [sex](#), or are struggling emotionally.

Help them find professional support

It can be hard to know who to turn to for advice and support when you're experiencing symptoms of the [menopause](#). Encourage your partner or friend to see their GP to find out information about treatments such as [Hormone Replacement Therapy](#), which can help with menopausal symptoms. Offer to go with them to an appointment if they think it will help.

There are also menopause specialists who have experience in supporting anyone going through perimenopause and menopause. Charities offering information and support include [Women's Health Concern](#) and [Menopause Matters](#).

The [Daisy Network](#) provides support for people going through [early menopause](#) and [Queermenopause](#) provides resources for people who identify as LGBTQ+.

Further reading

1. [British Menopause Society: The British Menopause Society response to the Department of Health and Social Care's call for evidence to help inform the development of the government's Women's Health Strategy.](#)
2. [Forth: Menopause and the silent sufferer survey 2021.](#)
3. [Fawcett Society: Menopausal women let down by employers and healthcare providers.](#)

Disclaimer: This article is for information only and should not be used for the diagnosis or treatment of medical conditions. Egton Medical Information Systems Limited has used all reasonable care in compiling the information but makes no warranty as to its accuracy. Consult a doctor or other healthcare professional for diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions. For details see our [conditions](#).

Authored by: Lydia Smith	Peer Reviewed by: Dr Krishna Vakharia, MRCGP	
Originally Published: 24/02/2024	Next review date: 26/01/2024	Document ID: doc_32411

View this article online at: patient.info/news-and-features/how-to-support-someone-during-the-menopause

Discuss How to support someone during the menopause and find more trusted resources at [Patient](#).



To find out more visit www.patientaccess.com
or download the app



Follow us

