



Mental Health
Ireland

Menopause and Mental Health

*A Pocket Guide on
How to Manage Menopause
and Mental Health*

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and Mental Health*

Perimenopause and menopause are a part of many people's lives, and it can affect the mental health and wellbeing of those experiencing it.

Mental Health Ireland coproduced this booklet in response to the need for more information on this topic. This booklet is designed to provide information, tips, and signposting, as well as the real experiences of people that have been affected.

We invite you to use this booklet to support yourself or others impacted by perimenopause and menopause.

Contents

Section 1	1
• Introduction	1
• What is Perimenopause/Menopause?	3
• Symptoms of Perimenopause/Menopause	6
• Common Myths about Perimenopause/Menopause	9
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Section 2	11
• Impacts on Mental Health	11



Section 3 **15**

- Advocating with your Medical Provider – Checklist 15
 - Advocating in the Workplace 17
 - Advocating for Myself at Home 19
-

Section 4 **20**

- Ways I Can Support Myself 20
 - Information for Supporters 25
-

Section 5 **26**

- Mental Health & Menopause Support Plan 26
 - My Menopause Symptom Checker 27
-

Section 6 **31**

- Support Information 31
 - Glossary of Terms 37
 - General Information 39
- 

Section 1

INTRODUCTION

Perimenopause and **menopause** are a part of many people's lives, but they can be difficult, affecting mental health and wellbeing.

A 2021 Irish study found:



77%
OF WOMEN

felt unprepared for perimenopause, and that “women lack knowledge & feel unprepared for menopause.”²

In 2023, consultations were held with women around perimenopause, menopause and mental health conducted by the Office of Mental Health Engagement (MHER) and Mental Health Reform (MHR). This consultation identified that **‘education and awareness raising’** was limited around perimenopause.

One person said:
“the double stigma of having mental health challenges and the menopause is life threatening.”²



As a mental health promotion organisation, Mental Health Ireland in 2023 put together a **coproduction** group to create this booklet, as a helpful resource for people around perimenopause and menopause.

This booklet is designed to provide information, tips, and signposting, as well as the real experiences of people who have been affected.

This booklet is for:

- all people who menstruate
- those currently experiencing perimenopause and menopause
- those having previously experienced perimenopause and menopause.
- their supporters

We invite you to use this booklet to support yourself or others impacted by perimenopause and menopause.

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- ¹ C. Lillis, M. McNamara, J. Wheelan, M. McManus, M.B. Murphy, A. Lane & P.M. Heavy (2021) *Experiences and health behaviours of menopausal women in Ireland*.
 - ² "Exploring the Mental Health Impact of Menopause and Perimenopause", HSE Mental Health Engagement & Recovery and Mental Health Reform. 2023

What is the Menopause?

“Menopause is when a woman stops having periods completely. It is a natural part of aging.”

(HSE, 2023)



Perimenopause

Perimenopause is the period of time before a person's periods have stopped completely. Symptoms can appear up to seven years before menopause.² This is usually the stage that most people refer to when they are discussing symptoms and effects of menopause. During this time, hormone fluctuations can cause different symptoms for example hot flashes, changes to menstrual cycle and others (see section on symptoms).



Post-menopause

Post-menopause is the time after menopause occurs, some symptoms can continue for some people during this time.




Early menopause

Early menopause is when menopausal symptoms occur before the age of 45.

Premature Ovarian Insufficiency can occur before the age of 40 (around 1 in 100) (previously called premature menopause).

People may experience menopausal symptoms or early menopause due to surgical or other medical interventions or treatments³ for example: cancer treatments such as radiotherapy³.

How a person experiences or is affected by perimenopause or menopause can be very different for everyone. When it comes to your perimenopausal/menopausal journey, you are the expert on yourself.



**The number of people
who could be affected
by menopause:**

389,903

**The number of women
in Ireland between the
ages of 40 and 55 years
as per the last census.
(CSO Census, 2022)⁴**

¹ <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/menopause/symptoms>

² www.gov.ie/en/publication/538ad-menopause-explained/#menopause

³ <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/menopause>

⁴ CSO 2022

Symptoms of Perimenopause & Menopause

The most reported symptoms according to an Irish study:



92% HOT FLASHES



89% LOW SEX DRIVE



87% NIGHT SWEATS



80% WEIGHT CHANGES DURING THE MENOPAUSE TRANSITION



48% FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO MANAGE THEIR WEIGHT

Potential Physical Symptoms

Recurring UTI's
Breast pain
Light **Osteoporosis**
periods
Hot flashes
Fatigue
DRY EYES
Dry mouth
Difficulty sleeping
Palpitations
Vaginal dryness and discomfort during sex
Migraines and headaches
HEAVY PERIODS aches and pains
ITCHINESS Frequent urination
Insomnia
Osteoporosis **Loss of libido**
ALTERED SENSE OF SMELL
Muscle and joint stiffness **Hair changes**
Stiff Joints
Night sweats
DRY EYES
Stiff Joints
Facial Hair
Dizziness

Potential Mental Health Symptoms

Panic attacks
Anxiety
Loss of confidence
Memory Loss
LOSS OF MOTIVATION
Depression
Anxiety
Insomnia
Brain Fog
Loss of self-esteem
Poor concentration
Irritation
Mood changes
Depression
Tearfulness
Feeling low

The symptoms that you may experience can be very different to anyone else. Some symptoms are well known, but others are not and can be seen as unique. Most people will experience some symptoms, 1 in 5 won't experience any symptoms, a further 1 in 5 will experience severe symptoms. ²

Symptoms can also change over time and can vary according to the stage a person is in. New symptoms can sometimes appear, and others may not be as severe. This can have an impact on your emotional and physical wellbeing.



Symptom Checker

Using a symptom checker can help you identify if you are in perimenopause or menopausal. The Symptom Checker (list) might be useful to bring to your GP or other medical professional to support your conversation about what you are going through. **See page 27.**

¹ *Garda National Wellbeing Office (2023) Menopause guidance, An Garda Síochána, Dublin, Ireland. pp. 1-28*

² www.healthdirect.gov.au/perimenopause

³ www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/mind-body/menopause-symptoms-and-support

⁴ www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/mind-body/menopause-symptoms-and-support

⁵ www.nia.nih.gov/health/sleep-problems-and-menopause-what-can-i-do

Common Myths about Perimenopause & Menopause

Perimenopause and menopause have not been talked about openly. The whispers we have heard throughout our lives about its impact can affect how prepared and informed you feel about perimenopause and menopause.

Here are some of the whispers and facts to support open conversations about this time in your life.

Please try to get your information from credible resources when informing yourself about perimenopause and menopause.

Myth & Rumour	FACT
Perimenopause & Menopause just affects older women/over 45yrs	While menopausal symptoms typically start around age 45 this can start earlier. Trans men can also experience menopausal symptoms. Some men can experience a type of menopause called Andropause.
I just have to 'go through it' – there isn't anything I can do	People don't have to just 'go through' perimenopause and menopause. There are lots of ways to support yourself through the journey. Use the information in this booklet, the links, and resources can offer you information on ways you can support yourself or seek support.

Myth & Rumour	FACT
I can hardly help them; they will have to go through it themselves	As a supporter or loved one of a person experiencing perimenopausal & menopausal symptoms, there is a lot you can do. Getting information, keeping communication open and asking the person what can you do to support them, are great ways to do that. You might go to appointments with them, give them a cup of tea, and most importantly listen to them. Feeling supported and understood by you, will help them to feel less alone.
It's the same for everyone, it's just a few hot flashes	Although many people experience similar symptoms, your journey is unique to you. You are the expert on yourself. Many people experience a few or no symptoms, the majority will experience some symptoms.
Perimenopause and menopause symptoms are just physical	Perimenopause and menopause symptoms can impact many parts of your life and can affect your mental health. There is information in this booklet that can support and inform you on how to support your mental health during perimenopause and menopause.
Sex stops after perimenopause and menopause	Sex does not stop because of perimenopause and menopause. A person's sexual health can be impacted by the symptoms but having some information and understanding can be helpful. See the section around sexual health in this booklet.
I can't work effectively because of my perimenopause and menopause symptoms	Some of the symptoms can impact a person while they are at work, but this is not the case for everyone. Many workplaces are becoming aware of the need to offer support for people during menopause. There is a section in this booklet that can help you to advocate for yourself and get the support you need.

Section 2

The Impacts of Perimenopause & Menopause on mental health and a mental health diagnosis

Perimenopause and menopause transition can be a difficult time. There is a '**Window of Vulnerability**' where some people are extremely sensitive to hormonal changes. People living with a mental health diagnosis, or an underlying mental health condition may find this transition challenging.

It is important to remember that the mental health changes that occur at this time are transitory and intermittent. Some people are not at all affected and those that are, have symptoms for a limited time.

In this section of the booklet, you will find information relating to how perimenopause/menopause can affect underlying mental health conditions. There is also some helpful guidance on how to manage changes in your mental health, and how to access the supports when you need them.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Perimenopause/menopause is not a mental health condition; however, it can affect your mental health and wellbeing both directly and indirectly.

Directly, symptoms such as anxiety, low mood, sadness, loss of confidence and depression are closely related to the fluctuating hormonal changes. Indirectly, the loss of sleep, hot flashes, night sweats and fatigue can affect your other symptoms. Poor sleep can make depression more likely.

It is important to remember that while depression and low mood can be a symptom of perimenopause and menopause, individuals with a history of mental health conditions can have an increased risk of depressive symptoms.

Mental Health Conditions

If you have a history of depression/anxiety/bi-polar disorder/schizophrenia, you may find that your symptoms are impacted by your perimenopause/menopause ¹. If you are engaging with mental health services, it is important to notify them if you think you are experiencing perimenopause/menopause.

If you are experiencing perimenopause/menopause, please let your GP know, and if you experience any of the following you should be referred to the Mental Health Services:

- Severe, unmanageable deterioration in your symptoms of bi-polar disorder/schizophrenia/severe depression or anxiety etc.
- Thoughts of self-harming or suicide.
- Here is some information on what that referral can look like.

www.mentalhealthireland.ie/mental-health-services

How are our bodies and minds affected by perimenopause/menopause?

Discovering what is happening in our bodies during perimenopause/menopause can really help us to understand the impact on our mental health; especially when we have an underlying mental health condition/diagnosis.

- During perimenopause/menopause, levels of the hormones Oestrogen, Progesterone and Testosterone naturally begin to decline. This affects the chemistry of our brain, which, in turn, may cause physical, mental and emotional changes².
- As changing hormones impact your mood fluctuations, hormone replacement therapy (HRT) can be prescribed to help³.
- Anti-depressants are sometimes prescribed to help with hot flashes and night sweats for women who cannot take HRT as a first line of treatment⁴.



Non-Hormonal Factors

Perimenopause/menopause can occur at a time when new stressors or changes are taking place.

You may be adjusting to:

- caring responsibilities for elderly parents
- relationship changes
- career or work pressures
- children moving out of home



It can be difficult to manage everything that is happening when you are not feeling yourself.

It is important to find the support you need to be able to recognise your stressors and triggers. You can get support from a trusted friend, family members or a support service, to help identify coping skills so you can meet the challenges and create a strong sense of self confidence. Talk to someone you find supportive and affirming.

Section 3

Advocating with your Medical Provider (10 Point Checklist) ⁵

1

If you suspect that you are perimenopausal or menopausal, and your symptoms have started to interfere with your quality of life or your mental health, it's a good idea to **make an appointment to see your doctor or a healthcare professional** who specialises in menopause.

2

If you are making a doctor's appointment it is a good idea to keep track of your mood, adverse mental health symptoms and/or changes in behaviour you are experiencing. If you require a blood test, please notify your medical professional in advance.

Please see the link to the symptom tracker.

3

Make a note of any changes to your periods and bring **a list of any medications** that you're taking, including herbal supplements.

4

Write down any questions or concerns, so that you do not forget to mention them during your appointment. Bring a friend or family member/supporter (if required).

5

It's always worth asking if there's a particular person in the area who **specialises in menopause**. You can ask your doctor to check if you should be referred to a Complex Menopause Hub.

6 Your doctor may want to carry out **blood tests** to check your hormone levels, please be mindful that these can vary by the hour. Blood tests can be helpful to rule out underlying issues.

7 If your doctor does not suggest a blood test, and you would like one, it is within **your right to request this** from your doctor.

8 Ask your doctor/menopause specialist about the **types of treatment that are available** and the effects that these treatments may have on your current mental health treatment.

9 If you are already taking medication for a mental health condition/diagnosis, it is **important to discuss with your doctor/psychiatrist the dose of medication** you are currently on. (Medication dosage may need to increase or decrease during certain stages of menopause.)

10 Ask your doctor for information on available **Talk Therapies/Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.**

¹ *Menopause | Mental Health Foundation-Menopause and Mental Health Conditions (www.mentalhealth.org.uk website, 2021)*

² *Antidepressants and Menopause - The Menopause Charity*

³ *Antidepressants and Menopause - The Menopause Charity*

⁴ *menopause-diagnosis-and-management-pdf-NICE Guidelines.pdf*

⁵ *How-to-ask-your-GP-for-help-rev.pdf (themenopausecharity.org)*

Advocating in the Workplace

Each workplace has a duty of care to their employees and they want to support you. There is legislation that protects employees in the workplace and provides information to employers of what their statutory obligations are.

You might consider the information below to advocate for yourself in the workplace.



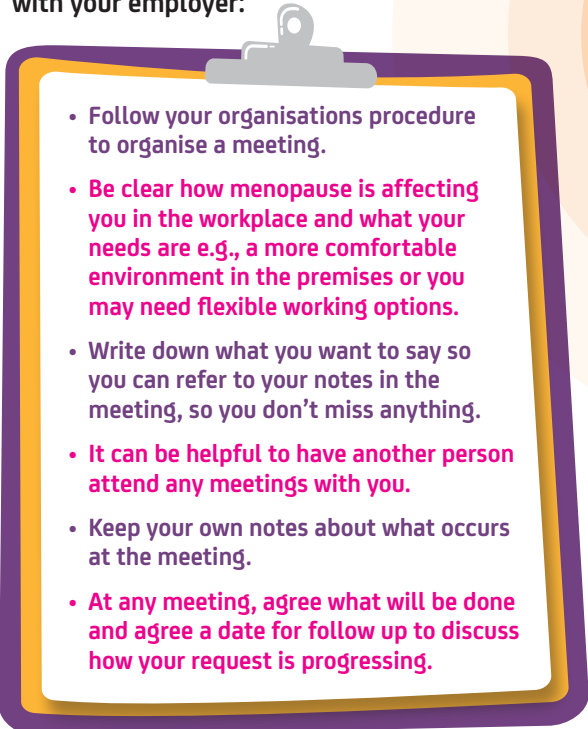
Put together a plan, this could include:

- **Identify who would be a good person to speak to in the workplace.**

Example: Manager/team leader/union rep/HR department or a colleague.

- **Remind yourself of the value you bring to the organisation**, make a note of your strengths, your accomplishments, your experience.
- **Know your rights** – research and inform yourself on current statutory and legal requirements, see links at the end of this section.
- **Know what your organisations policies are** around mental health, menopause, health and safety, sick leave, etc. For example, there may be supports such as an Employee Assistance Programme.

Some guidance on advocating/communicating with your employer:

- 
- Follow your organisations procedure to organise a meeting.
 - **Be clear how menopause is affecting you in the workplace and what your needs are e.g., a more comfortable environment in the premises or you may need flexible working options.**
 - Write down what you want to say so you can refer to your notes in the meeting, so you don't miss anything.
 - **It can be helpful to have another person attend any meetings with you.**
 - Keep your own notes about what occurs at the meeting.
 - **At any meeting, agree what will be done and agree a date for follow up to discuss how your request is progressing.**

These organisations can provide you with more information around your rights and employers responsibilities in this area:

<https://employmentrightsireland.com/health-and-safety-obligations-for-irish-employers/>

www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/managing_health_and_safety/safety,_health_and_welfare_at_work_act_2005/

Advocating for Myself at Home

Helping your loved ones to understand how perimenopause/menopause is affecting you can give them an opportunity to support you during this time. In the next section there is information on how to have a conversation with your supporters/loved ones and ways to support yourself.

- Having a chat with family members and supporters about what is happening.
- Be as clear as possible about what you might need, e.g. the bedroom window open at night.
- Ask them to support you in practical ways e.g. sharing the cooking, cleaning or other duties.
- Get some information and leave it out for others to read so they can better understand your experience. Podcasts, webinars and TV programmes might also be helpful.



Section 4

Ways I can Support Myself

How can I Support Myself?

There are many ways you can support yourself during perimenopause and menopause. Taking the time to engage in activities that nurture and support your wellbeing can help you to navigate the changes it may bring. Understanding what is happening can remove the fear of the unknown and can help you feel more in control. Learning about how you can manage symptoms can support your mental health and wellbeing. You have already started by picking up this booklet!

Language and Communication

Being clear in your communication with others can help them understand your needs.

- It is okay to ask for space and a few moments for yourself, for example, saying:

“I need a minute” / “I’m having a hot flash”

“I’m not able to handle this right now” /

“I’m feeling really anxious”

- If you are not sure what to say, try explaining what is happening for you:
“I am feeling xxx” or
“This is what would help right now”
- Use language that is comfortable for you but try to use correct phrasing where possible. It could be helpful to familiarise yourself with the appropriate terms used to describe the symptoms of perimenopause.



Sexual health

Some of the symptoms of perimenopause/menopause can make a healthy sex life difficult. A healthy sex life is important as part of your overall wellbeing.

Information to support a healthy sex-life during perimenopause/menopause;

- Vaginal dryness may lead to irritation, itchiness, and painful sex. There are products that can help with this. Discuss this with your medical provider.
- Tiredness, fatigue, and low mood can make maintaining an active sex life feel like a burden. Body confidence and self-esteem can also be an issue. Trying massage, foot rubs etc. to maintain intimacy if penetrative sex is too overwhelming.
- Having these conversations can be difficult with your partner but reaching out to a sexual health counsellor¹ may be an option to support you with this.



Nutrition

Having a varied and healthy diet can have a lot of positive benefit for during perimenopause and menopause. Your bones, heart and overall health can be supported by our nutrition which can also help you manage your symptoms². Some foods like caffeine and spicy foods may worsen symptoms.

Some supplements can also be helpful. Your doctor or a dietician/nutritionist can help with more information. The Irish Nutrition & Dietetic Institute (INDI) has helpful information on their website.



Exercise

Doing a physical activity every day can help support your physical and mental health. Even 10 minutes a day can provide benefits for you. Find an activity you enjoy and do it regularly. Joining a local group or with friends can be a great motivator to get out and get some physical activity. Activities like yoga, Pilates, swimming or walking are some suggestions. Your local sports partnership will have a list of low-cost activities in your area that you may be interested in trying out.




Sleep and Rest

Have a good night's sleep can be supportive to your overall health. Some perimenopause symptoms can make a good night's sleep difficult.

Creating a bedtime routine can include preparation before bedtime. This might include a skincare regime, having a bath or shower, body massage, meditation or gentle stretching. Lowering lights and limiting screen time can also be helpful. Reading a book or journaling are other tools that may help. Listen to your body, if you feel you need to rest, then rest when you can. Managing your time and factoring in time for self-care will help restore your energy in other ways.



Menopause and Alcohol

- Alcohol use can trigger or worsen symptoms, for example, for some it can trigger symptoms, such as hot flashes and night sweats.
 - Alcohol can disrupt your quality of sleep.
 - Some people during menopause can experience low mood and depression. Drinking alcohol can make these symptoms worse.
- 

Support is important – consider who may be of benefit to you as a supporter!

The experience of perimenopause can often feel isolating. Asking for support can be helpful.

- On any given day you may need different types of support. It may be someone to listen, help with a task or get some guidance.
- Different people may offer different types of support.
- This may be from a friend, family member or a professional.
- Give permission to others to talk about it by bringing up the topic yourself.
- Learning about other peoples' experiences can be helpful and reduce feelings of isolation. There are informal menopause groups online and in person.
- Community supports - find out what's happening in your area.

Some treatments that can be helpful are mindfulness, meditation, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and talk therapy.

*Remember
that you
don't have to
go through
this alone*

¹ <https://sextherapists.ie/>

² www.indi.ie/women-s-health/541-nutrition-and-the-menopause.html

³ www.sportireland.ie/participation/lsp-contact-finder

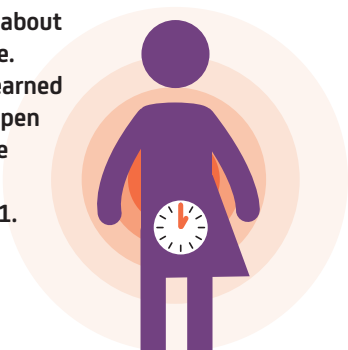
Information for Supporters

In this section you will find helpful information on the many ways you can support someone going through perimenopause and menopause.

- Help and support the person. Ask them what they need.
- Listen to them - everyone's experience is different. Let them know you care and that you are there for them.
- Do not make light of their experience or use negative language around menopause.
- Support the person with any changes or actions they may need to make.
- This may be a difficult time for you and the person you are supporting, be kind to each other.
- You don't always have to come up with the solutions, just showing you care is sometimes enough.

It can be helpful to learn more about perimenopause and menopause.

You can share what you have learned with the person to encourage open communication. There are more resources in the 'Supports Information' section on page 31.



Section 5

Mental Health & Menopause Support Plan

Use these pages to make notes on your own journey...

My Menopause Symptom Checker

Here is a list of some of the common symptoms of menopause, however this list is not exhaustive. Remember your journey is unique to you.

This is a symptom checker for you to use to keep track of your symptoms. Some symptoms may have causes other than menopause, so if you are concerned you should have them checked out.

This list can be used when communicating with your medical provider or supporters. Link to Symptom Checker:

<https://www.mentalhealthireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/11.-My-Menopause-symptom-checker.docx>



Common Symptoms

Symptom	date/time	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Hot flashes				
Night sweats				
Fatigue/tiredness				
Sleep disturbance				
Generalised aches/ pains				
Change to periods				

Mental Symptoms

Symptom	date/time	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Poor memory				
Poor concentration				
Brain fog				
Forgetfulness				

Emotional/Psychological Symptoms

Symptom	date/time	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Anxiety				
Low mood/ mood swings				
Emotional/crying				
Anger/irritability				
Depression				
Feeling of sadness				
Loss of joy/interest				
Reduced self-esteem				
Feeling overwhelmed				
Loss of confidence				
Panic attacks				

Physical Symptoms

Symptom	date/time	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Headaches				
Dizziness				
Thinning Hair				
Palpitations				
Dry skin/eyes				
Itchy dry skin				
Restless legs				
Tingling				
Tinnitus				

Genitourinary Symptoms

Symptom	date/time	Mild	Moderate	Severe
Loss of libido				
Painful sex				
Vaginal dryness				
Difficulty reaching orgasm				
Bladder issues (UTIs/incontinence)				

Other Symptoms not listed

Symptom	date/time	Mild	Moderate	Severe



Section 6

Support Information

G.P.

Type	The G.P. is your first point of contact if you are struggling with your mental health
Nature of support	General medical support for health and wellbeing
How to access	Use or register with your local G.P.
Further details/contact:	
https://www2.hse.ie/services/find-a-gp Out of hours G.P.: https://www2.hse.ie/services/find-a-gp-out-of-hours	

In an emergency

Type	In an emergency, contact the A+E Department of your local hospital
Nature of support	Emergency medical support for your mental health
How to access	Find the A+E Department in your local area Phone 999 or 112
Further details/contact:	
https://www2.hse.ie/services/emergency-departments	

Medical support for complex menopause

Type	Specialist complex menopause clinics at: 1 The National Maternity Hospital, Holles Street 2 The Coombe Hospital 3 The Rotunda Hospital 4 Nenagh General Hospital, Tipperary
Nature of support	Specialist multidisciplinary team approach to managing menopause for women with complex medical needs
How to access	Referral through your G.P.
Further details/contact:	
1 National Maternity Hospital: www.nmh.ie/general-gynaecology-service/complex-menopause-service.15085.html email: menopauseclinic@nmh.ie	
2 The Coombe Hospital: www.coombe.ie/menopause-clinic	
3 The Rotunda Hospital: https://rotunda.ie/womens-health	
4 Nenagh General Hospital: tel: 067 314 91	

Private menopause clinics

Type	Private specialist menopause services in various locations throughout the country
Nature of support	Support from medical doctors and physiotherapists and CBT therapists for women's health needs.
How to access	Self-referral or through your G.P.
Further details/contact:	
Google: menopause clinic and your location	

Counselling / Psychotherapy

Type	1: HSE Counselling in Primary Care (CIPC)
Nature of support	Up to eight sessions with accredited therapists for adults with medical cards
How to access	Through referral by your G.P., appointments in primary care centres
Further details/contact:	
www.hse.ie/eng/services/list/4/mental-health-services/counsellingpc	

Type	2: Private counsellor/ psychotherapist
Nature of support	Private therapy appointments
How to access	Self-referral- Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy has a directory of accredited therapists
Further details/contact:	
www.iacp.ie tel: 01 230 3536 www.facebook.com/IACPdot.ie/videos/how-do-i-find-a-therapist-thats-a-question-we-often-hear-however-we-have-an-answ/908870153172037	

Type	3: My Mind centre for mental wellbeing
Nature of support	Affordable, accessible community-based therapists
How to access	Self-referral
Further details/contact:	
https://mymind.org tel: 0818 500 800 email: hq@mymind.org	

Type	4: HSE Silver cloud
Nature of support	Free 6-8 week digital/online CBT/ mental health programmes
How to access	Referral by G.P. or mental health professional
Further details/contact:	
www.silvercloudhealth.com/ie/free-mental-health-support#:~:text=Speak%20to%20your%20GP%2C%20Primary,the%20platform%20free%20of%20charge	

Sex therapists / Counsellors

Type	Sex Therapists Ireland
Nature of support	List of counsellors in Ireland
How to access	Self-referral
Further details/contact:	
https://sextherapists.ie	

Free, confidential helplines

Type	1 Samaritans
Nature of support	Free, confidential 24/7 phone and email support by trained volunteers. Face-to-face support in some counties. Self-help app.
How to access	Self-referral
Further details/contact:	
Tel: 116 123 Email: jo@samaritans.ie Branches: www.samaritans.org/ireland/branches App: https://selfhelp.samaritans.org	

Peer support groups

Type	3 Menopause Cafés
Nature of support	Charity which supports not-for-profit pop-up café gatherings, hosted locally by volunteers, to bring people together to talk about menopause
How to access	Interested in organising a menopause café? www.menopausecafe.net/hold-a-menopause-cafe
Further details/contact:	
www.menopausecafe.net www.facebook.com/menopausecafeireland	

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Menstruate – discharge of blood and other material as part of the menstrual cycle

Symptoms – a physical or mental feature which is regarded as indication a condition of disease.

Hormone – a regulatory substance produced and transported in tissue fluids to stimulate specific cells or tissues into action

Andropause – a syndrome associated with a decrease or decline in feeling of general wellbeing with low levels of testosterone in older men.

Window of Vulnerability

www.psychology-lexicon.com/cms/glossary/56-glossary-w/6635-window-of-vulnerability.html

Transitory – not permanent

Intermittent – occurring at irregular intervals, not continuous or steady.

Stressors – something that causes a state of strain or tension.

Triggers – in mental health terms, a trigger refers to something that affects your emotional state, often significantly, by causing extreme overwhelm or distress.

CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) – (CBT) is a type of talking therapy. It is a common treatment for a range of mental health problems. CBT teaches you coping skills for dealing with different problems. It focuses on how your thoughts, beliefs and attitudes affect your feelings and actions.

Myth – a traditional story or a widely held but false belief or idea.

Credible – able to be believed.

Talk Therapy – Psychotherapy (sometimes called talk therapy) refers to a variety of treatments that aim to help a person identify and change troubling emotions, thoughts, and behaviours. Most psychotherapy takes place when a licensed mental health professional and a patient meet one-on-one or with other patients in a group setting.

Premature Ovarian Insufficiency – happens when a woman's ovaries stop working normally before she is 40. Many women naturally experience reduced fertility when they are about 40 years old. They may start getting irregular menstrual periods as they transition to menopause.

Radiotherapy – Radiation therapy (also called radiotherapy) is a cancer treatment that uses high doses of radiation to kill cancer cells and shrink tumours. At low doses, radiation is used in X-rays to see inside your body, as with X-rays of your teeth or broken bones.

Transition – the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another.

Diagnosis – the identification of the nature of an illness or other problem by examination of the symptoms.

HRT – Hormone Replacement Therapy is a treatment used to relieve symptoms of the menopause.

Advocate – any action that speaks in favour of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports, or defends.

Nurture – care for and protect something while they are growing.

Fatigue – extreme tiredness.

Vaginal – relating to affecting the vagina.

Nutrition – the process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth.



Mental Health Ireland is a national voluntary organisation whose aim is to promote mental health, wellbeing and recovery to all individuals and communities in Ireland.

Mental Health Ireland's vision is for an Ireland where mental health is valued and supported as an essential part of everyone's health, so that individuals, family and friends, and communities can thrive.

Many different peoples perspectives and voices supported the creation of this booklet through a process of coproduction.

Coproduction is a strengths-based process that looks to incorporate the end user as an equal participant from the very beginning and throughout the process, planning, development, delivery and evaluation

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**Mental Health
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