



holiday**extras**

Menopause Guide

For employees
and managers



The HX Menopause Guide

Hormone changes can affect anyone during the course of their life for a number of reasons, for example pregnancy, gender transitioning and menopause. And at Holiday Extras, we know that these changes can cause symptoms which affect how someone feels and performs at work.

This guidance focuses specifically on menopause and perimenopause and the effects it can have on a person's day to day experience. However, the recommendations should be considered for anyone experiencing hormone changes.

Perimenopause

The phase leading up to the menopause, when a person's hormone balance starts to change, and when they may begin to experience menopausal symptoms. For some people this can start as early as their twenties or as late as their late forties. On average, symptoms last for around four years but they can last anywhere between a few months up to ten years.

Menopause

The menopause is best described as a 'transition' rather than a one-off event. It is defined as the point at which a person's oestrogen levels decline and they stop having periods. Menopause is technically just one day, the day when you haven't had a period for a full year.



Who is this guidance for?

Holiday Extras aims to support all team members experiencing menopausal symptoms and provide everyone in the business with key information that enables them to understand the challenges colleagues may experience and how they can best support them.

Why is this guidance important?

Although the menopause can be experienced at any age, the average is between the ages 45-55, meaning most women will go through the menopause transition during their working lives. The symptoms experienced can range in severity from relatively minor to severely debilitating and can be both physical and psychological. Everyone has a different experience of menopause, but it can have a huge impact on an individual's comfort and performance in the workplace, with **25% of those experiencing symptoms saying they have considered leaving work and 10% taking the step to leave work as a result** (2016 Wellbeing of Women survey).

This guidance aims to promote an inclusive and supportive working environment for anyone experiencing menopause symptoms. It's designed to encourage and empower everyone to have open conversations within their team and with their manager about the challenges they face. It also encourages individuals to ask for adjustments to ease symptoms allowing them to carry out their daily role in a safe and comfortable working environment.



59%

said their symptoms have had a negative impact on their work

According to research by CIPD



What are the symptoms?

Symptoms vary greatly, but commonly can include:

- Hot flushes
- Anxiety
- Night sweats
- Memory loss
- Brain fog
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Recurrent urinary tract infections
- Joint stiffness
- Reduced concentration
- Heavy periods

How can we help?

Minor adjustments to our working environment can make a huge difference. If someone is experiencing menopausal symptoms, the following options should be considered:

- **Desk Fans** When in the office, HXers should speak to their manager, a Menopause Champion or our Business Operations Manager, who can arrange one for you!
- **Additional Breaks** Sometimes it can be helpful to take time out - a walk outside (weather permitting!) or a cup of tea can help to alleviate symptoms. Here at HX, we understand that individuals may need to take additional breaks throughout the day if they are struggling. If you feel this will help you please speak to your manager.
- **Sickness/Paid Leave** If an individual feels unwell and unable to work due to menopausal symptoms, Holiday Extras will support them. This includes the sudden onset of symptoms during the working day.



- **Flexible Working** Holiday Extras recognises that flexibility is key to anyone suffering as a result of transitioning through the menopause and aims to facilitate flexible working wherever possible. Temporary changes* could include: earlier/later start times, working from home, reducing working hours, more scheduled breaks, flexibility to work in cooler or quieter parts of the campus or turning their camera off when on calls. Understanding what would best support someone should be discussed and agreed with the manager/ the People Team, and reviewed regularly to ensure the adjustments continue to meet the needs of the person.
- **Working Space Assessment** If working from the office, workspace assessments can be requested which helps us work with the individual to ensure the desk setup is set up for your specific needs. We can then offer additional adjustments as needed, such as a supportive chair, laptop risers or back supports to help alleviate/ manage symptoms.

**As with any change to working patterns or set-up, your manager will regularly check in with you to ensure the arrangements continue to work well for the individual and the business.*





Additional Support at Holiday Extras

- **Manager Support** We encourage anyone impacted to let their manager know about any symptoms they are experiencing that affect them at work so they can be better supported. We're currently rolling out menopause training to every manager across the business with the aim to bring more awareness to menopause and its symptoms. This training will help to equip managers with the skills to have good conversations and helpful resources they can share with their team.

- **Menopause Champions** Sometimes people may not wish to discuss the menopause with their direct line manager. In this instance, we have a number of Menopause Champions around the business who have received more in-depth training on how to support colleagues with menopausal symptoms. Their details can be found on the First Aider Posters around the campus and also on the Menopause section of the Thrive Hub for those who work remotely. We also have trained Mental Health First Aiders who can support any mental health related symptoms.
- **Support Groups** Back in 2022, some of our team set up 'The M Word' - an internal support group for anyone experiencing Menopause symptoms and is open to everyone at HX. The group meets regularly to discuss relevant topics and drive more awareness across the business.





Employee Benefits

Those that are eligible to sign up to the Bupa private medical insurance benefit (HXers with over 4 years continuous service) have access to BupaBlueHealth, the virtual health service app (previously known as Babylon). BupaBlueHealth offers access to a GP 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Details of how to access this app can be found on MyExtras. Bupa also offer the Menopause Plan, where you can discuss symptoms of the menopause with a specialised GP.

Everyone at Holiday Extras also has access to our Help@Hand by Unum benefit (formally known as Lifeworks), an Employee Assistance Programme that includes access to support on a range of issues. Help@Hand offer expert advice, support and counselling, which is free, confidential and easy to access online or via telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Details to access this service can be found on the Reward Hub or speak to your manager for details.



Additional Resources

On our HX Thrive Hub, we have included a Menopause section that offers helpful resources, information and links to other useful sites. (If you are aware of any additional resources that you feel would be helpful to include in this section, please do let us know!)

In our campus library, you will also find a selection of topical books, including Davina McCall's 'Menopausal Power' which you may borrow any time!

How can we all support each other at HX?

Every HXer:

- Can educate themselves about the menopause and become familiar with the content of this guide.
- If needed, they should seek advice and support and be as open and honest as possible with managers keeping them informed.
- If they don't feel comfortable speaking to their manager, they should speak to one of the people mentioned above.
- Any HXer can request to become Menopause Champions if they are keen to do more (speak to the People Team if you are interested).

Managers should:

- Educate themselves about the menopause and become familiar with the terms of this guide and the variety of support they can offer.
- Take part in any menopause awareness training offered and ensure their team is aware of where to find information.
- Treat each person individually and be open and willing to have discussions around the menopause, working with them to provide the correct level of support.
- Check in regularly with the individual and be prepared to adjust any changes to their working environment as needed. If unsure, please speak to the People Team for advice and support.

Holiday Extras will:

- Review its health and wellbeing policies on a regular basis.
- Ensure its health offerings (EAP, Private Medical Insurance, BupaBlueHealth) have provisions to support those experiencing the menopause.
- Listen and work with HXers to support and drive change in relation to the menopause.

This guidance was introduced in May 2023 to ensure Holiday Extras is providing the best support for individuals transitioning through the menopause. Please get in touch if you have any feedback or feel there are other ways that Holiday Extras can evolve our approach.

Please note: This guide does not form part of any employee's terms and conditions of employment and Holiday Extras may amend it at any time.

