

# Menopause

Information for the public

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[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

## Menopause: the care you should expect

Menopause is a life transition that all people who have or have had periods go through. It can happen as part of aging, usually between the ages of 45 to 55, but sometimes earlier. It can also happen because of surgery to remove the ovaries (oophorectomy), cancer treatments like chemotherapy or radiotherapy, an inherited condition, or an unknown reason.

It is the time when your body stops producing eggs. It is also the time you stop having your periods if they have not stopped earlier because of contraception or surgery.

Your periods may become heavy or irregular before they stop. You may also have other symptoms, such as hot flushes. Symptoms can last for anything from several years to a few months and change over time. They can continue for some time after the menopause. They can also vary from being barely noticeable to strongly affecting your everyday life. It's different for everyone. There are different treatment options for menopause symptoms. For more information on symptoms and treatment, see [menopause, on the NHS website](#).

We want this guideline to make a difference by making sure that:

- Menopause or the time leading up to it is identified by healthcare professionals as early as possible, so that you get the support you need.
- Your healthcare professional discusses all the treatment options with you. They explain the benefits and risks of different options so you can work out together what might suit you best and balance treating your symptoms with any risks, taking into account your age, medical history, needs and preferences.

## Making decisions together

Decisions about treatment and care are best when they are made together. Your healthcare professionals should give you clear information, talk with you about your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns.

To help you make decisions, ask them, discuss and think about:

- What matters most to you – what do you want to get out of any treatment or therapy?
- What are the treatment options, and their benefits and risks for you?
- Do the benefits and risks of any treatment option change over time?
- What are you most worried about – are there risks or downsides to any treatment or therapy option that worry you more than others?
- How will the treatment affect your day-to-day life?
- What is likely to happen if you don't want to have treatment?

If you need more support to understand the information you are given, tell your healthcare professional.

Read more about [making decisions about your care](#).

## Where can I find out more?

The organisations below can give you more advice and support.

- [Menopause Mandate, biggs@intuitiveevents.co.uk](mailto:biggs@intuitiveevents.co.uk)
- [Menopause Matters, info@menopausematters.co.uk](mailto:info@menopausematters.co.uk)
- [The Menopause Charity, info@themenopausecharity.org](mailto:info@themenopausecharity.org)
- [Women's Health Concern, 01628 890199](tel:01628890199) or [admin@bms-whc.org.uk](mailto:admin@bms-whc.org.uk)
- [The Daisy Network, info@daisynetwork.org.uk](mailto:info@daisynetwork.org.uk)

You can also find information about people's experience of menopause on [healthtalk](#).

NICE is not responsible for the content of these websites.

To share an experience of care you have received, contact your local [Healthwatch](#).

We wrote this guideline with people who have been affected by menopause and staff who treat and support them. All the decisions are based on the best research available.

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