



## Getting Ready to Visit your Doctor

A Simple Guide to getting the most out of your appointment with your Healthcare Practitioner

### **Step 1: Complete the MEG Symptom Checker**

It's a good idea to have a look at the Symptom Checker and tick off any that you're experiencing.

This will save you a tremendous amount of time during your consultation, as you'll be able to show your health practitioner the list of common menopause symptoms and get across just how many you are suffering from. Often we forget some of the things we want to say when we're under pressure, so this is a great way of having all the information at your fingertips.

It's also reassuring to know that these symptoms are experienced by lots of women, so you're not alone.

### **Step 2: Prepare for your appointment**

When you make the appointment, you can ask if there's a health practitioner specialising in women's health rather than a general practitioner. Though it's worth remembering that even gynecologists' are often lacking knowledge around hormonal health.

Outside of the medical container, you can even look up coaches and therapists who specialise in menopausal women.

Remember that choosing a healthcare practitioner is a personal decision for every woman. The important thing is that you feel comfortable with the person so that you can entrust them with your experience and concerns.

# Menopause<sup>®</sup> Experts

Consider asking the following questions before choosing your doctor or healthcare practitioner:

Has she proactively discussed menopause with you before?

Does she have experience with menopause and can she provide the information you need?

Are you happy with how she is discussing this transitional period with you?

## **Step 3: What to expect when you're starting HRT**

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is one solution to managing difficult or unpleasant symptoms.

If you're prescribed HRT, it can take a few weeks before you start feeling any benefits and up to 3 months for the full effect. Your body needs time to adjust to the new medication and you should always have a follow-up appointment to see how you're getting on with it. Sometimes the dose needs tweaking as it's not a one-size-fits-all and it can take time to get the balance right.

It's worth remembering that the menopause experience is highly individualised. What you're going through might be different from the experience of other women, even if you're both going through menopause at the same time.

Medical treatment and management vary based on symptoms and should be tailored precisely for you — your age, health history, risks, expectations and concerns.

While HRT is often the first thing we think of to help with the menopause, it's worth keeping in mind there is a whole list of alternative treatments that can help you as well. On top of that, good nutrition, exercise and relaxation go a long way to soothing the way we feel and should not be overlooked when we're looking around for, he

# MENOPAUSE SYMPTOM CHECKER

Recording your symptoms is a good way to understand the changes that are happening to you and can help with a diagnosis of perimenopause / menopause when discussing this with your GP

HERE'S A LIST OF COMMON SYMPTOMS	YES	NO
Hot flushes / Night sweats		
Brain fog & forgetfulness		
Anxiety & depression		
Changes to hair & skin		
Vaginal atrophy, painful sex		
Low libido, lack of desire		

OTHER SYMPTOMS YOU MAY EXPERIENCE	YES	NO
Low mood		
Mood swings		
Crying spells		
Loss of confidence		
Poor concentration		
Poor memory		
Loss of joy		
Reduced self esteem		
Irritability		
Palpitations		
Difficulty sleeping		
Tired / Lacking energy		
Headaches		
Painful / Aching joints		
Changes to periods		
Urinary symptoms		
Feeling dizzy / Faint		
Dry eyes / Ears		
Oral health changes		
Thinning hair		
Dry / Itchy skin		
Tinnitus		
Restless legs		
Change to body odour		
Increased allergies		
Digestive issues		