



# Before You See the GP: A Support Guide for Menopause and Perimenopause

Menopause and perimenopause can feel overwhelming; but your GP appointment doesn't have to be.

This tool is here to help you feel clear, confident, and heard. The following suggestions can support you in preparing for your appointment. While things like nutrition, smoking, and weight can influence treatment options, you don't need to tick every box to be taken seriously.

Whether you're midway through making changes or unsure where to begin, you are entitled to care, compassion, and choice. The most important thing is that you show up and speak up.

**You don't have to have it all figured out, just be as prepared as you can be.**

## **Before Your Appointment:** Prepare and Reflect

- *Track your menstrual cycle:* Ideally for 2 months first. Note bleeding patterns, mood changes, energy levels, and cravings. (If you no longer have periods, just track the rest.)
- *Track your symptoms:* Bring a list or use my free Menopause Symptom Tracker.
- *Nutrition check-in:* Are you eating a balanced, nutrient-rich diet? Consider reducing alcohol and caffeine in the days before your appointment. It can help you tune into how your body feels without them.
- *Consider your weight:* Being in a healthy weight range, where possible, can open up more medical options. This is not shame, it's about access.
- *Smoking:* If you smoke, now's a good time to consider stopping, as risks increase with age
- *Contraception:* Do you still need it? You maybe able to combine HRT and contraception.
- *Lifestyle:* Consider how lifestyle factors affect your symptoms. How do your work, routines, or stress levels affect your symptoms? For example, are hot flushes making work presentations difficult?
- *Movement:* Are you moving regularly to protect your bone density and muscle mass after menopause? If not, what support might you need?
- *Prioritise:* Which symptoms affect your life the most? Sleep? Mood? Relationships? Confidence? Be specific – this helps your GP understand the real impact.
- *Know your goals:* Are you seeking reassurance? Looking to start HRT? Exploring alternatives? Be clear about what you hope to gain from your appointment.

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## **During Your Appointment:** Speak Up and Ask Questions

- *Be honest:* Don't downplay your symptoms or skip over anything that feels embarrassing. Your GP has heard it all before, their role is to support you, not judge you.
- *Remember:* Antidepressants are not a first-line treatment for perimenopause, though they may be helpful for some symptoms like hot flushes.
- *Ask about options:* Try asking: "What are the benefits of this treatment? And what are the risks if I don't do anything?"
- *Blood tests:* Hormone level tests aren't usually helpful unless you're under 45 and there's uncertainty about menopause. But bloods can help rule out other conditions like anaemia or thyroid issues.
- *Take someone for support:* It's okay to bring a friend, partner, or supporter — they can offer reassurance and help you remember what's discussed.
- *You can ask for a second opinion.* If something doesn't feel right, ask to see another GP. You deserve to feel heard, respected, and supported.
- *Book regular reviews:* Your needs may change over time. Make sure you check in regularly with GP, 3 monthly for the first year and then annually. Seek help again if your symptoms shift or worsen.

## **Final Reminder:**

You don't have to wait until things are unbearable to ask for help.

You know your body best, and when something doesn't feel right, that's reason enough to speak up.

**This is your health, your body, and your future and support is your right.**

## **Need Help Preparing?**

Not sure what to say, how to prioritise, or where to even start?

My Menopause Clarity Session is a one-hour space just for you; to feel heard, get clear on your symptoms, and create a plan you can take confidently to your GP.

**Book your Clarity Session here**

**<https://www.menopauseunmasked.com/product-page/1-hour-anything-menopause>**

You deserve to feel informed, supported, and in control.