

Prior to your menopause consultation - please have a look at the below symptom checker and the resources about menopause and HRT. Preparing for your consultation in advance helps us make the most of the appointment with your GP.

**MENOPAUSE SYMPTOM CHECKER:**

Diagnose the need for HRT using a SYMPTOM CHECKER not an FSH blood test.

You may find it helpful to use the online menopause questionnaire which provides a summary of symptoms that you can bring to your first appointment - see resources below. This includes a scoring system called the Greene Climacteric Scale which can provide a measure to compare symptoms now and in future.

<b>Vasomotor Symptoms (VSM):</b>	<b>Hot flushes</b>	<b>How often?</b>	<b>Night Sweats</b>	<b>How often?</b>
<b>General:</b>	Disturbed or less refreshing sleep or insomnia	Extreme tiredness (fatigue) Low energy	Joint pains and stiffness, muscle aches, leg cramps	Palpitations
	Itchy skin (formication) in patches or all over	More migraines or headaches	ringing in the ears	Dizziness
<b>Brain Function:</b>	Brain fog	Can't find the words	Poor memory	Poor concentration
	Mood swings for no apparent reason	Irritability	Anxiety	Low mood-deeper or more prolonged
	PMT worse	Bloating	Not functioning at work, home, in relationships	Weight gain

<b>Genitourinary problems (GSM): bladder, pelvic floor</b>	Recurrent cystitis (without infection)	Needing to wee more often in the day  How often?	Needing to wee more at night.  How often?	Have to get to the toilet in a hurry (urgency)
	Sometimes don't make it to the toilet in time?	Cough or sneeze incontinence?	Prolapse (feeling of a lump coming down in the vagina or dragging feeling in the pelvis)	Prolapse can cause difficulty opening the bowels. E.g. manual evacuation
<b>GSM: Sexual Problems</b>	Reduced libido	Dry sore vagina	Itchy vulva and vagina	Difficulty with arousal, not pleasurable
<b>Body changes:</b>	Putting on weight around the tummy	Hairy chin	Thinning hair on the head	
<b>Period changes:</b>	<u>Cyclical:</u> Lighter  Heavier  Shorter  Longer	<u>Cyclical:</u> Less frequent  More frequent  Stopped When?	Chaotic, no cycle?***  Bleeding between periods?***  Bleeding all the time?***	Bleeding after intercourse (Postcoital bleeding PCB)?***  ***these bleeding patterns usually need investigating <u>BEFORE</u> HRT is started

<p><b>Risk factors:</b></p>	<p><u>Have you had:</u></p> <p>Breast cancer?</p> <p>Ovarian cancer?</p> <p>Liver disease?</p> <p>Endometriosis?</p>	<p>Do you check your breasts regularly?</p> <p>Do you have a breast lump now?</p>	<p>Do you have a family history of breast or ovarian cancer?</p>	<p>Do you still have a uterus (womb)?</p> <p>Do you use contraception? Which type?</p>
	<p>Do you smoke?</p> <p>Alcohol units per week:</p> <p>Your BMI:</p> <p>Your Blood pressure:</p>	<p>Have you had a blood clot in your leg or lung?</p> <p>Is there a strong family history of this?</p>	<p>Do you get migraines?</p>	<p>Have you had a stroke or heart disease?</p> <p>Have you used HRT before?</p>

## **RESOURCES:**

### **General:**

[Balance - Homepage \(balance-menopause.com\)](https://www.balance-menopause.com)

[Menopause Matters, menopausal symptoms, remedies, advice](#)

[My Menopause Centre | Information & Advice from Menopause Experts](#)

[Women's Health Concern | Confidential Advice, Reassurance and Education \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

[Menopause - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

<https://pcwhf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/HRT-Myths-Uncovered.pdf>

### **Understanding the menopause:**

Menopause questionnaire:

<https://www.mymenopausecentre.com/menopause-questionnaire/>

What is menopause:

[What-is-the-Menopause-updated-Feb-22-final.pdf \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[Layout 1 \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[The menopause - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

### **Lifestyle:**

[Balance - Managing Menopause beyond HRT \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[Living well through your perimenopause and menopause \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[Healthy-eating-for-the-menopause.pdf \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

### **HRT overview:**

[Layout 1 \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[HRT - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

### **Risks and benefits of HRT:**

Overview: [Benefits and risks of HRT | Information for the public | Menopause: diagnosis and management | Guidance | NICE](#)

[HRT: The history - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

Breast cancer:

<https://www.balance-menopause.com/menopause-library/breast-cancer-and-hrt-factsheet/>

[HRT-and-breast-cancer.pdf \(themenopausecharity.org\)](#)

[Breast cancer risk factors - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\) understanding-risks-0317.png \(800x1132\) \(thebms.org.uk\)](#)

Heart disease:

### **Starting on HRT at age range 50-59 or within 10 years of menopause onset:**

HRT does not increase cardiovascular disease risk when started in women aged under 60 years

HRT does not affect the risk of dying from cardiovascular disease  
HRT with estrogen alone is associated with no, or reduced, risk of coronary heart disease  
Cardiovascular risk factors are not a contraindication to HRT use providing they are appropriately managed.

### **Starting on HRT at age >60 or more than 10 years post menopause onset:**

HRT does not appear to increase the risk of cardiovascular events, cardiovascular mortality or all cause mortality.

[Heart-disease-perimenopause-and-menopause-final.pdf \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

#### **Stroke:**

Oral (but not transdermal under 50mcg/24h) estrogen is associated with a small increase in the risk of stroke. However, the baseline risk of stroke in women aged <60yrs is very low so the increased risk is non-significant

#### **Blood clots (venous thromboembolism):**

HRT tablets (but not patches or gels) are linked with a higher risk of developing a blood clot.

#### **Endometrial cancer:**

Slightly increased risk with oestrogen only HRT, which is why this HRT should only be used by women who have had a hysterectomy. The addition of a progestogen every day reduces the risk of this cancer compared to non-users.

#### **Ovarian cancer:**

A 2015 meta-analysis of 52 epidemiological studies has shown a very small increased risk of ovarian cancer with estrogen only and combined HRT.

#### **Osteoporosis:**

HRT is not at present recommended by regulatory authorities as the first treatment of choice to prevent brittle bones, although it is currently the only validated treatment for younger postmenopausal women. The randomised controlled trial data suggest there are 23 fewer fragility fractures per 1000 in postmenopausal HRT users. The benefit might continue in women taking HRT for longer and the protection stops when HRT stops.

[Osteoporosis: bone health following the menopause - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

**Dementia:** It is currently unknown whether HRT affects the risk of developing dementia. NICE has recommended more research about this.

Type 2 Diabetes: HRT does not increase your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

**Different types of HRT:**

[HRT-types-and-doses.pdf \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[HRT: Types, doses and regimens - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

Transdermal (via the skin) oestrogen: [Layout 1 \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

Lenzetto spray: [Layout 1 \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

Oestrogel and sandrena gel: [Oestrogel-and-Sandrena.pdf \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

Micronised progesterone/Utrogestan: [Layout 1 \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

**Do I need testosterone?**

[22-WHC-FACTSHEET-Testosterone-for-women-24FEB2022.pdf \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

**Genitourinary symptoms:**

[Vaginal-dryness.pdf \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[Vaginal dryness - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

[Urogenital problems - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

**Migraines:**

[Migraine-and-menopause.pdf \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[Migraine and HRT - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

**Endometriosis:**

[Layout 1 \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[Induced menopause in women with endometriosis - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

**Contraception:**

[Contraception-during-the-Menopause-and-Perimenopause.pdf \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

[Contraception for the older woman - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)