

# CLINICIAN APPOINTMENT CHECKLIST



If you are experiencing several symptoms and think they may be hormone related, it's time to see a health care professional.

## Making an appointment

- Ask receptionist for a clinician that is a specialist in menopause**
- Check they have read the [National Institute for Healthcare & Excellence \(NICE\) guidelines](#) on menopause and been formally trained on latest treatment options**
- Ask for a double appointment** (appointment times are 10 minutes but most surgeries offer an option for more complex or sensitive topics)

## Prior to the appointment

- Buy a notebook** and use as your menopause diary where you can track your period dates and frequency, any perimenopausal symptoms and triggers including the ones you may find difficult to talk about
- Track your changes** to provide evidence for any bothersome aspects impacting you physically, psychologically or cognitively
- Take a list of any medication you are on** including herbal medicines or supplements as well as any relevant personal or family history
- If you're feeling worried, ask a friend or family member to join you**
- Make a note of any questions** you have or concerns about treatment

## Your consultation: what to expect

- ✦ **Questions about your lifestyle**
- ✦ **An explanation of the different stages of menopause**
- ✦ **Common symptoms** and how the menopause is diagnosed (including testing)
- ✦ **Lifestyle changes** that could help your health and wellness
- ✦ **Benefits and risk of treatments** including HRT, Mirena Coil, non-hormonal treatments and lifestyle interventions
- ✦ **How the menopause may affect your future health**
- ✦ **Answers your list of questions and concerns**



## Be compassionate to yourself

Menopause is a unique experience, so treatment should be individualised too

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## Red flags to watch out for

### ✧ **Unnecessary hormone testing**

Unless it's to eliminate any other potential health issues, your clinician should not be suggesting a hormone test if you are aged 45 or over. This is because hormones are too erratic and fluctuate to be accurate (The NICE guidelines are very clear on this and say diagnosis should be based on symptoms alone)

### ✧ **You're offered anti-depressants as a first option**

If your clinician immediately suggests anti-depressants ask what other options are available as anxiety and depression are just a couple of the many other symptoms you may soon experience

### ✧ **Your clinician tells you to ride it out**

Unless there is a health reason that excludes you from HRT or other treatments, then be insistent – it's offered by the NHS and is your right

### ✧ **Your clinician prescribes you with HRT without scheduling in a follow-up**

## Still not satisfied?

### ✧ **Ask for a second opinion**

✧ **Visit the [British Menopause Society website](#) and click on "Find a specialist" to see a private or NHS clinic near you**