Menopause and mental health

mind Solent

Join an upcoming session

- Men’s Mental Health & Wellbeing
  - Thu, 12 November
    1pm – 2pm

- Mental Health & Wellbeing Overview
  - Thu, 25 February
    1pm – 2pm

- Taking Control of Your Mental Health
  - Thu, 29 April
    1pm – 2pm



Welcome! Your trainer is … Kelly

A safe space

- Take time out if you need to: keep yourself safe
- No recording - audio or visual
- We are not clinical staff - nothing here replaces information from a GP or medical professional

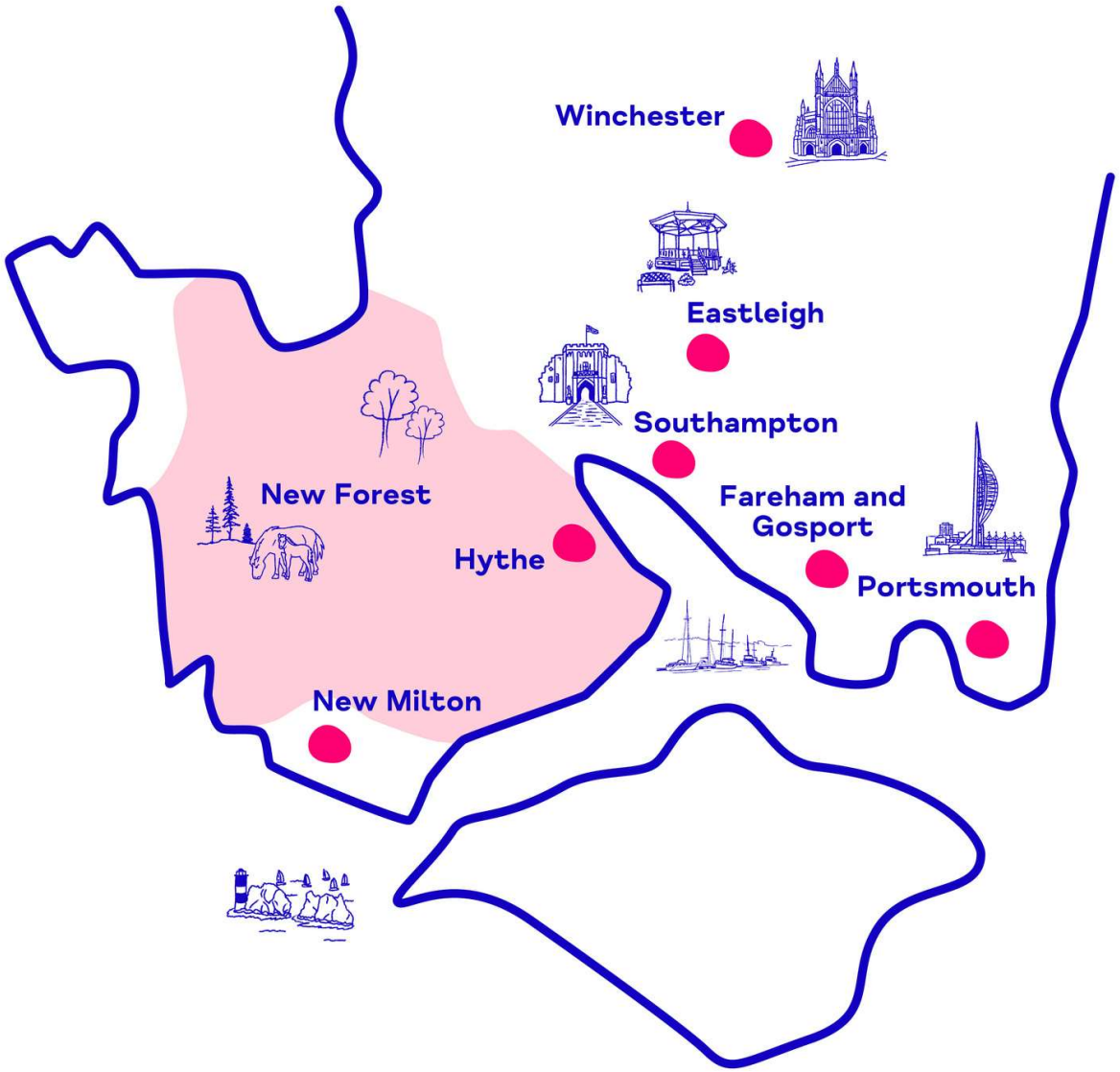
mind Solent

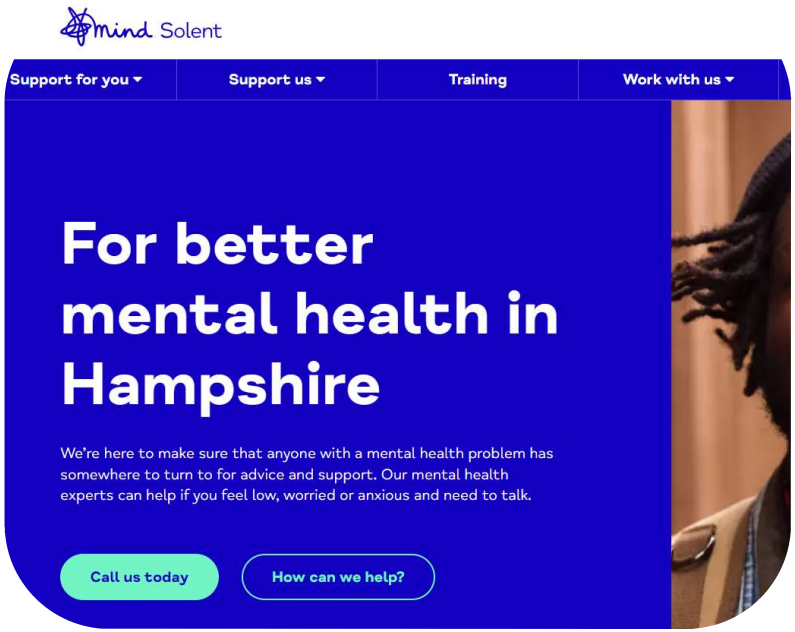
We are Solent Mind

We’re here to make sure that anyone with a mental health problem has somewhere to turn to for advice and support.



Our services





Support and resources for you

NHS Talking Therapies

NHS services designed to offer short-term psychological therapies.

You can refer yourself without seeing your GP, simply visit the link below to find details of your local service.

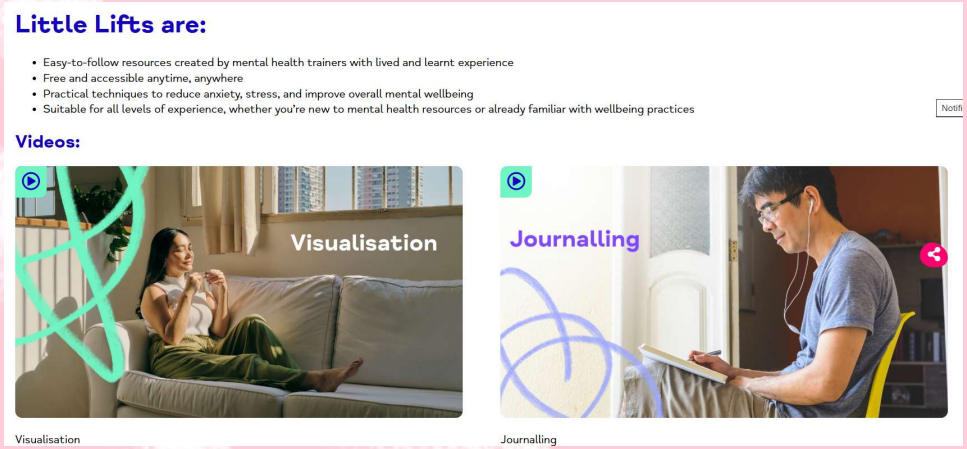
Find details of your local service online

NHS 111

Call 111 and select the ‘mental health’ option for crisis support

Little Lifts

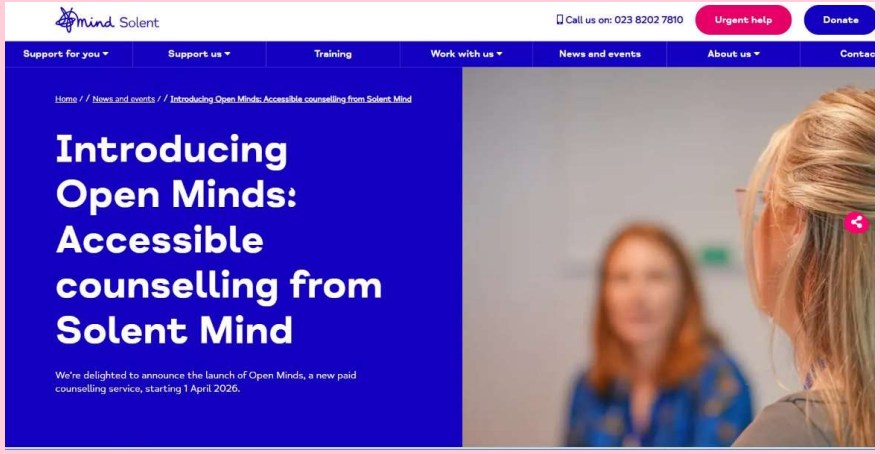
Free mental health resources by Solent Mind; designed to help boost wellbeing



Little Lifts – free mental health resources by Solent Mind's Workplace Wellbeing Training team

Open Minds

Accessible, paid counselling service from Solent Mind



Introducing Open Minds: Accessible counselling from Solent Mind

Session overview



- What is the menopause?
- What is its impact?
- What should we know?
- Making a difference
  - At work
  - For individuals
  - For supporters
- Self care
- Next steps
- Resources



The menopause can affect every part of life and for some it's hard to manage. They should feel they can approach their managers and ask for adjustments in the workplace if needed, to help them cope.



Helen, Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner

Menopause

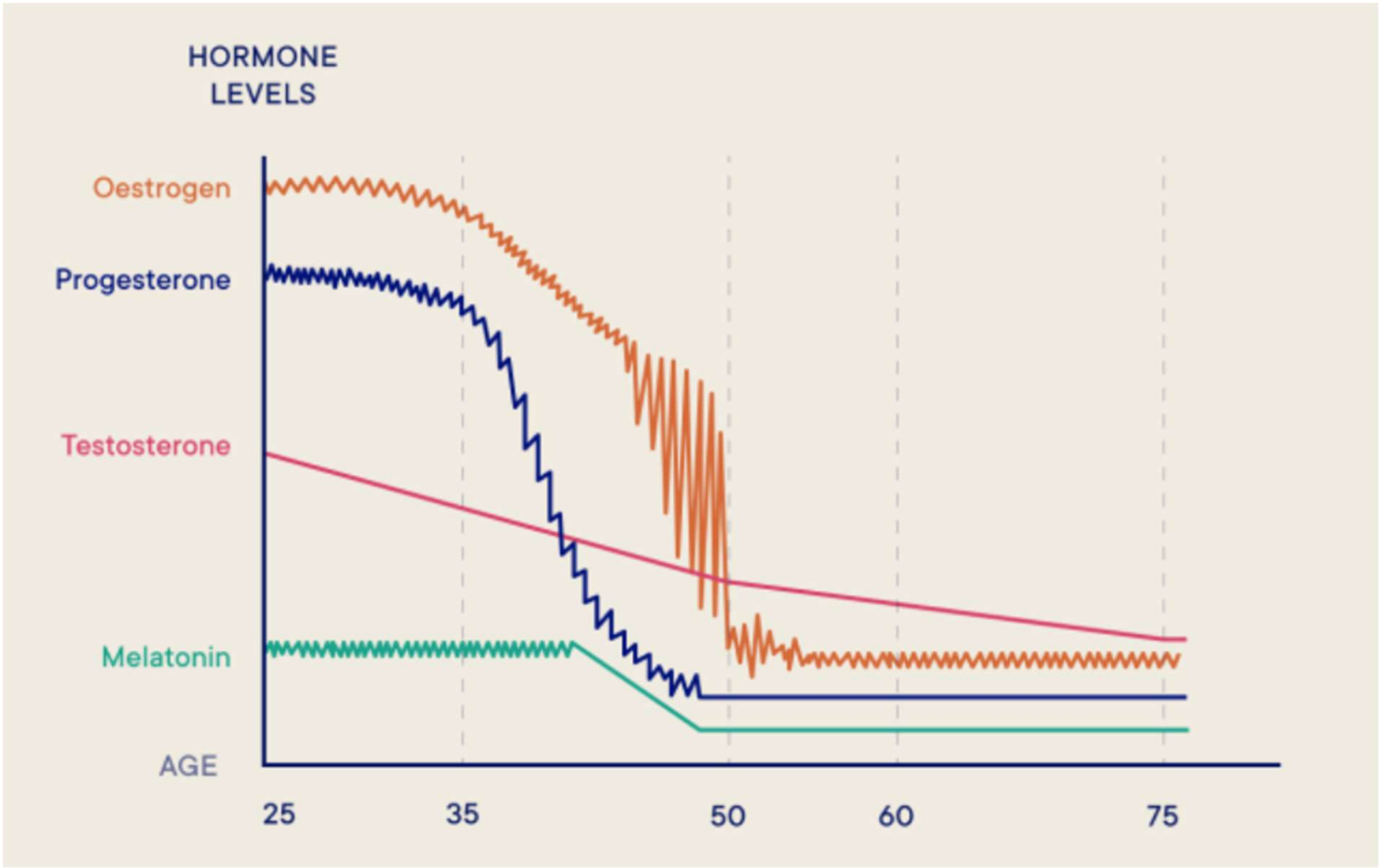
A point in time. The end of reproductive years.
From the Greek word pausis (pause) and mēn (month)

Perimenopause

‘Around menopause’. The time during which the body makes the natural transition to menopause. Hormones start to fluctuate

75% of women will experience symptoms during perimenopause

Hormones and the menopause



Why is this a workplace issue?

- The workforce is losing valuable experienced workers
- Women are having to reduce working hours to cope with symptoms
- Women are losing out on opportunities
- Potential to be discriminatory to not support women and trans men through this change.
- As we have to work until we are older, this is an issue we cannot afford to ignore.



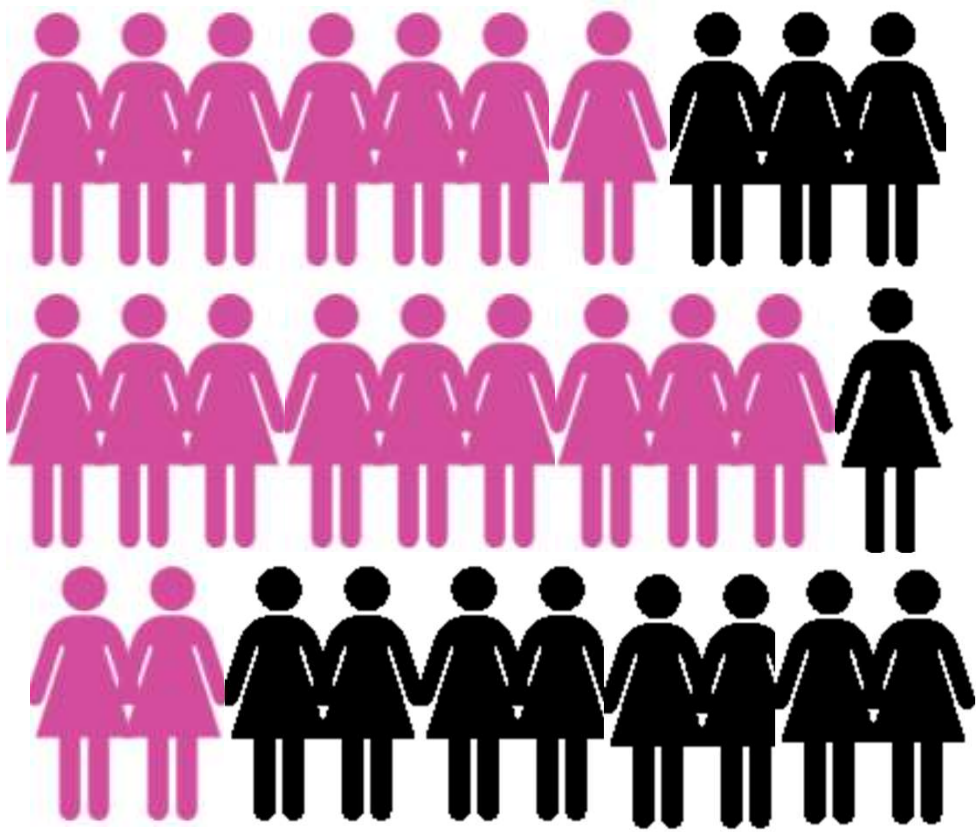
How comfortable are you . . .

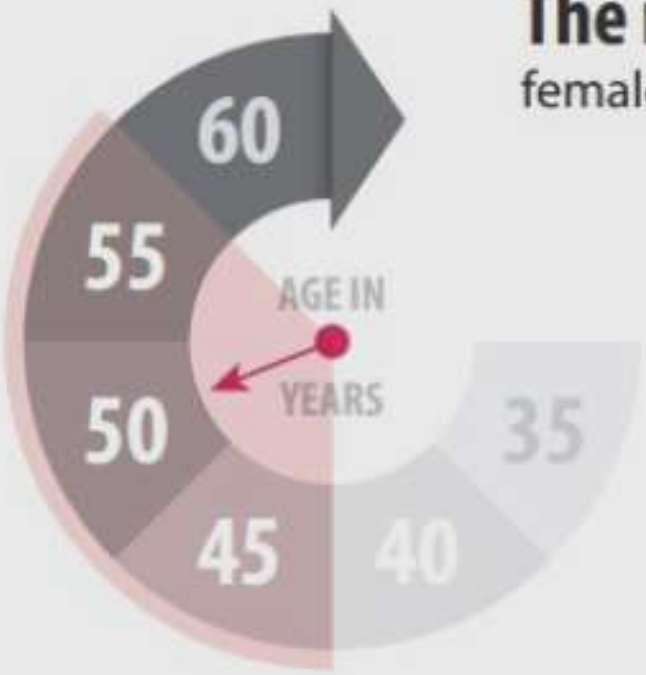
Absolutely, I'd talk about it.

I probably would if it had an impact on work.

No, I don't feel I can talk about it.

Workplace statistics





The menopause is a natural part of female ageing when menstruation stops

It usually occurs between

45 and 55 years of age,

although it can occur anytime up to mid-60s. Symptoms which might affect work include tiredness, poor concentration and memory, and low confidence

Symptoms of the menopause usually last

between 4 and 8 years





Evidence indicates that approximately

25%

experience symptoms described as severe or debilitating

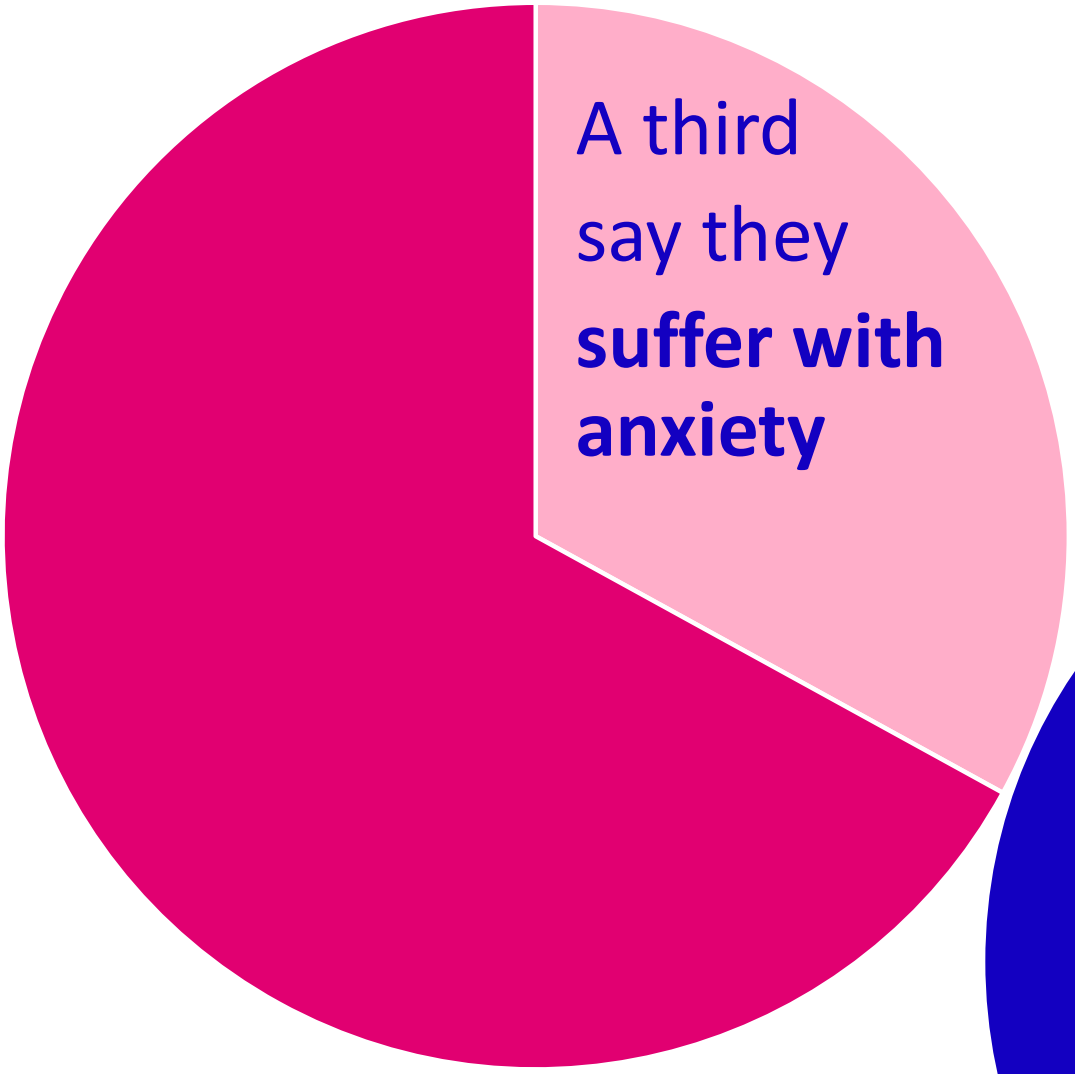
Ignorance is *not* bliss.

"Nobody ever told me this, my mother never told me this."



"That was part of the taboo.

You were supposed to suffer in silence."


A third
say they
suffer with
anxiety


Almost
half say
they
feel
depressed

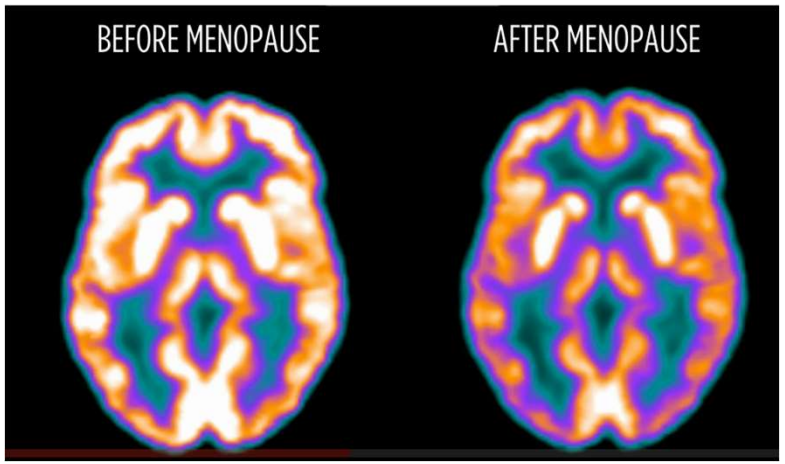


- Forgetfulness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Frustration
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Emotional exhaustion
- Brain fog

Brain Fog

In a recent survey **73%** of respondents said they found **'brain fog'** very or somewhat difficult to cope with during the menopause

Fawcett Society (2022)



Scan from Dr Lisa Mosconis research

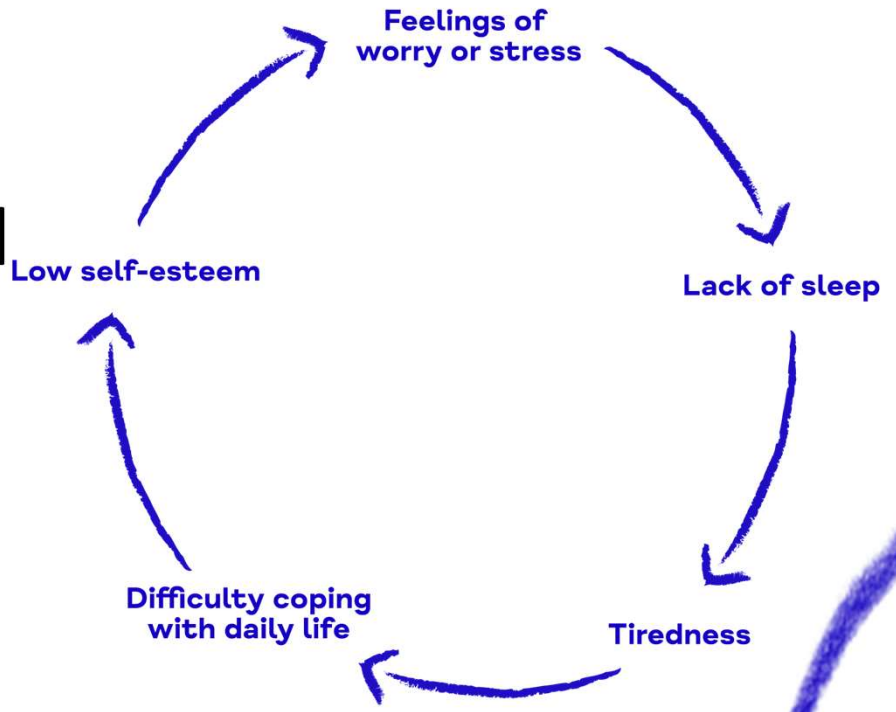
- Hot flushes
- Mood swings
- Headaches
- Joint pain
- Fatigue
- Itchy skin
- Palpitations
- Restless legs
- Sleep problems



Sleep disturbances

A survey found that **84%** of respondents said they found **‘difficulty sleeping or exhaustion’** very or somewhat difficult to cope with during the menopause

Fawcett Society (2022)



Quotes from Matchtech

Menopause can feel like losing confidence in a mind you've trusted your whole life, turning small worries into overwhelming challenges.

Supporting my partner through perimenopause has taught me patience, compassion and that real support means listening, understanding and simply showing up.

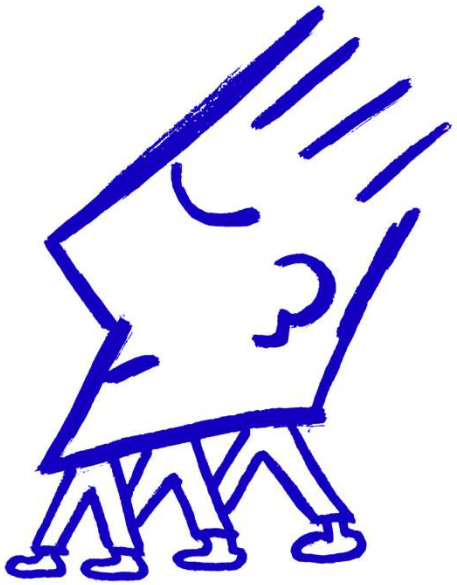
I had no idea how much hormones affect our physical and mental wellbeing. That's why open conversations and understanding matter so much.

Understanding menopause helps me be a better son, brother, husband and colleague, through listening, empathy and support

Menopause can make everyday decisions and conversations feel overwhelming, leaving you doubting yourself and navigating unfamiliar emotions.

Menopause is about far more than hot flushes. It can affect confidence, concentration, sleep, memory and wellbeing.

Menopause doesn't just affect the person going through it



There should be no **stigma** or **shame** attached to menopause.

We need more companies to come out and say, '*Okay, I understand. Now, how can we help?*'

Former Olympian Michelle Griffith-Robinson



BS 30416 - Menstruation, Menstrual Health and Menopause in the Workplace

Practical guidance to support employees experiencing menstruation, menstrual health, or menopause in the workplace.

Download BS 30416

What could we do to help remove the stigma around the menopause?

What can you do for yourself?

- Education.
- Accept and manage changes.
- Speak to your manager.
- Exercise and eat well.
- Use stress-lowering techniques.
- Talk about it.
- See your GP.

What helped?

“I worked closely with my GP to complete any tests they advised. Stayed on my medication.’’

“Acceptance plus more self-care: food, sleep, fresh air.’’

“Be kind to myself. Regulate sleep. Eat well, limit caffeine.’’

“Getting out in the fresh air and eating well also helps.’’

“Trying to manage physical symptoms as much as possible, getting fresh air and exercise, seeking help when needed.’’

“Spoke to friends and family.’’

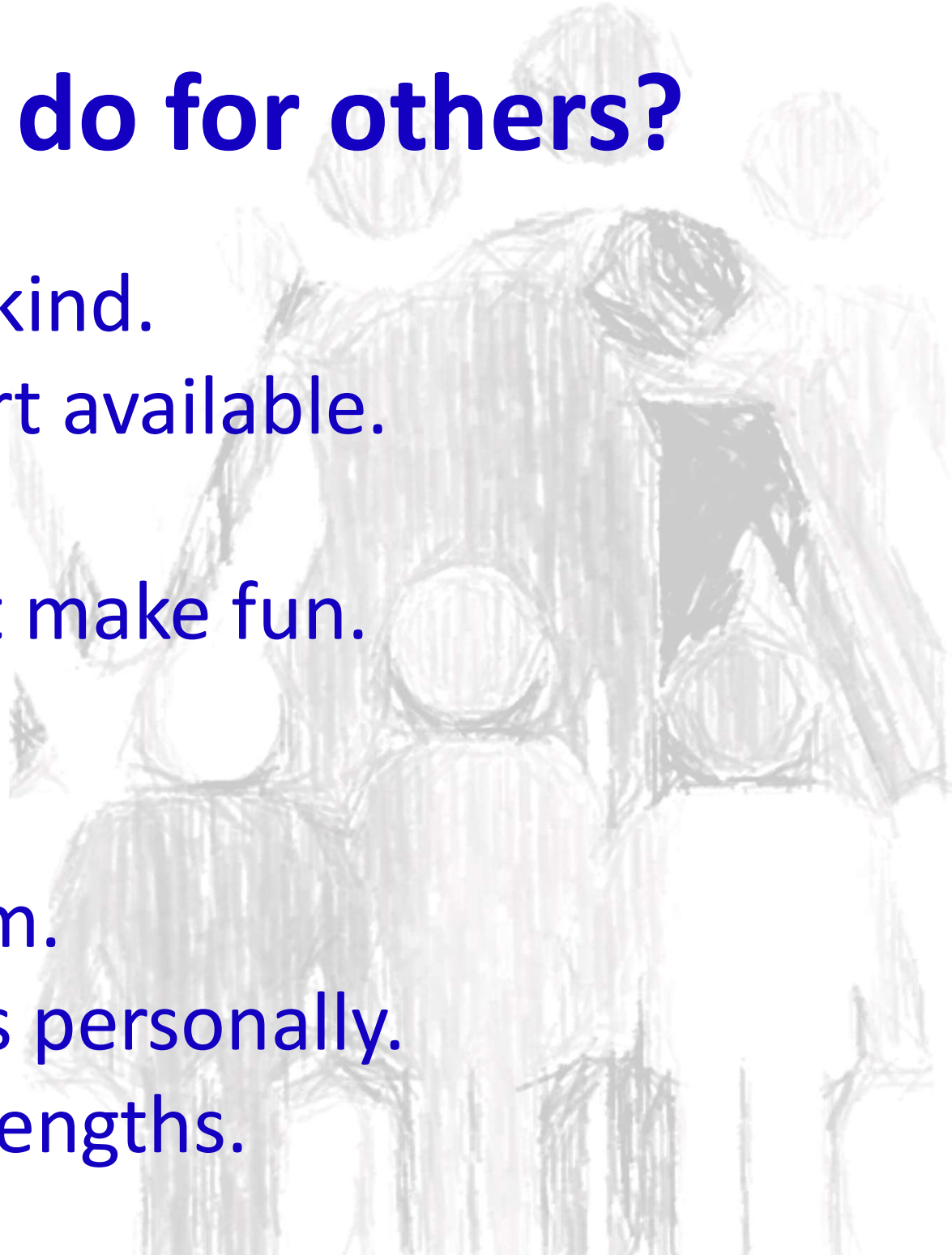
“I read up about it. Reading about other women's experiences. Therapy.’’

What can you do for others?

Stay flexible. Be kind.
Know the support available.

Ask them! Don't make fun.
Stay in touch.

Be there for them.
Don’t take things personally.
Build on your strengths.



Tips for talking about the menopause

- Not everyone will want to talk about this at work
- Allow individual to lead conversation
- Don’t make assumptions
- Confidentiality
- Consider health issues before disciplinary/performance management
- Empathy

What did others do that was helpful?

“Stayed clear and gave me space.’’

“Offered understanding/empathy.’’

“This was a real challenge as I didn't really speak to them initially, but they knew something was wrong and brought up the subject before I did which allowed me to talk about what was going on.’’

“Speaking to other friends going thru it helped.”

“Sadly this is still a taboo subject and people don't take the distress seriously.’’

Five ways to wellbeing

1 Connect



Try to do something different today and make a connection.

- Talk to someone instead of sending an email.
- Speak to someone new.
- Ask how someone's weekend was and really listen to what they tell you.
- Put five minutes aside to find out how a friend, family member, or colleague really is.





2 Be active

Exercising makes you feel good.

- Take the stairs not the lift.
- Go for a walk at lunchtime.
- Walk into work, perhaps with a colleague, so you can 'connect' as well.
- Get off the bus one stop earlier than usual and walk the final part of your journey.
- Find an activity you enjoy and make it part of your life.

3 Take notice

Take some time to enjoy the moment and the environment around you.

- Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling.
- Notice the changing seasons.
- Appreciate what matters to you and savour the moment.

4 Give

Doing something kind helps people feel a greater sense of wellbeing.

- Do something nice for a friend or a stranger.
- Volunteer your time.
- Get involved in your local community.
- Thank someone.



5 Keep learning

Why not learn something new today?



- Sign up for a class.
- Read something new.
- Learn a new skill.
- Research something you've always wondered about.
- Try something new or rediscover an old interest.

Let's talk about menopause.



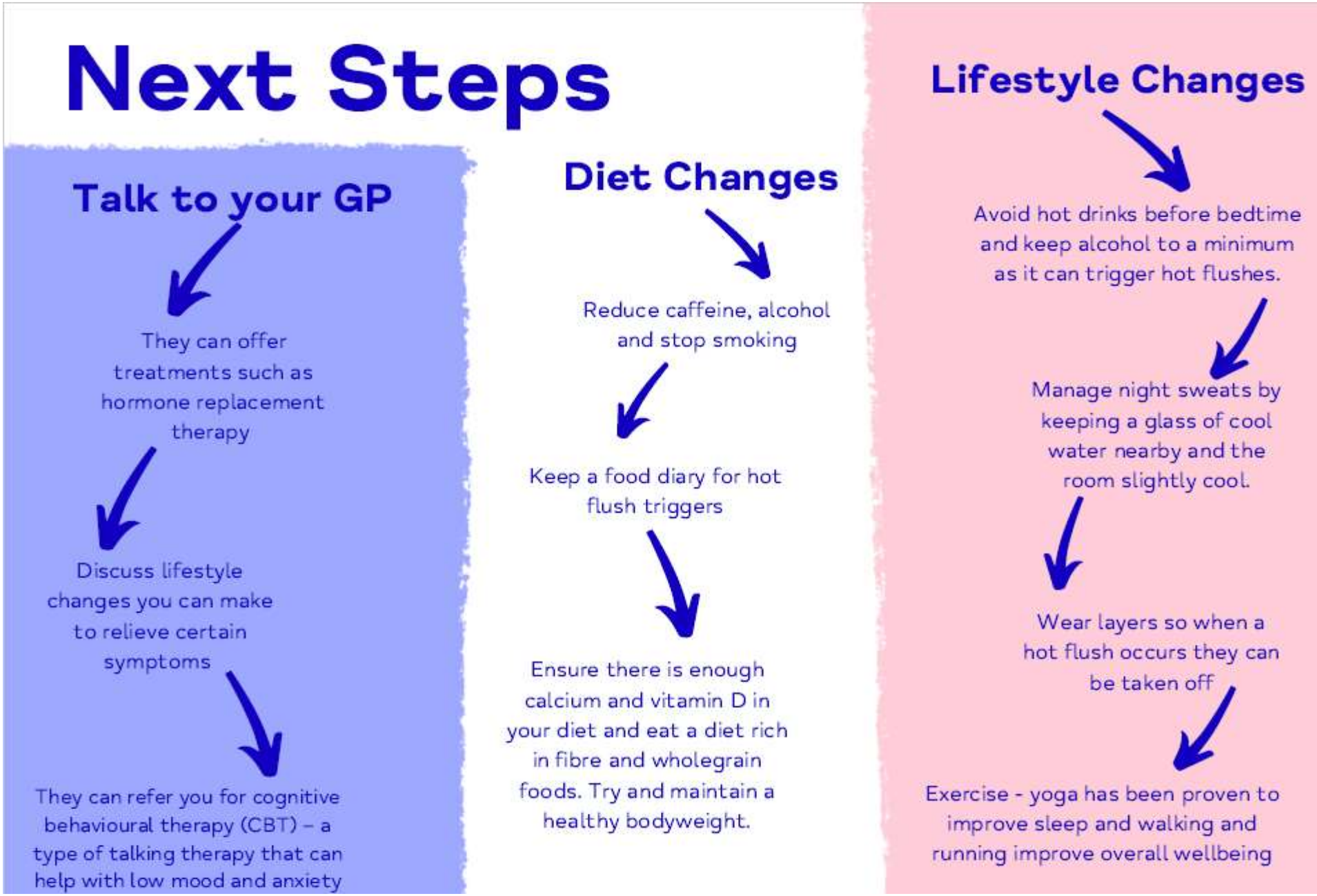
Celebrate. Keep a diary of the positives and challenge the negative thoughts. Make time to laugh.

Connect. Reach out for the support of others who have been through similar experiences. Speak to your friends and family about how you're feeling.

Challenge. Challenge the way those going through the menopause are treated in society and in the workplace.

What will you do next?

Solent Mind toolkit



What everyone should know

- It can be a long haul.
- It can be fine one day, and not the next.
- Every person is different; don't compare!
- Not everyone wants to talk about it.
- It doesn't need "fixing"; it needs understanding.

Resources for support

Balance	https://www.balance-menopause.com/
Menopause and Me Digital Toolkit	https://www.bitcni.org.uk/programmes/the-menopause-me-digital-toolkit/
Menopause Matters	www.menopausematters.co.uk
Over the Bloody Moon	https://www.overthebloodymoon.com/menopause-support
NHS	www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms
Daisy Network Charity	https://www.daisynetwork.org/
NHS Health and Wellbeing page	Menopause Support - People Portal

How comfortable are you . . .

Absolutely, I'd talk about it.

I probably would if it had an impact on work.

No, I don't feel I can talk about it.

Feedback and staying in touch



Solent Mind Training Feedback Form * – Fill in form

https://forms.office.com/e/GqsdYV2y1C

023 8202 7818

training@solentmind.org.uk

solentmind.org.uk

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