



EMPOWHER PATH

*Empowering midlife women*

## Discover. Recover. Rise.

Hello — and welcome to your December check-in from EmpowHer Path. Christmas can be magical... and exhausting. Late nights, rushing, alcohol, disrupted routines and family dynamics can all amplify menopause symptoms. This month's newsletter brings you seasonal research, workplace guidance and practical tools to help you feel more grounded and in control — whatever your holiday looks like.

### **Holiday season, sleep disruption and menopause: what the research shows**

We already know that sleep can take a real hit during perimenopause and menopause thanks to falling oestrogen and progesterone, night sweats, temperature dysregulation and a more sensitive stress system. And of course, December doesn't help: alcohol, caffeine, late nights, irregular bedtimes and busier days are all known triggers for hot flashes, night sweats, anxiety and mood swings.

What this means for you:

This month is not the moment to strive for perfection — it's about preserving your baseline so symptoms don't spike. Small, realistic habits can protect your sleep and your mood far more than a "perfect" routine you can't maintain during the holidays.

So this festive period:

**Do** have a glass of fizz or even three — but alternate with water

**Don't** bow to the pressure of accepting every invitation. Pace your activities, take a walk with the family if you can't go to the gym or your usual exercise class

**Do** ensure you eat plenty of protein — it will stop you reaching for the empty carbs



# Menopause at work during the festive season

Menopause support at work during the festive season  
End-of-year pressure can magnify symptoms – and employers have a responsibility to support staff fairly.  
Here's what's relevant right now in the UK:

- Reasonable adjustments (Equality Act): If symptoms affect day-to-day functioning, employers may need to offer adjustments such as flexible hours, hybrid working, quieter spaces or temperature control – especially crucial when workloads peak in December.
- Workplace wellbeing policies: Many organisations release year-end wellbeing reminders. Managers are encouraged to check in with staff – not about symptoms, but about workload, energy and realistic deadlines.
- Christmas party season: Alcohol, heat and late nights can be tough for those experiencing menopause symptoms. Employers should avoid pressuring attendance and consider more inclusive, lower-key options.

If you're an employee: You're entitled to ask for support. A simple "I'm finding X more challenging right now – here's what would help" is completely reasonable.

If you're an employer or manager: A compassionate, practical conversation now can make a real difference to retention, wellbeing and engagement.

## A note for men

If your partner or colleague is navigating menopause, a small gesture goes a long way:

"Is there anything I can take off your plate this week?"  
This lands far better than solutions or fixes.





## Gentle reflections for the season

Taking a moment to reflect helps us notice patterns we might otherwise miss — especially in midlife, when our bodies and priorities are changing. Gentle reflection isn't about judgement or fixing anything; it's about understanding what's been supporting you, what's been draining you, and what you want to carry forward.

So below I pose a few quiet questions which can make the next season feel clearer and more intentional.

- What has my body been trying to tell me this year — and where did I listen, even briefly?
- Which situations or habits drained my energy the most — and what might I do differently next time?
- What helped me feel most steady, calm or like myself again this year?
- As I move into the new year, what is one small boundary or support I want to protect for my wellbeing?

### **And finally**

As we close out the year, I want to say a genuine thank you — for the support, trust and conversations I've shared with so many of you this year. Menopause can feel relentless and isolating at times, but progress is possible. If this year has been hard, know that 2026 doesn't have to look the same. With the right understanding, support and practical changes, it really can be the year we start to crack it — together.

Merry Christmas  
Jo

