



Early Intervention Service

# **An Introduction to Menopause and Psychosis**

# Introduction

Menopause is part of the female reproductive cycle; it is caused by the lowering of oestrogen levels in the body which lead to menstruation (periods) stopping.

Oestrogen has many functions within the body and this lowering can lead to mental and physical changes.

This usually occurs between 45 and 55 but some people this could happen earlier or later.

Symptoms can have a massive impact on your life in all areas.

This can include relationships, family, work, and social life. These symptoms can often start before menopause in a phase called the perimenopause.

## What are the symptoms?

Physical Symptoms: Often periods will become irregular in the perimenopause phase, but this isn't true for everyone.

The most common symptoms are hot flushes in areas of your body such as your face, neck and chest and night sweats.

Other symptoms may include, but are not limited to sleep disturbance, low libido (sexual drive), palpitations (a quickness

of the heartbeat) headaches/migraines, muscular and or joint pain, skin changes, vaginal dryness and urinary symptoms.

## **Mental Health Symptoms:**

Something that professionals are discovering more about are the effects menopause and perimenopause have on a person's mental health.

This may include low mood, low energy, increased anxiety or impaired memory/concentration ('brain fog').

Some people have reported onset of mental health conditions including psychosis and perimenopause may worsen already existing mental health conditions, including psychosis.

Some well-known symptoms of menopause, however this list is not exhaustive.

## Symptoms of Menopause



## Treatments for Menopause

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is the first line and most common treatment used. Oestrogen is the main component of HRT, combined with a progestogen.

This can be delivered orally through tablet, or through the skin with patches, sprays and gels.

This has been shown to be a very effective treatment, as with all medications there are possible side effects which a medic can explain if this is a route you are considering.

Other treatments can be used or alongside of HRT.

## Lifestyle factors:

Exercise and diet changes, reduction of alcohol intake, reduction in smoking, relaxation techniques including things such as yoga and meditation.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy is a form of talking therapy and can help with some of the symptoms of menopause.

These can be used alongside mental health medications. For more information please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk> › conditions › menopause.

Recovery is possible in psychosis; and some people may only have one episode.

Other people may need ongoing support. There is on-going research looking at the link between hormones and mental health to understand more about this topic.

### **Contact details for EIS Services:**

Oxfordshire: 01865 902 724

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# Accessibility

An accessible version of this leaflet can be found on our website: [www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/leaflets](http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/leaflets)

## Get in touch

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## Feedback

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides advice and support to patients, families, and carers, helping to resolve any problems, concerns, or complaints you may have.

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