

Menopause. Breaking taboos.



Can I use the 'M' word?

Does mention of the menopause make you feel uncomfortable? If it does then you're not alone, nearly half (47%) of the UK public think the menopause is a taboo topic in society.

But. Things are starting to change. With an increasing amount of noise about the menopause over the last couple of years, from Davina's Channel 4 menopause documentary to high profile celebrities talking about their own experiences, it feels like there are conversations about the menopause being had in mainstream media.

But this doesn't seem to filter through to advertising, where brands are still acting like the menopause is a taboo topic. And because of this, most women don't feel like brands are doing enough to support them throughout this key milestone.

According to Kantar research, 76% of menopausal and perimenopausal women don't feel represented in advertising at all. And that's no surprise when only 12% of ads currently feature someone over 50 in a leading role, despite nearly half (47%) of UK adults being aged 50+. To make matters worse, when over 50's are featured in ads, they are more likely to be male.

'We need to help people realise they can talk about potentially embarrassing symptoms at work, with friends and not just with family'

Dr Sarah Brewer, Medical Director at Healthspan
Brand Champions women's health event March 2022



So, why are menopausal women so under-represented in advertising?

There are some examples of brands who have embraced this consumer group and hit the nail on the head. Tena's #LastLonelyMenopause is a good example of this. Highlighting how the menopause can be an isolating experience. But Tena are actively targeting 50+ women with their products so they'd be crazy not to focus on them.

That leaves us with the brands whose demographic is wider. Tesco have a series of ads called Food Love stories, one ad in the series does a great job of showing an active group of older women, coming together for something to eat after open water swimming. This is a stark contrast to most representations of ladies 50+, which reinforce stereotypes of the older consumer not being digitally savvy, being alone or being physically or mentally weak.

