

## Useful Resources

- Menopause Matters

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

Wealth of information on menopausal symptoms and a helpful decision tree regarding treatment choices.

- Balance

[balance - Homepage \(balance-menopause.com\)](#)

Founded by a GP, this website has many evidence-based resources. They have created an app to help support menopausal patients with features including a symptom tracker.

- Women's Health Concern

[WHC factsheets and other helpful resources - Women's Health Concern \(womens-health-concern.org\)](#)

Helpful factsheets on topics such as HRT, nutrition, exercise and contraception.

- The Menopause Charity

[Menopause Support and Advice from The Menopause Charity](#)

Information sheets on a wide range of topics. They also have some easy read documents for those with learning disabilities.

[Easy Read Menopause Information in English and Welsh - The Menopause Charity](#)



## References

- NICE - Menopause: diagnosis & management (2019).
- RCOG - Treatment for symptoms of the menopause (2018).
- BMS - HRT Guide (2022)
- UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines (2019)
- Women's Health Concern - Menopause & Insomnia (2022)



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This patient information leaflet has been made for Skerryvore Practice as part of a Quality Improvement Project. It is for information giving purposes only, and not to be substituted for medical advice. Created in March 2024. Version 1.

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# Menopause & HRT

**Patient Information Leaflet**



*Skerryvore*  
PRACTICE

# What is the Menopause?

The **menopause** is defined as 12-months without a period (for no other medical reason). Prior to this is the **peri-menopause**, when hormone levels fluctuate and gradually reduce. During this time symptoms such as hot flushes, brain fog, vaginal dryness, mood swings and changes to your periods may be noticed. Any time after the menopause is **post-menopause**.



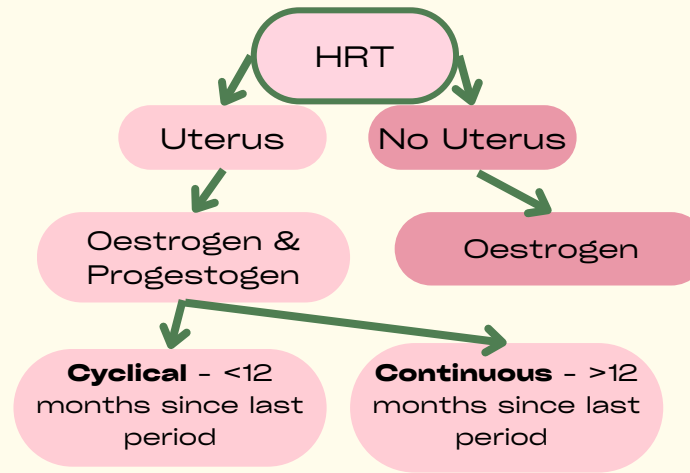
Over time your ovaries become less active, with fewer eggs primed for ovulation mid-cycle. Decline in ovary activity results in less oestrogen production - causing symptoms e.g. hot flush. As fewer eggs are developed, ovulation is more unlikely to occur causing these irregularities to your period in the peri-menopause.

## HRT - The Basics

HRT helps to alleviate symptoms by supplementing the hormones which are low in your body. It is these low levels of hormones which cause symptoms such as night sweats & hot flushes.

By “topping up” the hormone levels, it is hoped that symptoms will not be as significant.

## Types of HRT



HRT can be prescribed in several forms including; as a tablet, a patch, gels, vaginal creams/pessaries or a hormonal coil.

## Risks & Benefits of HRT

Decreased risk of:

- Coronary Heart Disease
- Diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Plus improved symptom control

Increased risk of:

- Breast Cancer
- Blood clots (VTE)
- Stroke

The risks & benefits of HRT are specific to the individuals' circumstances, family history and the type of HRT given e.g. patch vs tablet. Helpful visual decision aids can be found in the resources overleaf.

## General Advice

### Nutrition

Eat a healthy, balanced diet and ensure adequate intake of calcium & Vitamin D.

### Exercise

Guidance advises 150 minutes a week of moderate exercise e.g. walking, cycling. Add muscle-strengthening exercises twice weekly. This could be walking with heavy shopping bags, using weights or doing press-ups.

### Smoking & Alcohol

Quitting smoking will have far reaching benefits for your health, including reducing your risk of osteoporosis. Limiting alcohol can improve sleep and hot flushes.

### Screening

Please remember to take up your invite to attend screening programmes including cervical, breast & bowel screening.

### Contraception

Although fertility is low, contraception is required until the menopause.