

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR AND QUESTIONS TO ASK?

Menopause symptoms can affect each woman differently.

You may experience physical and emotional changes during perimenopause or menopause, which can impact your quality of life. If you find you are unable to attend work or feel unwell, it is important to make an appointment with your GP or gynaecologist. Your doctor can provide helpful advice and options to manage your symptoms and improve your long-term health.

Allow time for your appointment:

When booking your doctor's appointment, it is a good idea to mention menopause so that enough time is allocated to discuss your symptoms and address any questions you may have.

Prepare for your appointment:

Make a list of your symptoms. The menopause symptoms check list can help you document these and provide useful information for your doctor.

Document changes to your period:

Provide a menstrual diary, including the frequency of your periods, blood flow, and the date of your last menstrual period.

Make a list of medications, vitamins, and herbal supplements:

Provide the doses and how often you take them. If you are taking herbal supplements and are not sure what the ingredients are, it can be useful to bring the packaging to your appointment.

Bring a notebook and pen:

Ideal for taking notes during your consultation.

Prepare a list of key questions that you wish to ask your doctor. Questions you may like to ask are:

- How is menopause diagnosed?
- How long does menopause last?
- What are the pros and cons of taking MHT (menopausal hormone therapy)?
- What are the alternatives to MHT?
- Do I need contraception?
- Do you recommend any lifestyle changes to help with symptoms or to improve my long-term health?
- Do you recommend any websites, or have any written information?

QUESTIONS YOUR DOCTOR MAY ASK AT YOUR APPOINTMENT:

- Date of the last period.
- Personal or family history of breast cancer, heart disease, or venous thromboembolism (e.g. blood clots in the legs).
- Date of cervical screening test (CST), mammogram, and colonoscopy.
- Current medications.

It's important to find a doctor who you feel comfortable with, and who has experience in managing menopause. If you are not happy, do not hesitate to seek a second opinion or find a doctor who suits you better.