

Supporting Your Partner Through Menopause

“One day your wife wakes up and appears to have lost the plot and you’ve no idea why!”

What is Menopause?

Menopause marks the end of a woman's reproductive years and comes with major hormonal shifts. These changes can deeply affect physical health, emotions, brain function, and relationships. Hormones—oestrogen, progesterone, and testosterone—fluctuate and decline, triggering a wide range of symptoms. Symptoms that your partner doesn't have control over and can take her by surprise. Your patience and compassion can make all the difference.

Stages of Menopause

Perimenopause is the lead-up, when hormones start to fluctuate. This may begin in the late 30's or early 40's and symptoms can fluctuate wildly.

Menopause is defined as just one day—12 months after the last period—usually in a women's 50's.

Postmenopause is everything after that 12-month mark. Symptoms may ease, but for some people, some symptoms may continue.

Common Symptoms to Look Out for

Mood swings, anxiety, depression, loss of joy

Sleep issues such as insomnia, frequent waking and fatigue

Brain fog and forgetfulness

Hot flushes or night sweats

Changes in libido (possibly high or low), discomfort during intimacy

Emotional overwhelm, low confidence, loss of motivation, low self-esteem

Changes to periods

Be aware these are just some of the common symptoms and there are many more that your partner may experience. Every woman will experience things differently.

Things to Avoid

Don't dismiss symptoms as 'just hormones'

Avoid menopause jokes or comparisons to others

Try not to pressure her about sex

DO NOT suggest she should 'snap out of it'

What Can I do to Help?

“What I really wanted and needed was someone to be my ‘ride or die.’ Supporting, reassuring and advocating for me.”

Learn About it

Understanding what she’s going through helps, even if you’ll never fully grasp how it feels. Many women feel lost or isolated during this time; your love and support are vital. Research from knowledgeable sources is a great way to help you stay informed.

Ask her What she Needs

When she’s struggling emotionally or physically, guessing won’t help. No one’s a mind reader, just ask, gently, how you can help or if there is anything she needs. Keep in mind she may not always know herself.

Encourage Support

Discuss seeking support and offer to attend any appointments with her. For some women, symptoms such as fatigue and brain fog can make it hard to remember and articulate how they are feeling. Being there to advocate can help her get the support she deserves.

Be Flexible

Menopause often brings fatigue, social anxiety and confidence issues. She may prefer staying home over going out. She may struggle in some environments whilst out. Try to respect that and show empathy, support and understanding.

Ease the Pressure

It’s a confusing time for both of you. Asking “When will this end?” isn’t helpful. Symptoms can last around 4–10 years but vary widely. Your support—be it a hug, a hot drink, chocolate, household chores or running a bath—can mean everything.

Pause Before you Respond

Hormonal shifts can affect brain chemistry, as can fatigue, sometimes leading to harsh words and conflicts. Try your best to pause, breathe, and walk away if needed. Breathing space can ease the tension and allow the moment to pass.

Communicate

Many women wish they’d understood menopause sooner so they were able to talk to their partners and seek help. It’s not just a woman’s thing—it affects both of you. Staying open and talking it through can help you both.

Show you Love her

Body image issues often arise during menopause, due to loss of confidence and changing body shapes. If she avoids being seen naked or covers up, it’s likely due to low self-esteem. Reassurance and affection go a long way.

Address Intimacy

Sex can become complicated. Falling hormone levels affect libido and may cause painful dryness. Many women avoid intimacy to avoid talking about it. Both partners may feel rejected or sad. Open, gentle conversation is crucial to avoid growing apart.

Menopause can test a relationship, but with knowledge, empathy and support, it can also bring you closer. Being kind, being open to learn and being present, is what she needs most right now. Women with supportive partners often cope better, feel less alone, and maintain stronger, healthier relationships.