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**How to…. support a member of staff during the menopause**

Women experience the menopause in a multitude of ways. Some women do not need any assistance with the menopause and require no medical intervention. Some women have much more severe symptoms and require medical treatment. Each situation is different and there is no standard approach to supporting women at work.

As with any longstanding health-related condition, sympathetic and appropriate support from managers is crucial in order to provide members of staff with the support that they need.

Some women may require minor adjustments to support them. Consider:

* Flexibility working arrangements for those experience debilitating symptoms. For example, where the role permits, allowing employees to work around their symptoms, perhaps by allowing employees to rest when they are tired and make the time up later, or permitting occasional homeworking when symptoms are severe. Some women experiencing the menopause will find that they have times of the day where symptoms are more or less problematic and start and finish times could be adjusted to take this into account. For example, women with disturbed sleep patterns may find they are more productive with a later start time.
* Flexibility around the taking of breaks, or increased breaks during the working day.
* Flexibility around attending relevant medical appointments.
* Changing/ washing facilities for women to change clothes during the working day.
* Where uniforms are provided, consider if natural fibres where possible, and provide additional uniforms to ensure it is possible to change during the day.
* Facilitating a more comfortable working environment, taking into account temperature and lighting, to help women manage their body temperature. Make desk fans easily available and consider if ventilation is sufficient or can be improved.

Above all, listen and respond sympathetically to requests for support and adjustments. Take advice from HR if required. Recognise that some women may not want to discuss the menopause. Any conversations should be kept strictly confidential.