

Easyjets take on the menopause

“We recognise that women experience the menopause in a multitude of ways and that it can be a very personal and private matter, in some case requiring additional medical intervention. We also understand that the menopause can have an impact on you at work including in relation to your attendance, your performance, and/or the needs you have from your working environment. We want to be able to offer you the support you need during this time and so encourage you to speak to your Line Manager, Base Management Team and/or HR so we can understand the impact it is having on you and any adjustments we can make. These adjustments could include, but are not limited to; additional or adapted facilities in the workplace (such as fans or other ergonomic adjustments if possible), temporary or permanent flexible working arrangements, adjustments to uniform requirements; or adjusting the triggers detailed in the attendance management stages above”

A number of organisations have provided their employees with a fully documented Menopause policy for e.g Leicester University were the first to introduce this within their organisation, the NHS, MET police are a few to name a few that have followed in this procedure.

The menopause can effect both men and women though it is quite different the symptoms can be quite similar in different areas and this also needs to be acknowledged when dealing with the overall topic when dealing with all genders when approaching this stage in their lives.

Male Menopause

The male menopause "andropause" is used to describe aging-related hormone changes in men.

Other terms include testosterone deficiency syndrome, androgen deficiency of the ageing male and late-onset male hypogonadism.

Testosterone levels vary greatly among men. In general, older men tend to have lower testosterone levels than younger men. Testosterone levels gradually decline throughout adulthood — about 1 percent a year after age 30 on average.

Signs and Symptoms of the Male Menopause

Low energy.

Rarely, you might experience hot flushes.

Changes in sleep patterns. Sometimes low testosterone causes sleep disturbances, such as insomnia, or increased sleepiness

Emotional changes. Low testosterone might contribute to a decrease in motivation or self-confidence. You might feel sad or depressed, or have trouble concentrating or remembering things.

Physical changes. Various physical changes are possible, including increased body fat, reduced muscle bulk and strength, and decreased bone density. Swollen or tender breasts (gynecomastia) and loss of body hair are possible.

Changes in sexual function. This might include reduced sexual desire, erectile dysfunction, fewer spontaneous erections — such as during sleep — and infertility. Your testes may also become smaller

Menopause Facts

Menopause is a natural part of every woman's life, and it is not always an easy transition. With the right support, it can be much better. Whilst every woman does not suffer with symptoms, supporting those who do will improve their experience at work.

Menopause should not be taboo or 'hidden'. We want everyone to understand what menopause is, and to be able to talk about it openly, without embarrassment. This is not just an issue for women, men should be aware too.

The changing age of the UK's workforce means that between 75% and 80% of menopausal women are in work. Research shows that most women are unwilling to discuss menopause-related health problems with their line manager, nor ask for the support or adjustments that they may need.

Menopause is defined as a biological stage in a woman's life that occurs when she stops menstruating and reaches the end of her natural reproductive life. Usually, it is defined as having occurred when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months (for women reaching menopause naturally). The average age for a woman to reach menopause is 51, however, it can be earlier or later than this due to surgery, illness or other reasons.

Perimenopause is the time leading up to menopause when a woman may experience changes, such as irregular periods or other menopausal symptoms. This can be years before menopause.

Post menopause is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months.

Symptoms of Menopause

It is important to note that not every woman will notice every symptom, or even need help or support. However, 75% of women do experience some symptoms, and 25% could be classed as severe. Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically including, but not exclusively, hot flushes, poor concentration, headaches, panic attacks, heavy/light periods, anxiety, and loss of confidence. Some women also experience difficulty sleeping body pain, arthritic pain to name a few.

What needs to be done

Both male and female colleagues of all age groups must understand the implications of a time that hits mostly the female population as well as stated some men, should be clearly taught and understood as part of a management programme and maybe to the workplace as a whole that colleagues can understand the changes that may present themselves in the workplace and have a great understanding of what simple small acts can do to help assist a colleague or the member of your team. Its all very well saying that the employee can approach the management but if that management team or individual does not have an understanding, maybe because they are male and young and have not had this impact their lives many not have the same approach if you spoke to a female manager of similar age going through the similar problem.

As with all companies they do not want to spend money on training, however a small course or more information on the menopause and subsequent symptoms to each management team, then this will grow a bigger understanding and compassion for those that are brave enough to ask for assistance.