

Empowering women on their journey through menopause

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Magazine

ISSUE 3 | 2025



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EMPOWERING WOMEN:  
FROM MENSTRUATION  
TO MENOPAUSE



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**Sarah  
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on sex, menopause  
& the myths

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# EMPOWERING WOMEN: FROM MENSTRUATION TO MENOPAUSE

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pauseLive!   
 SATURDAY 4TH OCTOBER 2025

Charlotte Body   
 THE POWER OF PAUSE

An interview with Charlotte Body on redefining women's health and empowerment



What is the main aim of the PAUSE Live event?

**A:** The core aim is to empower women by breaking the silence   
 around all women's health topics. We want to create an inclusive   
 community where women can share their stories, learn from   
 experts, and access resources that help them thrive during this   
 transition. It's about celebrating this stage of life, not fearing it.

What aspects of the event are you   
 most excited about?

**A:** I'm really excited about the diversity of voices we bring to   
 PAUSE Live. From medical experts to wellness coaches – each   
 person contributes something unique. Seeing women connect,   
 support each other, and leave feeling uplifted is incredibly   
 rewarding. Also, the energy at the live events is electric – it's a   
 reminder that none of us are alone in this journey!

How has your own journey through   
 perimenopause influenced the event's content   
 and approach?

**A:** My personal struggles made me realise how isolating this   
 experience can be. So, PAUSE Live focuses on honesty and   
 vulnerability. We tackle not just the physical symptoms but   
 the emotional and psychological impact too. We address   
 relationships, identity, career shifts – all those layers that often   
 get overlooked.

What are your hopes for the future   
 of PAUSE Live?

**A:** I want PAUSE Live to grow beyond live events into a global   
 movement. I also hope to expand our support network, collaborate   
 with more organisations, and continue advocating for better   
 education and healthcare around menopause. Ultimately, I want   
 every woman to know she has a community cheering her on.

What advice would you give to women currently   
 navigating perimenopause, especially those   
 dealing with additional life challenges?

**A:** Be kind to yourself and seek out support, whether that's   
 friends, professionals, or communities like PAUSE Live.   
 Remember, this phase is a transition, not an ending. It's okay   
 to ask for help, to express your feelings, and to prioritise your   
 wellbeing.

You bring such vibrant energy to PAUSE Live   
 – what keeps you feeling fun and youthful,   
 especially during such a transformative time   
 in life?

**A:** Thank you! Honestly, I think staying curious and open to new   
 experiences is key. I've learned to laugh at myself, not take life too   
 seriously, and surround myself with other women who lift me up!

What do you most want women to take away   
 from their experience at PAUSE Live?

**A:** I want every woman to walk away feeling seen,   
 supported, and empowered. Whether it's learning   
 something new, making a meaningful connection, or simply   
 realising she's not alone. My hope is that they leave with a   
 sense of possibility, with tools to take care of their bodies   
 and minds, and with the confidence to embrace this phase   
 of life as a new beginning.

And just for fun—what's one guilty pleasure or   
 little ritual that gets you through a tough day?

**A:** Ohhhh... it has to be dancing to rave music in the   
 kitchen! Sometimes, a cheeky glass of wine in hand!

“ We tackle not just the   
 physical symptoms but the   
 emotional and psychological   
 impact too.

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MTick applies to our capsule range tested against the 48 signs of menopause—Empower Perimenopause found to support 33 signs and Empower Menopause 34.  
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**CHECK  
YOUR  
VULVA**  
#KNOWYOURNORMAL

4



We are rewriting the story of women's health. Because when you know your normal, you can reclaim your voice, your body, and your wellbeing.

# CHECK YOUR VULVA

#KNOWYOURNORMAL

Try checking in once a month & don't hesitate to speak to your GP if something feels off.

**YOUR VULVA, LIKE THE REST OF YOUR BODY, CHANGES OVER TIME. THINGS LIKE AGE, HORMONAL SHIFTS, PREGNANCY, CHILDBIRTH, AND EVEN LIFESTYLE CAN ALL INFLUENCE HOW YOUR VULVA LOOKS AND FEELS.**

Every vulva is unique – there's no "perfect" shape, size, or colour. That's why it's important to get to know your normal, rather than comparing yourself to others or what you've seen online.

Regular self-checks are a powerful way to stay in tune with your health, spot any changes early, and build body confidence.



#KNOWYOURNORMAL

## What to Look For:

### Appearance

- Note the shape, size, and symmetry of the labia and surrounding area.
- It's totally normal for one side to look different from the other.

### Texture

- Skin should generally feel soft and smooth.
- Watch for any thickened areas, lumps, sores, or bumps that weren't there before.

### Colour

- A healthy vulva is often pink or reddish-pink, but your natural colour may vary.
- Be mindful of darkening, redness, or paleness that's new or persistent.

### Discharge

- Normal discharge is clear or white and may have a mild scent.
- Look out for unusual colours (yellow, green), strong odour, or a change in amount.

### Other symptoms

- Take note of any itching, burning, pain, or discomfort.
- Any spotting or bleeding outside of your period should be taken seriously.

### Pubic hair

- Changes in growth, texture, or distribution may be worth discussing with a doctor.

## When to Contact a Healthcare Professional:

- ➔ Lumps or sores that don't heal or are getting bigger
- ➔ Skin changes like thickening, unusual texture, or colour changes
- ➔ Persistent itching, burning, or pain that home care doesn't help
- ➔ Unusual discharge in colour, consistency, or smell
- ➔ Bleeding that isn't part of your normal menstrual cycle



### Final thought:

Your vulva is yours—and knowing what's normal for you is one of the most powerful things you can do for your health. Try checking in once a month and don't hesitate to speak to your GP if something feels off. You know your body best.



# Rants and Big Pants:

## The *best* and *worst* menopause advice we've ever had

*When you hit perimenopause, the advice rolls in thick and fast. Whether it's from friends, doctors, social media or well-meaning partners and colleagues, it can be overwhelming, confusing and sometimes downright unhelpful. Add in a dose of hormone-induced irritation, and that "helpful advice" can get right on your nerves. So, we sat down with midlife influencers Rants and Big Pants, who've not only lived it but built a whole community around talking about it – out loud, proud and with zero shame.*



Known for their Big Weekenders, where women gather for expert talks, honest chats and serious belly laughs, these two are cutting through all the noise to share the advice that actually helped, what they wish they'd known and what we all need to stop saying.

### The worst advice?

One of the biggest frustrations the pair shares is the mountain of one-size-fits-all advice thrown around online these days.

"When we first started, there was hardly anybody talking about menopause, right?" they say, "but now that menopause has become this loud online conversation, which is great in some ways, everyone's offering advice based solely on their own story. And that

can be dangerous. Got achy joints? Try magnesium. Or turmeric. Or cod liver oil. Or... or... or," they laugh. "It's constant, it's overwhelming, and the messaging just gets so confusing."

They're not against people sharing their experiences, far from it. "Stories matter," dB agrees, "but if you're sharing what worked for you, be really clear that that's all it is: your story. Have a disclaimer saying 'I'm not a GP, I'm not an expert'. Because what worked for you could genuinely make someone else feel worse."

Neens adds, "You have to check whether you can actually take some of these things if you're already on medication. That's a massive one. I wouldn't want someone taking something just because I mentioned

it and then they come back to me saying it clashed with their sertraline or something. That's serious."

Their message? Menopause is not a formula. It's a personal journey. Trust the experts, explore your options and go at your own pace.

### The best advice?

One of the most powerful takeaways from Rants and Big Pants is this: you deserve proper care and support during menopause and you shouldn't have to fight for it.

Their top tip? Be prepared. Going into a GP appointment without a plan rarely ends well. That's why they always recommend writing down your symptoms, your concerns and questions ahead of time. It's easy for your mind to go blank once you're in the room, especially when you're not feeling your best or you're dealing with brain fog. "Don't wing it. You'll forget everything once you're in there," they say.

They're also passionate about helping women understand their right to ask about and access treatments like HRT. Too often, women feel like they aren't being heard and need to beg for help. But the truth is: you're entitled to support. If your GP isn't listening? Push. Or pivot.

One of them had to go private to get the care she needed. "It was an

investment," she admits. "But if I fall apart, I can't look after anyone else." They also acknowledge the fear many women have about HRT, something they hear from their community regularly. Their advice is simple: If a doctor has prescribed it for you, try it. See how it works. And if it doesn't feel right? You can always stop. The most important thing is that you feel empowered, not pressured.

### What they wish they'd known sooner

"When we were younger, we didn't even know what menopause was," they reflect. "At least now, our daughters know it's coming. They can prepare." Back then, information was scarce and while the conversation has moved on, they know we're still in a period of transition. "We're not where we need to be, but we're miles ahead of where our mums and nans were."

They also encourage women to be open-minded when it comes to evolving treatments, even if that means accepting that we don't have all the answers yet. "Are we guinea pigs for different HRT combinations? Probably. But if it's working and giving you your life back, then fair play."

Their advice? Be cautious but not closed off. Stay curious. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

### Don't get in your own way

Weight gain, bloating and a changing body can leave you feeling like a stranger in your own skin. Rants and Big Pants say it's time to stop punishing yourself for that.

"If you want to lose weight, go for it. But don't hate yourself while you're doing it," they say. "That does nothing but put you in a bad headspace and make you crave chocolate," they laugh.

They know how much menopause messes with your confidence. But instead of trying to fix yourself, they say the focus should be on kindness, patience and self-care. "Menopause is tough enough without adding guilt to the mix."



### A NOTE TO THE MEN

*For the men reading, or more likely the women sharing this with them, here's their last piece of advice: "Never (and we mean never) say 'Is this because of your menopause?' Just don't."*



## EMPOWERING WOMEN: FROM MENSTRUATION TO MENOPAUSE



Join us for the third edition of the UK's largest menopause and women's health event!

**PAUSE Live is the unapologetic powerhouse shaking up women's health. It's not just an event, it's a full-on revolution in culture and confidence. At PAUSE Live, we're here to support women of all ages, because every stage of womanhood deserves the proper attention and care.**

Throughout the event, we will be hosting a number of transformative workshops.

Our workshops are thoughtfully designed to explore the unique challenges younger women navigate. Through powerful quotes and meaningful petitions, we aim to spark conversation and spotlight the importance of women's health and emotional wellbeing.

Each session opens with a brief introduction, guiding attendees straight to the heart of the action.

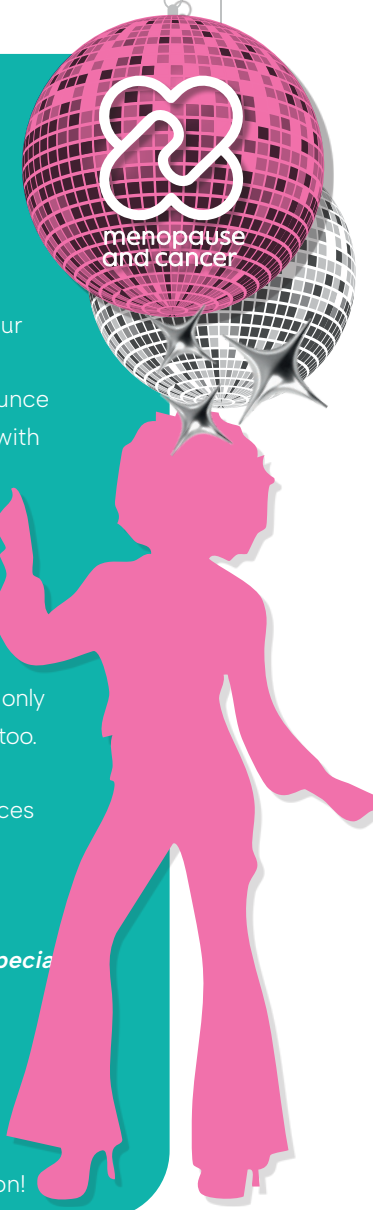
**Menopause and Cancer Workshop** Join us for an insightful and empowering session exploring the unique challenges faced by cancer survivors navigating menopause.

**Understanding Endometriosis** Join us for an honest and informative session shedding light on endometriosis, an often misunderstood and underdiagnosed condition.

**PMDD and PCOS: Stories, Science & Support** Join us for a powerful and informative session exploring two often overlooked and misunderstood conditions, Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD) and Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS).

**Menopause and the workplace** Explore the impact of menopause at work, learn strategies for self-advocacy, and discover how employers can foster a supportive and inclusive environment.

### GROOVE through life



#### Dance-a-Thon to Make a Difference

Dust off your dancing shoes and unleash your inner dancing diva! PAUSE Live is turning up the music to announce an exciting Dance-a-Thon in collaboration with Menopause and Cancer.

The Dance-a-Thon will feature dances from cultures around the world – think Afrobeats energy, bhangra beats, and a splash of disco glitter, all designed to get hearts pumping, hips shaking, and smiles spreading. Movement as an inclusive tool not only for health, but for connection and enjoyment too.

We're bringing all communities together through the joy of dance. This series of dances invites women of all ages and abilities to move in a fun, free and liberating way, all whilst raising vital funds.

**On September 19, we will be holding a special dance practise session via Zoom to get you warmed up for the final Dance-a-Thon at PAUSE Live.**

Can't resist the call of the dancefloor? Come along to the PAUSE Live event in London and join the Dance-a-Thon in person!

### CELEBRATING EVERY CHAPTER OF WOMEN'S HEALTH

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#### Meet your presenters:

##### Live Stage Highlights

**Cherry Healy** is one of the original menopause voices. It has been a long-term ambition of Cherry's to front a women's health format, and it has become a reality.

**Neems** brings the laughs – for their iconic big pants and brilliantly blunt rants. At PAUSE, she's serving humour with heart and keeping it unapologetically real.

**Menopausal Pin-Up** is the true Essex icon. Celebrated for her raw honesty and fearless voice, she's showing the world that authenticity is the new glam.

**Dr Hilary Jones** takes the stage with the kind of medical insight that is clear, credible, and always on point. At PAUSE, he's the trusted voice turning health talk into headline moments.

**Emma Neville** is a qualified menopause coach, counsellor, and founder of the 'This Is Me' community – bringing her lived experience to the conversation around early menopause and women's health.

#### Education Stage Sessions

- **Dr Shirin Lakhani** is leading the charge on vulva health – bold, brilliant, and breaking taboos. As the face of the 'Know Your Normal – Check Your Vulva' campaign, she's turning quiet conversations into a movement.
- Meet **Dr Itunu Johnson-Sogbetun** – GP, trailblazer, and unapologetic voice for women's health. From diversity to empowerment, she's front and centre, challenging norms and championing change.
- **Weight loss injections** – Pause is your go-to for separating fact from fiction in the world of weight loss. If GPL 1's caught your eye, we've got the UK's leading experts giving you the real lowdown.

#### Wellbeing Activities

From journalling and meditation to energising boxing workouts, our sessions are designed to support every aspect of wellbeing – giving participants the freedom to choose what feels good for both their body and mind.

#### Booking Information

**How to book** Our easy-to-use booking system now gives you the chance to try a tasty teaser of the NeoGen celebrity facial for just £50 at PAUSE Live! This 30-minute treatment offers a glimpse of the lift, glow and tightening that comes with a full course. All proceeds go directly to PAUSE Lives' charity partner Menopause and Cancer.

Advance online booking is essential to secure your spot. Treatments will take place at Stand A5. NeoGen Plasma is non-invasive, needle-free and clinically proven to stimulate collagen and elastin for natural, surgical-standard results, with minimal downtime.

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# Confidence IN EVERY STRAND

*Andrew Barton is one of the UK's most celebrated celebrity hairstylists, known for his transformative work on TV's '10 Years Younger' and his award-winning career spanning top salons and global brands.*

**Menopause can bring unexpected changes to hair texture and volume. What are the most common hair concerns you see in menopausal women?**

The most common change is at the most obvious part of the hair, the front, which often causes alarm for women as they see a density change at the hair line. This makes the hair harder to manage and style and therefore lowers their confidence and self-esteem, often at a time in their life when so many hormonal changes are also happening.

**Hair thinning and hair loss are major concerns during menopause. What are your top tips for managing and styling thinning hair?**

It's not a straightforward answer as hair styling is individual for each person and much also depends on their ideas of their personal style identity. Generally, hairstyles that have some suggestion of curl or wave give the illusion of fuller thicker hair where flat straight hair sits close to the head shape. A good hairdresser should encourage with honest advice and focus on what is possible rather than over promising. I'm always keen to manage people's expectations which is a good starting point.

**Are there any specific haircuts or layering techniques that help create the illusion of fuller hair?**

A bespoke hair cut can not only transform how someone looks but how they feel about themselves too.

Generally, haircuts that avoid over layering but with subtle face framing sections around the front can be suitable to achieve fuller looking hair. This helps the hair to move freely as it's styled. There are lots of techniques I use to create a more flattering and fuller look.

**What are your favourite styling tricks that are easy to execute at home?**

Tipping your hair upside down before blow-drying and basting the roots rotating the dryer helps to lift the roots which are the hardest part of the hair to dry. Using a round brush will also help to boost volume rather than flat brush. Always use a styling spray or mousse, as this will make a blow-dry restyle last longer. When using a round brush to add movement to a blow-dry, clip the curled section of hair into a barrel shape. Allowing it to cool into shape will give a longer lasting result.

**What role does colour play in creating the look of thicker, more vibrant hair—and are there any shades or techniques you suggest for menopausal hair?**

Menopausal hair conditions are usually related to density loss. Hair colouring techniques that include multi-dimensional tones and various woven strands of hair in strategic areas can give the effect of fuller hair. Solid colours are generally harder to maintain and tend not to give the hair colour texture. On thinner hair, be careful with bleach products, they may give high levels of lift but can also result in damage and a more transparent effect.

*with Andrew Barton*

Lighter tones can work well to add texture but the less lifting the better, think biscuit or latte tones rather than brighter blondes. Colour can definitely add more dimension to the hair and illuminate the skin tone.

**Can you share a few quick, confidence-boosting hair tips that women can do in under five minutes?**

- 1 Dry shampoo can be an on-the-go saviour
- 2 Touch up colour wands can disguise grey roots between colour appointments
- 3 Sounds simple but pushing the hair back off the face, including over the crown, instantly lifts the hair
- 4 Flexible light weight hairsprays can instantly fix even a tired blow-dry. Tip your head back and give the hair a shake as you apply the hero of styling products.

@andrew\_barton\_hair

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**Nikita**

After being peri menopause for a few years and thinning quite a bit because of it! This gave me a real confidence boost!



**Sharon**

Allevi8 has definitely helped with my mood and I would highly recommend.



**Jane**

My menopausal hair is longer and thicker and my hairdresser agrees.



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# Magnificent menopause

## Alison Bladhs' Guide to thriving through the change

### You've dedicated your career to supporting women through perimenopause, menopause, and post-menopause. What inspired you?

I have spent more than three decades working with women in both nutritional therapy and beauty therapy, and over the years I kept hearing the same story repeated in my clinic. Brilliant, capable women were struggling with symptoms that were dismissed as "just stress" or "part of getting older". They were often left to piece together conflicting advice from friends, magazines, and the internet, which was both confusing and disheartening.

I realised there was a gap not just in knowledge, but in the kind of support that meets women where they are. My background allowed me to see the full picture, from what's going on internally with hormones and metabolism, to how that affects skin, confidence, and daily life. I wanted to bridge that gap with realistic, evidence-based strategies that women could actually use in their busy lives. That combination of professional expertise and deep empathy for what my clients were going through became the foundation of my work and my passion.

### What were some of the most surprising or difficult aspects of menopause for you personally?

The brain fog was the biggest shock.

I've always been organised and able to juggle a lot, but suddenly I was forgetting words mid-sentence and misplacing things constantly. It was unsettling and at times, it chipped away at my confidence. I was also surprised by the effect on my stress tolerance. Things I could once brush off suddenly felt overwhelming. And then there was the impact on my sleep, waking up in the night for no apparent reason and struggling to get back to sleep, which made everything else harder.

On a physical level, I noticed changes in my body composition and skin, a clear reminder that lasting transformation starts from the inside out. Menopause isn't about one isolated symptom, it creates a ripple effect that touches every part of your life, which is why a whole-body approach is essential.

### Congratulations on your new book – *Have a Magnificent Menopause* – can you tell us about it?

Thank you! Writing this book has been on my mind for years because I kept seeing the same need in my clients, a clear, compassionate, and practical roadmap for navigating menopause without overwhelm. I truly believe every woman, no matter what age, deserves to feel vibrant and beautiful, and that belief runs through every page of this book. When I was researching for the book, the underlying thing I kept hearing

from women was, "Just tell me what to do." They didn't want jargon or endless theory, they wanted clear steps they could follow straight away. I wanted it to be something women could dip in and out of, not a dense textbook that ends up gathering dust. It's full of real-life, do-able strategies that fit into a busy lifestyle, whether you're working, caring for family, or both. I also knew I wanted to include the beauty and skincare side, because feeling good in your skin is an important part of feeling like yourself again. In short, I wrote the book I wish I'd had when my own symptoms started, one that would have saved me a lot of trial and error.

**“Menopause isn't about one isolated symptom, it creates a ripple effect that touches every part of your life”**

### What makes this book different from other menopause guides on the market?

So many menopause books are either very clinical or overly fluffy. I wanted to land right in the middle, evidence-based, but written in a warm, relatable way that feels like a conversation rather than a lecture. Each chapter ends with simple actions, checklists, and "quick wins" so you can start making changes

immediately. It's not about perfection, it's about progress. And because I'm also a beauty therapist, I've woven in advice on skin health, body confidence, and self-care that goes beyond just diet and exercise.

Because this book is real. It's written for the woman who's tired of being told to "just manage" or "wait it out." It's not filled with jargon or unrealistic wellness trends, it's practical, grounded, and designed for women with busy lives who want real results. What makes it truly different is that it combines everything I've learned in over 30 years as both a registered nutritional therapist and a beauty therapist. You're not just getting the science, you're getting the full picture, how to feel better inside and out.

This book doesn't just cover hot flushes and hormones, it tackles weight gain, energy crashes, anxiety, brain fog, skin changes, and loss of confidence. Then it gives you simple, evidence-based solutions you can actually do without turning your life upside down. It's not one-size-fits-all, because every woman is different, and *Have a Magnificent Menopause*

helps you find your own way through this chapter of life. It's not just a guide, it's a supportive, straight-talking companion that walks beside you. No fluff. No fear. Just honest, actionable advice that works. And that's what women need right now.

### Can you share a favourite tip or strategy from the book that readers have found helpful?

Some popular strategies from the book include the "10-Minute Recharge" stepping away from screens, preferably outdoors, to reset your energy and focus; the "Two-Minute Skin Boost" ending your shower with a short burst of cooler water, then sealing in moisture with a nourishing oil while your skin is still damp for an instant glow; and the "One More Plant" rule adding one extra fruit, vegetable, seed, or herb to every meal to feed your gut, balance hormones, and improve overall wellbeing.

These are just a handful of the quick, realistic wins in *Have a Magnificent Menopause*, the kind of simple changes that can make a big difference without turning your life upside down.

### What do you hope readers will take away from your book, especially those just beginning their menopause journey?

I want every reader to know they are not broken and they are certainly not alone. Menopause can feel like a storm, but it's also an opportunity to reset, rebuild and feel stronger than you have in years. You don't need to overhaul your whole life to see results, the right small changes, done consistently, can transform your energy, mood, skin, and confidence.

This book gives you the tools, strategies, and shortcuts I've seen work for thousands of women, the exact steps to take when you're wondering where to start. It's your guide, your reference, and your cheerleader, showing you that you can feel energised, clear-headed, and confident again. It all begins with one decision: to put your health back at the top of your list.

### Lastly, what's your favourite way to unwind after a long day — bubble bath, binge-worthy series, or a walk in nature?

A walk in the woods is my ultimate reset. There's something about being surrounded by nature, noticing the light through the trees, and breathing in fresh air that instantly brings my nervous system down a notch. When I get home, I love to cook something simple but nourishing, maybe a piece of salmon with roasted vegetables and then curl up with a good book. I've learned that good sleep starts with how you wind down, and that gentle transition from a busy day to restful evening is one of my favourite rituals.





# Understanding Your Body:

Dr. Shirin's

## Guide to Knowing What's Normal

**Your work is a powerful blend of science, empathy, and advocacy. How has your journey shaped the way you approach women's health care today?**

"My journey into women's health has been shaped by both science and lived experience. As a doctor, I'm deeply committed to evidence-based medicine — every recommendation I make is grounded in research. But over the years, I've seen how women's concerns, especially around intimate and menopausal health, are often overlooked or minimised. That's where empathy and advocacy come in.

I've worked extensively with women living with lichen sclerosus, a painful and often underdiagnosed condition that can profoundly affect

confidence, relationships, and sexual wellbeing. Many of these patients have been told for years that there's 'nothing more' that can be done — yet with innovative approaches like radiofrequency microneedling combined with platelet-rich plasma, we've been able to improve symptoms and restore quality of life.

Similarly, my work with sexual dysfunction — whether linked to menopause, hormonal changes, or pelvic floor issues — has shown me how deeply these challenges affect both physical and emotional health. It's why I believe in taking a holistic approach: addressing the biological cause, supporting emotional resilience, and empowering women with the knowledge to advocate for themselves.

This combination of scientific rigour, compassionate listening, and a determination to challenge the status quo means my approach today is as much about changing the conversation around women's health as it is about delivering excellent clinical care."

**“Ultimately, this campaign is about empowerment. When women know their normal, they're in the best position to protect their health**

### Know Your Normal – Check Your Vulva Campaign

**You launched the 'Know Your Normal – Check Your Vulva' campaign to encourage vulval self-awareness. Why was this initiative so important to you?**

"The 'Know Your Normal – Check Your Vulva' campaign was born out of frustration at how late so many vulval conditions are diagnosed. As a doctor, I've seen far too many women come to me with advanced lichen sclerosus, skin changes that have been dismissed for years, or even vulval cancers that could have been detected earlier. Unlike breast checks, vulval self-examination simply isn't talked about — it's still shrouded in taboo and embarrassment. I wanted to normalise the idea that your vulva is just another part of your body you can and should get to know, so you can spot changes early and seek help.

**The idea of regularly checking your vulva is still taboo for many. What do you say to those who feel awkward or unsure about where to start?**

For those who feel awkward or unsure where to start, I always say: this isn't about sexual activity, it's about health awareness. Just like checking your breasts, it's a simple act of self-care. You can use a hand mirror in a comfortable, private space and take a few minutes to look for changes — things like new lumps, colour changes, patches of thickened skin, sores, or any pain or itching. I often recommend starting by looking once a month so you build confidence and familiarity over time.

**There's often confusion between what's "normal" and what's not when it comes to vulval appearance. How can people better understand the wide range of what's normal for their own bodies?**

When it comes to knowing what's 'normal', the truth is there's a huge range in vulval appearance — just as every face is different, so is every vulva. The key is to learn your normal so you can notice when something changes. That's why I encourage women not to compare themselves to images online, which are often altered or unrepresentative. Instead, focus on your own baseline: your skin tone, texture, symmetry, and how it feels day to day. If something changes and it doesn't go back to normal after a couple of weeks, that's your cue to get it checked.

Ultimately, this campaign is about empowerment. When women know their normal, they're in the best position to protect their health — and break down the stigma that's kept vulval care in the shadows for too long."

### Understanding

#### & Treating Vaginal Atrophy

**Vaginal atrophy is a condition that affects so many, yet it's rarely talked about. What do readers need to know?**

"Vaginal atrophy — now often called Genitourinary Syndrome of Menopause — is incredibly common, yet still shrouded in silence. It's caused by a decline in oestrogen, which leads to thinning, dryness, and reduced elasticity of the vaginal tissues. This can result in discomfort during sex, itching, burning, urinary issues, and a general loss of confidence. Too often, women think these symptoms are an inevitable part of ageing — but they're not something you have to just 'put up with'.

**What kinds of treatments are available today for vaginal atrophy: both hormonal and non-hormonal? And how do you determine the best course of action?**

The good news is there's a range of safe and effective treatments available today — both hormonal and non-hormonal.

- Hormonal options include local oestrogen creams, pessaries, or tablets that work directly on the tissues to restore moisture, elasticity, and pH balance.
- Non-hormonal options range from high-quality lubricants and vaginal moisturisers to advanced regenerative treatments. These include energy-based devices like EmpowerRF, which combines radiofrequency and electrical muscle stimulation to improve blood flow, collagen production, and pelvic floor strength.
- I also offer the O-Shot®, an innovative treatment using platelet-rich plasma (PRP) from the patient's own blood, which is injected into targeted areas

to stimulate tissue regeneration, enhance lubrication, and improve sensitivity. For many women, these treatments can be life-changing — restoring comfort, intimacy, and confidence.

Choosing the right approach starts with a detailed consultation. I look at the severity of symptoms, overall health, any history of hormone-sensitive conditions, and the patient's own preferences. Sometimes we begin with simple moisturisers or lubricants and build up to more advanced therapies; other times, a combination of local oestrogen and regenerative treatments like the O-Shot® or EmpowerRF delivers the best results.

**Many people assume vaginal atrophy is just 'part of ageing' and something to put up with — how do you challenge that mindset, and why is it so important to seek support?**

The idea that vaginal atrophy is just part of ageing is outdated and harmful. You wouldn't accept chronic knee pain without exploring treatment options, so why should you tolerate ongoing discomfort in such an intimate and important part of your body? These symptoms can affect relationships, mental wellbeing, and day-to-day comfort — and early intervention not only relieves symptoms but also prevents them from worsening.

My message is simple: you don't have to choose between living with discomfort and taking risks. There are safe, effective solutions that can restore your quality of life, and you deserve to feel comfortable, confident, and fully yourself at every stage."



## Breaking the Silence

**Shame and stigma still prevent many people from speaking up about intimate symptoms. What advice would you give to someone who feels dismissed or ignored when they do seek help?**

"Shame and stigma are two of the biggest barriers to getting help for intimate symptoms. I've met so many women who've been living with pain, itching, dryness, or sexual dysfunction for years because they've either been too embarrassed to speak up, or because when they did, their concerns were brushed aside. My advice is: don't give up. If you feel dismissed, seek a second opinion — ideally from someone with a special interest in women's intimate health. Keep a clear record of your symptoms, how long they've been happening, and how they affect your daily life. This makes it harder for anyone to downplay what you're experiencing and helps you advocate for yourself.

Remember: you're the expert on your own body. If something feels wrong or different, that's valid. You don't need to justify your discomfort or wait until it's unbearable before asking for help. And importantly, these issues are common — you are not alone, and there is no shame in wanting to feel comfortable and confident in your body.

**How can healthcare professionals, especially GPs, better support and validate their patients' concerns in this area?**

For healthcare professionals — especially GPs — there's a huge opportunity to do better in this space. First and foremost, listen without judgement. Many women come into the consultation room already feeling embarrassed or fearful they'll

be dismissed. Simple things — like allowing time for the patient to speak, using clear and non-clinical language, and reassuring them that what they're experiencing is common and treatable — can make a huge difference.

Education is also key. Understanding conditions like lichen sclerosus, vaginal atrophy, and sexual dysfunction — and being aware of both traditional and newer treatment options such as local oestrogen, regenerative therapies like the O-Shot®, and devices like EmpowerRF — ensures you can offer solutions tailored to each woman's needs. And if you don't have the expertise yourself, signposting to a specialist should be the next step, not the last resort.

Ultimately, creating a culture where women feel safe, heard, and respected when discussing intimate health is the first step towards ending the cycle of silence and unnecessary suffering."

## Looking Forward

**You've helped create real change in how we talk about vulval and vaginal health. What's next for you and your work?**

"I'm proud of the progress we've made in breaking the silence around vulval and vaginal health, but there's still so much more to do. My next steps involve expanding public education through campaigns like Know Your Normal, developing resources that make intimate health information accessible and non-intimidating, and continuing to push for earlier diagnosis of conditions like lichen sclerosus and vaginal atrophy. Clinically, I'm focusing on refining innovative treatments — from regenerative therapies like the O-Shot® to advanced technologies like EmpowerRF — so more women can benefit from personalised, evidence-

based care. I'm also passionate about ensuring women have access to holistic care that goes beyond symptom management — care that addresses confidence, comfort, and overall quality of life.

Medical aesthetics clinics play an important role in this. They're often the first point of contact for women who might never have raised intimate concerns with their GP. Many come in for skin or facial treatments, but during consultation reveal symptoms like dryness, pain, or sexual dysfunction. These conversations open the door for education and referral — and for clinics that specialise in intimate health, like mine, it means we can offer solutions from hormone support to regenerative treatments such as the O-Shot® and advanced technologies like EmpowerRF.

I want to work more closely with healthcare professionals, especially GPs and practice nurses, to improve confidence in recognising and managing intimate health issues. If we can equip primary care with the knowledge and tools to act early, we can transform outcomes for thousands of women.

I'm also heavily involved in events like Pause Live, which brings professionals and patients together to share knowledge and empower women with real options; and Menopause in Practice, which focuses on educating healthcare practitioners. These platforms are vital for normalising conversations about menopause and intimate health, breaking the old narrative that these symptoms are just something you 'put up with'. They also ensure practitioners stay at the cutting edge of what's safe, effective, and evidence-based — so we can collectively raise the standard of care.

**Finally, if you could leave our readers with one empowering message, what would it be?**

If I could leave readers with one empowering message, it would be this: Your intimate health is just as important as every other part of your wellbeing. There is nothing shameful about your body or your needs. Know your normal, speak up if something changes, and don't settle for being dismissed. You deserve to live without discomfort, to enjoy intimacy without pain, and to feel confident and healthy at every stage of life."

**"I want to work more closely with healthcare professionals, especially GPs and practice nurses, to improve confidence in recognising and managing intimate health issues."**



## Dr Shirin Lakhani

**MBBS, MRCA, MRCGP, DRCOG, ACCMA**

Dr Shirin Lakhani is a leading cosmetic doctor specialising in advanced aesthetic treatments. She trained as an anaesthetist before becoming a practicing GP. In 2013, she founded Elite Aesthetics, an award-winning aesthetic clinic. Dr Lakhani has specialist expertise in intimate health and hormone replacement therapy for both men and women. She frequently appears on television and in the press, contributing to aesthetic journals and speaking at major UK aesthetics conferences.





“Women’s health has been underserved for too long. It’s time to take menopause seriously.”

Dr Hilary Jones

# Say hello to M-Club.

## A fresh, feel-good brand that’s already winning fans in the menopause space.

If there’s one name making real waves right now, it’s M-Club. Thoughtfully created with expert insight and clinical backing, this high street brand is all about meeting women exactly where they are. Whether that’s at the first signs of perimenopause or navigating life after menopause.

Designed by health and wellbeing pioneers The Body Doctor, M-Club is more than just a product line. It’s a movement. Built to support the 15.5 million women in the UK currently experiencing perimenopause or menopause, the brand is breaking barriers by offering affordable, expert-backed products and a growing platform for information, connection, and community.

### Smart Products. Real Support.

Now available in select Boots and

Morrisons stores, on Amazon, and via [m-club.co.uk](https://m-club.co.uk), the M-Club range features 18 hormone-free products across three easy-to-navigate collections:

- **M-Body** – easing the physical effects of menopause
- **M-Power** – supporting energy, mood, and balance
- **M-Bed** – helping women get the restful, restorative sleep they need.

From cooling mists and dry eye relief to oral spray supplements and pillow sprays, each product has been developed with input from healthcare professionals and created to meet the real needs of real women.

And if that wasn’t enough, M-Club’s entire range proudly carries the MTick from GenM, the trusted symbol that guarantees a product is menopause-friendly.

## Our Tried & Tested Favourites

We were lucky enough to get our hands on some of the range, and spoiler alert: we’re obsessed. Here are our top picks from each collection...

### Cooling Mist (M-Body) –

A handbag essential for sudden hot flushes. Lightweight, refreshing and non-sticky. We didn’t know we needed it... now we don’t leave the house without it.



### Wellbeing & Relaxation Oral Spray

(M-Power) – Fast-absorbing, vitamin-rich and surprisingly tasty. A brilliant boost for mental clarity and stress support.

### Restful Nights Pillow Spray (M-Bed)

– Chamomile and lavender in a blissful bedtime blend. One tester finally slept through the night after weeks of restless 3am wakeups.

## Changing the Menopause Conversation

M-Club isn’t just about symptom relief, it’s about redefining menopause support in a way that feels empowering, inclusive and accessible. That’s why the brand is building a vibrant digital community, sharing expert guidance and amplifying real women’s voices across its platforms.

It’s also collaborating with some of the most trusted names in women’s health. The M-Club advisory team includes British Menopause Society Advanced Specialist Melissa Sookia and menopause and fertility coach Sarah



“Menopause isn’t something you can just power through

Sarah Banks



Banks, both of whom have shaped the brand’s compassionate, science-led approach.

### As Sarah Banks puts it:

“Menopause isn’t something you can just power through – it brings huge hormonal shifts that impact every part of life. Women deserve products designed specifically for them, to help ease the symptoms and changes they’re going through.”

### And according to Dr Hilary Jones, who also advises the brand:

“Women’s health has been underserved for too long. It’s time to take menopause seriously. What M-Club is doing is refreshing. The products are smart, the advice is practical, and the mission is clear. We need more of this.”

## Making Menopause Mainstream

M-Club’s launch is just the beginning. Earlier this year, the brand was the headline sponsor of The Future of Healthcare, an exclusive event hosted by

PAUSE Live, where policymakers, GPs and health leaders gathered to discuss the urgent need for better menopause support.

That partnership continues at PAUSE Live this October, where M-Club will exhibit its full range and connect directly with the menopause community. Dr Hilary Jones will also attend, lending his voice to the growing call for visibility, access and innovation in women’s health.

## Why M-Club

The truth? Women don’t need gimmicks. They need real solutions that actually support their journey through one of the most transformative stages of life. And with M-Club, they’re finally getting exactly that.

So, if you’ve been looking for a brand that sees you, supports you and is actively changing the conversation, it’s time to join the club.

[m-club.co.uk](https://m-club.co.uk)





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“ Like many women in midlife, this patient noticed her skin had started to lose its glow and firmness. Fine lines were forming, her cheeks looked flatter, and her hair – especially around the hairline – was becoming noticeably thinner.

# Reclaiming Radiance

One woman's journey to healthier skin and hair during menopause, by Dr Raquel Amado

As women, we expect certain changes in our bodies as we age. But menopause often catches us off guard – not only in how we feel, but in how we look.

Thinning hair. Dry, crepey skin. Loss of facial volume. These often-overlooked effects can seriously impact self-confidence. The good news? With the right care, it's possible to restore skin and hair health naturally.

Let me introduce you to one of my patients, a vibrant 53-year-old who came to me seeking just that.

Like many women in midlife, she noticed her skin losing glow and firmness, fine lines forming, cheeks flattening, and hair thinning along her hairline. She was already using professional products, but wanted something that addressed the root causes.

Through consultation and blood tests to rule out deficiencies, we created a holistic plan to restore her

skin's structure, boost hair growth, and help her feel like herself again.

## Why menopause affects your skin and hair

Hormones are powerful – and when they shift, our skin and hair respond. During menopause, falling oestrogen and androgen levels reduce collagen, hydration, and hair follicle health.

Women can lose up to 30% of their skin's collagen in the first five years after menopause, which explains the rapid changes many experience:

- Thinning hair and receding hairline
- Dry, sagging, or wrinkled skin
- Redness, flushing, or increased sensitivity
- Pigmentation or uneven tone
- Fine lines around eyes, mouth, and neck

Understanding why these changes

happen gives us a roadmap to reverse them.

## The 360° renewal plan

We worked from the inside out, using regenerative tools to encourage the body's own repair systems.

### 1. Skin prep with polynucleotides

We began with Plines® and Newest® – advanced skin-repair injectables made from purified DNA fragments (safe and sterile) that stimulate collagen, elastin, and hydration. Newest also contains hyaluronic acid for an added plumping effect.

Over four monthly sessions to the face, neck, and chest, her skin regained elasticity, smoothness, and a natural glow.

### 2. Facial volume and glow restoration

Once her skin was healthier, we used NCTF® 135 HA (by Fillmed) – a hyaluronic acid-based skin booster enriched with antioxidants, vitamins, and amino acids to deeply nourish and hydrate from within.





sessions reduced shedding, improved scalp health, and encouraged new baby hairs at her hairline.

### The final results

In just a few months:

- Skin was firmer, smoother, and more hydrated
- Facial contours were subtly restored without puffiness
- Hair looked fuller, healthier, and was more resilient
- Most importantly, she felt like herself again.

### What you can do today

If you're experiencing skin and hair changes during menopause, you're not alone and you don't have to settle.

Start by:

- Speaking to a menopause-savvy practitioner
- Checking nutrient levels (iron, magnesium, biotin, vitamin D)
- Considering regenerative treatments like polynucleotides, exosomes, and skin boosters
- Protecting skin from the sun and staying hydrated.

Menopause is not the end of your radiance. With the right care, you can look and feel empowered.

For lost volume, we applied targeted Fillmed® dermal fillers:

- Volume for lifting and contouring cheeks
- Universal for smoothing folds and redefining jawline
- Fine Lines for delicate areas like temples, lip lines, and under-eyes

Because her skin was already strengthened, we needed less filler and achieved longer-lasting, natural results.

### 3. Hair regrowth with exosomes and microneedling

For her thinning hair, we combined microneedling with Purasomes HSC50+ Hair & Scalp Complex – an exosome-based formula containing 20 billion exosomes, 20 growth factors, hyaluronic acid, peptides, and vitamins to rejuvenate follicles.

Delivered at 0.5mm depth to reach follicles without harming bulbs, three

*Dr Raquel Amado is a Level 7 aesthetic practitioner, clinical trainer and international speaker known for her regenerative, holistic approach to aesthetic care. She helps women navigate menopause with confidence, compassion, and science-backed solutions.*

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# Product round up

## Menopause-friendly product picks we're loving right now

Whether you're dealing with hot flushes, brain fog, joint aches or just need a little extra support in your day-to-day life, we've rounded up some of our favourite products that genuinely make a difference. These aren't miracle cures, but they are practical, smartly formulated and created with your wellbeing in mind.



### Six Pack Revolution Sculpt Protein Snack Bars

Let's be real, menopause hunger just hits different. Whether you're on the go, post-workout, or just trying to stay ahead of the snack cravings, these bars are a smart grab. Made with natural ingredients and clean protein, they help keep energy levels steady and curb those blood sugar dips that can wreak havoc on your body.

Price: Box of 12 – £29.99

### Mothercuppa No.4 – Clarity Tea

Forgotten what you went to the shops for? Can't remember if that meeting's at 2pm or 3pm? Brain fog during menopause is real and seriously frustrating. That's where No.4 – Clarity Tea by Mothercuppa comes in. This carefully blended herbal tea is designed to support memory, focus and concentration, helping to ease that cloudy, can't-think-straight feeling that so many of us know all too well. Ideal for busy days when your brain needs that little bit of backup.

Price: £8.99 per pack

### Soak & Sleep French Linen Bedding

Night sweats and temperature spikes can turn sleep into a nightmare when going through menopause. That's why we recommended the Soak & Sleep French Linen Bedding. Their range is soft, cool and naturally temperature-regulating, making it a great choice for women dealing with hormonal fluctuations. Forget tossing off the duvet in frustration, this luxurious linen keeps things comfy and cool, no matter what your body throws at you.

Price: From £30

### Opti 15 Muscle & Joint Gel

Aching joints? Sore muscles? That isn't just you getting older. Hormonal shifts during menopause can bring on stiffness and inflammation. Our solution? Opti 15 Muscle & Joint Gel. This fast-absorbing gel contains 15 plant-based extracts and essential oils, including arnica, eucalyptus and ginger, traditionally used to soothe and support musculoskeletal discomfort. It's discreet, non-sticky and super handy after exercising or when you've just had one of those achy days. You can also keep it in the fridge for a cooling boost.

Price: £24.99 (200ml)



### Empower by Love Mushrooms – Perimenopause Capsules

Feeling all over the place? Mood swings, brain fog, zero energy... you're not alone and you're not imagining it either. Perimenopause can throw everything out of sync. But that's where Empower by Love Mushrooms steps in. This clever daily supplement is packed with natural heavy hitters like Lion's Mane, Ashwagandha and Red Clover, ingredients chosen to help bring calm, clarity and balance when your hormones are a bit all over the place. So, whether you're dealing with stress, struggling to focus or just feel a bit off, Empower is here to support you through it all. It's also got the MTick, so you know it's menopause-friendly and designed with women like us in mind.

Price: £39.99 (or £29.99/month)

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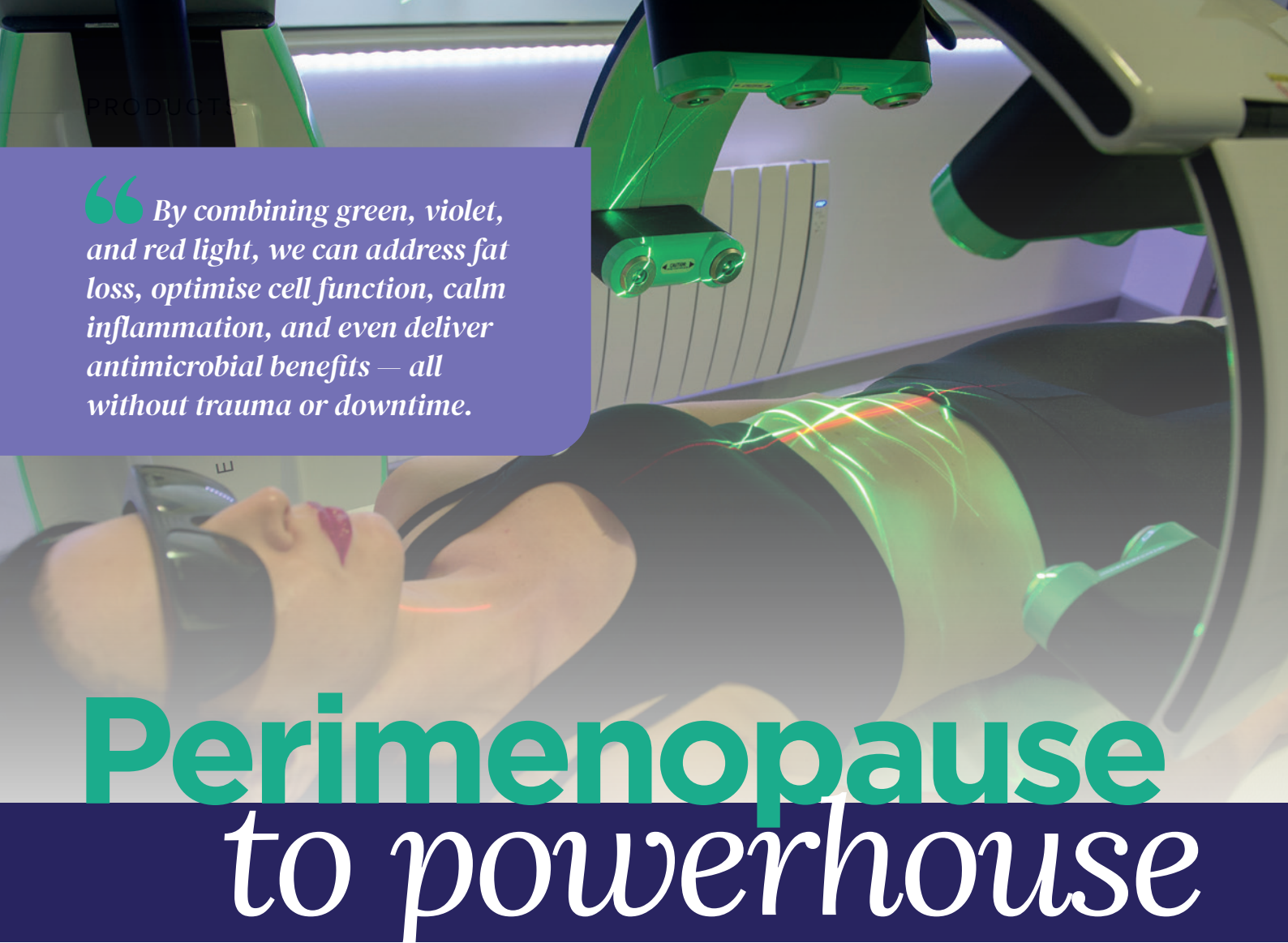
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PRODUCT

“By combining green, violet, and red light, we can address fat loss, optimise cell function, calm inflammation, and even deliver antimicrobial benefits — all without trauma or downtime.

# Perimenopause to powerhouse

## The Rainbow Treatment – Powering women’s perimenopause energy from the inside out

On October 4, PAUSE Live will host a world-first in women’s wellness: **The Rainbow Treatment** — a breakthrough non-thermal, high-energy laser protocol designed to restore energy, resilience, and hormonal balance in women navigating perimenopause and menopause.

In partnership with the Rakus Clinic, our flagship London location opposite Harrods will offer exclusive demo sessions. This is your chance to experience the same advanced protocols trusted daily by one of the world’s most renowned clinics.

### Why the “Perimenopause to Powerhouse” years need a cellular reboot

Think of your mitochondria — the “power stations” inside your cells — as having run flawlessly for decades. But during perimenopause and menopause, falling oestrogen levels can cause those power stations to slow down, lose efficiency, and produce more “smoke” (oxidative stress). This is known as inflammaging — chronic, low-grade inflammation that chips away at energy, muscle, bone, skin health, and mood.

**The Rainbow Treatment** tackles this at

the root: it re-tunes your cellular power stations with three colours of visible light that work together to restore efficient energy production, clear the “smoke,” and strengthen your body’s repair systems.

### The Science – Three lights, four power stages

Just like an assembly line that needs workers at each station, your mitochondria have four key “complexes” in their energy-making process. The Rainbow Treatment sends targeted light energy to each of them:

Wavelength & Colour	Complex Target(s)	Analogy	“Perimenopause to Powerhouse” Benefits	Delivered By
Violet (405 nm)	I & II	The spark plug – ignites the energy process and cleans the line of harmful bugs	Antimicrobial action; immune balance; better blood flow to brain and heart; nerve calming	EVRL, FX405, GVL
Green (520–532 nm)	III	The maintenance crew – keeps the energy flow steady and repairs key structures	Stem cell activation; collagen and cartilage support; stronger bones and nerves	Emerald, GVL
Red (635 nm)	IV	The final generator – finishes energy production and powers up the whole system	Maximum ATP output; improved circulation; reduces chronic inflammation; preserves muscle	EVRL, FX635, FX405

### How the devices work together

- Emerald™ – Focuses on green light to preserve hormone function, reduce fat cell size without destroying them, and build collagen for skin and joint support.
- GVL™ – Combines green and violet light, boosting stem cell activation, antimicrobial defence, and vascular repair in one treatment. Ideal for systemic wellness, tissue regeneration, and reducing inflammation while supporting both hormonal balance and metabolic health.
- FX Series / EVRL™ – Combines red and violet light to give: antimicrobial support, anti-inflammatory effect, enhanced tissue repair, joint health, recovery, and whole-body mitochondrial support.

### Benefits for women in their “Perimenopause to Powerhouse” years

- Re-ignites energy – fewer slumps, more vitality.
- Calms chronic inflammation – supports joints, heart, and brain.

- Strengthens skin, bone, and muscle – counters hormonal changes.
- Helps maintain healthy weight and muscle tone – better metabolic balance.
- Improves clarity, mood, and circulation – feel sharper and more resilient.

### Dr Rita Rakus: Leading the way

Dr Rita Rakus, MBBS, FBACD, FBCAM, is one of the world’s most respected voices in non-invasive rejuvenation and wellness medicine.

Featured in UK and international media, she’s known as the “London Lip Queen” and crowned by Tatler as the “Machine Queen” for her unparalleled collection of advanced technologies.

She says, “By combining green, violet, and red light, we can address fat loss, optimise cell function, calm inflammation, and even deliver antimicrobial benefits — all without trauma or downtime. This is the future of women’s wellness: non-invasive, evidence-based, and results-driven.”



Join us at PAUSE Live  
When: Friday, October 4  
Where: PAUSE Live, in partnership with the Rakus Clinic, Knightsbridge  
Book: Spaces are limited – pre-book your demo session.  
Perimenopause to Powerhouse – Light Up Your Best Years Yet.

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# The GP at the frontline of women's health:



## Dr Itunu Johnson-Sogbetun on menopause and medical advocacy

### What are the most common misconceptions women have about menopause that can delay them seeking help?

One of the most common barriers I see is a deep fear of hormones – what is often referred to as “hormonophobia”. This usually stems from outdated studies or stories that have been passed down without full context. Many women worry that taking hormones will increase their risk of cancer or serious illness, when for most women under the age of 60 or within 10 years of their last period, hormone therapy is safe and often life changing.

There is also the issue of menopause being seen as a taboo topic in many communities. Some women feel a sense of shame around ageing or believe they must just get on with it because that is what their mothers or grandmothers did. I hope women see that they do not have to struggle alone. Menopause is a natural transition and there are effective,

evidence-based options available to help them feel like themselves again.

### How do you diagnose perimenopause in patients whose symptoms may overlap with other conditions?

Diagnosing perimenopause can be complex because the symptoms are so wide ranging and often overlap with other conditions. Fatigue, anxiety, brain fog, poor sleep, and palpitations can also be caused by mental health issues or thyroid problems, for example.

I always approach each woman with the understanding that, although I am the medical professional, she is the expert of her own body. I listen closely to what she is feeling and what changes she has noticed. I take time to explore her story, and I trust her instincts.

It is important to run tests to rule out other possible causes of symptoms. However, in perimenopause, hormone tests often do not provide meaningful

information. Hormone levels can fluctuate widely from day to day, so the results are not always reliable or clear.

A culturally competent and holistic approach is essential. I look at the full picture, including a woman's physical, emotional and social wellbeing. Sometimes we bring in other professionals such as psychologists, dietitians or physiotherapists to provide more tailored support.

As I often say, it is not just about running tests. It is about listening carefully, recognising patterns, respecting what the patient is experiencing, and offering care that is thoughtful and individualised.

### Which lifestyle interventions do you find most effective for managing menopausal symptoms?

Lifestyle changes can be incredibly helpful and often form the foundation of symptom management.

One of the first things I help women explore is how to manage their mental load. I use the idea of rubber balls and glass balls to help them identify what can be dropped without consequence and what must be protected. This helps with prioritising, delegating, setting boundaries, and letting go of guilt.

Spending time in green spaces is another simple but powerful intervention. Regular time outdoors, even just a short walk, can improve mood, reduce stress and help with sleep. I also encourage women to “eat the rainbow”. A colourful, plant rich diet supports hormonal balance, gut health and energy levels. It is not about rigid rules but about nourishing the body in a sustainable way.

Physical activity is another cornerstone. It does not have to mean going to the gym every day. Gentle movement like yoga, strength training, swimming or dancing can improve mood, sleep, joint health and cardiovascular fitness. The key is to find something that feels enjoyable and doable.

I also remind women to make time for joy giving activities. Whether it is reading, painting, singing, or spending time with people who uplift them, these moments of pleasure can make a big difference to overall wellbeing.

Staying off the 24-hour news cycle, reducing time on social media, and stepping away from the constant buzzing of notifications can also have a calming effect on the nervous system. Support from family and friends matters too. I encourage women to communicate their needs and involve

those around them, so they do not feel like they must carry everything on their own. My role is to support women to make changes that feel realistic. We break things down into small steps, and I give them permission to start where they are.

### How do you balance the benefits and risks of HRT when advising women with varying health backgrounds?

I believe in being clear, honest and compassionate. I explain the benefits of hormone therapy in detail, but I am also open about the potential risks, keeping everything in perspective.

At the same time, I understand that some women come with personal or family histories that make them nervous about hormones. I never dismiss those fears. I take time to answer their questions and give them the space to make informed decisions that feel right for them. This is about partnership. I want every woman to feel supported, not pressured.

### What emerging treatments or tools are you most excited about?

I am very excited about the developments in personalised testing for conditions like PCOS, endometriosis and the menopause. These tools may one day help us fine tune diagnostic and treatment plans even more accurately.

On a broader level, I am encouraged by the rise of digital tools that help women track their symptoms and better understand their bodies. These can support conversations in clinics and

help women feel more connected and empowered.

Ultimately, the future of women's health in general practice lies in more personalised, joined up and inclusive care.

*“Regular time outdoors, even just a short walk, can improve mood, reduce stress and help with sleep. I also encourage women to “eat the rainbow”. A colourful, plant rich diet supports hormonal balance, gut health and energy levels.*

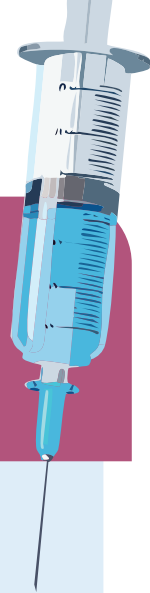






# From jab to jowl

The not-so-tight truth about GLP1 injections



By Smita Ahluwalia, award-winning facialist and holistic beauty therapist specialising in skin of colour and menopause.

I've always believed that true beauty is a blend of inner health, outer glow, and emotional well-being, especially during the transformative and sometimes turbulent stages of menopause and perimenopause. Recently, GLP-1 receptor agonists (like Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro) have become big conversations in my treatment room, not just for their metabolic benefits, but also for how they intersect with ageing, skin, and confidence. While I am in no position to recommend my clients take these medications, I am fascinated by the changes I am seeing in clinic.

## Tackling the “meno belly”

Menopause brings hormonal shifts that slow metabolism, increase stubborn abdominal fat (“meno belly”), and spark insulin resistance. GLP-1 medications help tackle this by curbing appetite, boosting feelings of fullness, and improving blood sugar control. For my clients, that often translates into noticeable weight loss around the midriff, more energy, and a lighter mood, all of which are foundations for better skin health and self-esteem.

## A tool against hot flashes

Hot flashes are often one of the more difficult menopause symptoms for my client's to manage and play havoc with

the skin, worsening rosacea and acne. Emerging evidence suggests GLP-1s may help stabilize body temperature by modulating hypothalamic function and improving glucose control. Anecdotal evidence from women in menopause forums (and some of my clients) report drastic reductions in hot flashes shortly after starting GLP-1s.

## Psychosocial benefits

As well as reduced weight, increased mobility and less hot flashes, many of my clients are reporting wellness benefits such as better sleep, overall mood and more positive reinforcement in their work and social lives. This is likely due to being slimmer. As a society we are quick to reward someone for losing weight without considering why or how they have lost weight (it could be due to stress or illness) and how that input could affect the person mentally. I do my best not to feed into toxic enforcement of beauty ideals and rather focus on how my client is feeling while observing and recording changes in their skin.

## “Ozempic face”

Rapid fat loss, especially in the face, can lead to sagging skin and hollow cheeks, resulting in the much-spoken-about “Ozempic face”. Worse yet, for clients simultaneously experiencing

menopause-related skin laxity and loss of collagen, the combined effect can age the appearance prematurely.

In my clinic, I like to use a combination of therapies and devices to improve laxity and boost collagen including, radiofrequency microneedling, light therapies and mechanical massage. Emepelle is a skincare line I love to recommend as it is specifically designed for women experiencing menopause-related skin changes.

## A holistic strategy

It's important to remember that GLP-1s are not a silver bullet. The clients I see thriving on these medications tend to be integrating:

### Holistic lifestyle choices

Balanced nutrition, sleep hygiene, stress management to support metabolic shifts.

### Thoughtful medical supervision

Especially around HRT and GLP-1 interactions (e.g. absorption issues with oral hormones).

### Community support

Attending events such as PAUSE Live to learn from other women and experts about their experiences and emerging evidence about GLP-1 and how it intersects with menopause.

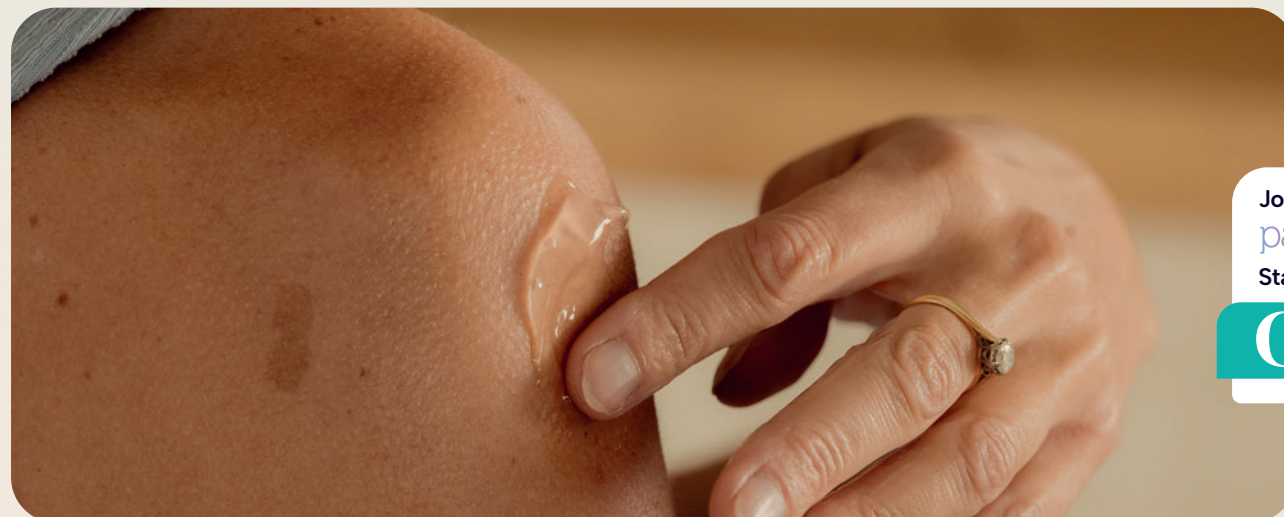
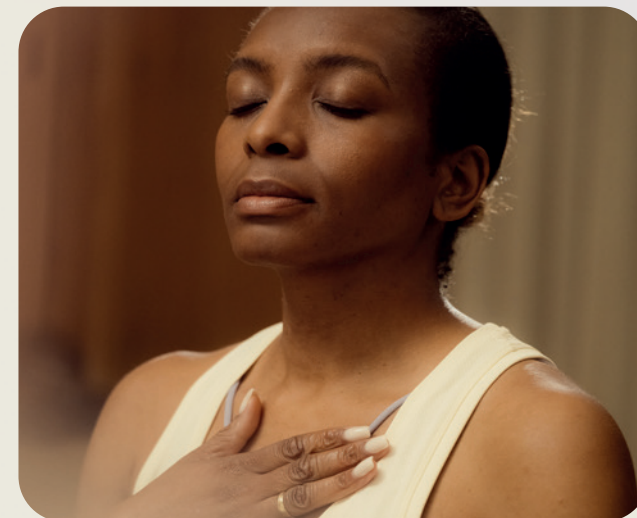


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“Many women have persistent, shifting pain due to combined factors – low oestrogen, inflammation, poor nutrient absorption, muscle loss, and altered pain processing.

## Stronger through the change:

HOW MENOPAUSE AFFECTS YOUR MUSCLES AND BONES – AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT



Menopause isn't just about hot flushes and hormone shifts – it can quietly erode your muscle strength and bone density, too. But knowledge is power. Physiotherapist Shreya Kane breaks down what's happening beneath the surface, why it matters, and how you can take simple, science-backed steps to stay strong, mobile, and confident – through menopause and beyond.

While hot flushes are a well-known symptom, oestrogen's crucial role extends into our musculoskeletal system – the framework of bones, muscles, and connective tissues.

Musculoskeletal conditions cause more disability worldwide than any other health group, affecting daily routines, confidence, and wellbeing.

Symptoms can include widespread aches and stiffness, characterised by diffuse muscle and joint pain, potentially exacerbating pre-existing conditions like

back pain or arthritis. Abdominal weight gain, fatigue, and reduced resilience are also common. Symptoms often appear early and may be misattributed, delaying management. These issues interact – fatigue can worsen mood, pain can reduce activity, and inactivity can worsen musculoskeletal problems.

### Sarcopenia

Oestrogen helps build muscle, but its decline speeds muscle breakdown. Fast-twitch fibres, key for balance and quick

movements, weaken, increasing fall risk. Less muscle means less joint protection and poorer insulin sensitivity, raising type II diabetes risk.

### Osteoporosis

Oestrogen regulates bone renewal. Falling levels tilt the balance toward bone loss, silently reducing density and raising fracture risk. One in three women over 50 will have an osteoporosis-related fracture, with hip fractures often leading to disability and loss of independence.



### Inflammation

Oestrogen has anti-inflammatory effects. Its decline increases inflammation, slows recovery, and impairs healing in muscles, bones, and tendons. Gut bacteria and oestrogen influence each other; changes can affect vitamin D absorption, inflammation, and pain perception.

### Tendons, joints, and metabolic health

Lower oestrogen can stiffen joints, worsen arthritis, and raise risk of tendon injuries such as frozen shoulder and repetitive strain issues. Menopause-related hormonal shifts increase diabetes risk, compounded by muscle loss and reduced insulin sensitivity.

### Unexplained pain

Many women have persistent, shifting pain due to combined factors – low oestrogen, inflammation, poor nutrient absorption, muscle loss, and altered pain processing. Mood, sleep, and confidence also influence pain experience. Understanding that pain is part of a broader physiological shift is key to managing it.

### Practical steps to stay mobile, strong, and pain-free

Lifestyle strategies are powerful, whether or not hormone therapy is used.

- **Prioritise quality sleep**

Aim for 7–9 hours nightly. Morning

light helps set your body clock; in the evening, dim lights, limit screens, and cool your bedroom.

- **Manage stress mindfully**

Mindfulness, NSDR meditations, and journaling can lower stress hormones and support heart health.

- **Boost your protein intake**

Preserve muscle with 1.6–2.2g protein per kg ideal body weight daily, spread across meals.

- **Support bone health with vitamin D and calcium**

Test vitamin D levels and supplement if needed. Get calcium from food or supplements.

- **Eat to nourish your gut and hormones**

Aim for 30g+ fibre daily:

**Probiotics:** yogurt, kimchi, kefir

**Prebiotics:** onions, garlic, leeks

**Phytoestrogens:** soy, flaxseed

**Soluble fibre:** oats, beans, lentils

- **Make movement non-negotiable**

Break up sitting every 45 mins with short bursts. Do weight-bearing activities (walking, dancing) and strength train

with bands, bodyweight, or weights.

- **Try bone-friendly add-ons**

Mini-trampoline rebounding and weighted vests add bone-building resistance without stressing joints.

### Thriving, not just surviving

Menopause significantly impacts musculoskeletal health, increasing risks of muscle and bone loss, inflammation, and related conditions. But you can take proactive steps for your health before injuries or conditions like type II diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol develop.

A personalised approach with education, lifestyle changes, and medical advice is crucial for best results. The choices we make today lay the foundation for our future health and well-being, shaping how we experience the years to come.

We can change the narrative from surviving menopause to thriving in menopause and beyond.



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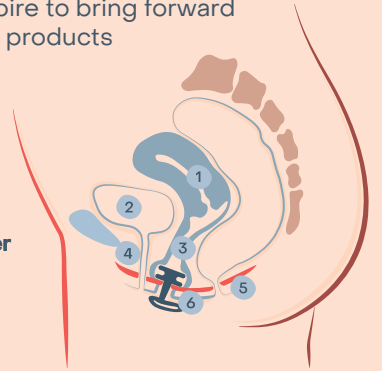
## About Efemia

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By equally prioritising reliability, functionality and emotional aspects, we aspire to bring forward dependable and effective products that fit well into women's everyday lives.

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- 2. Bladder
- 3. Vagina
- 4. Urethra
- 5. Pelvic floor
- 6. Efemia Bladder Support



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# If the genes FIT

Sascha Landskron, Director of UniNutrition Ltd, explores how genetic testing can support your menopausal health journey



DIET is a four-letter word. Many of us have tried diets and let's be honest, there are plenty out there to try: vegan, vegetarian, pescatarian, carnivore, low carb, low fat, gluten-free, dairy-free, ketogenic, paleo. How do you decide which diet is right for you?

The problem with diets is that diets are a lot like yellow jumpers. Some people can don a yellow jumper and look and feel amazing. They really glow. Whereas others will appear anaemic and lacklustre in yellow.

If you wear yellow and feel amazing, you will want to tell all your friends and family about how great the jumper is. And any messages about wearing yellow will be amplified by companies that produce yellow jumpers, because it's

good for business... and it might help... some people. Diets are just the same. For example, some people decide to go vegan and then feel amazing and it dramatically improves their health. While others may struggle to get enough of some nutrients on a strictly plant-based diet.

There are personal variations between our digestion (how we break down food into smaller components) and metabolism (how we use those

components to produce energy). When we understand how we digest and metabolise, we can truly understand how to reach optimum nutrition.

There is a growing interest in personalised health and nutrition strategies, especially as women look for effective support during menopause. There are many ways that we can seek personalised interventions. My preference is always to start with nutrigenetics.



### What is nutrigenetics?

Nutrigenetics is the study of the relationship between genetics and diet to improve health and disease. Our understanding of the human genome is a relatively new science, and it's ever evolving. The good news is, you don't have to have a PhD in genetics to have a healthy interest in your own DNA.

Our genes provide a template or blueprint for our health, and our lifestyle and choices influence the expression of our genes. Essentially, every human health condition has a genetic component, either inherited or influenced by our health behaviours.

Genetics plays a factor in so many common conditions, including weight gain, high blood pressure and cholesterol, diabetes, bone health, vitamin and mineral deficiencies and even food intolerances and IBS. Knowledge is power, and knowing your genetics gives you power over your health.

### Genetics and menopause

The perimenopausal years can be fraught with ill health. Optimising our diet and lifestyle is key to longevity and wellness, especially from middle age and up. Menopause can be associated with troubling symptoms. What, how and when we eat can have a significant effect on these menopausal symptoms.

Understanding our methylation and obesity genes, as well as those genes that influence the metabolism of fat and carbohydrates, can help us further optimise our wellbeing. This is important at all stages of life, however, from middle age is the time to really focus our attentions on personalised health.

### What is nutrigenetic testing and what are the benefits of doing it?

Nutrigenetic testing is a simple and accessible way to analyse specific genes related to nutrition and health. Every cell in our bodies contains our DNA blueprint, so you can collect DNA from blood, skin or hair, but most commercially available tests require only a saliva sample, or a simple swab of the inside of the mouth.

Once the sample is taken and analysed in a lab, you receive a report that outlines how your genetic blueprint predisposes you to different health aspects. Understanding these genetic predispositions can help tailor your diet and supplement recommendations. The benefits are vast. Many of us are taking supplements without really knowing if we need them. Many of us worry about preventing ageing and poor health.

Many of us struggle with digestion and wonder if we have food intolerances.

Fatigue, low energy, brain fog and weight gain are the most common complaints I see in my clinics. I've reliably found that nutritional genetic testing helps to improve strategies for managing these menopausal symptoms. Nutritional genetic testing provides actionable insights to help people make more informed dietary choices.

If you would like to find out more about how to optimise your nutrition, please feel free to get in touch:  
[sascha@uninutrition.co.uk](mailto:sascha@uninutrition.co.uk)



*“The problem with diets is that diets are a lot like yellow jumpers. Some people can don a yellow jumper and look and feel amazing. They really glow. Whereas others will appear anaemic and lacklustre in yellow.”*



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## Smart supplement choices FOR MENOPAUSE RELIEF

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**A7**

From hot flashes to brain fog, menopause symptoms can be challenging – but the right supplements may help ease the transition. Superintendent pharmacist Miriam Martínez Callejas, co-founder of Roseway Labs, shares what science says about effective ingredients and how to choose what's right for you.

Supplements tailored to menopause can help ease symptoms and support well-being. Before adding any to your routine, speak with a healthcare professional – especially if you're using hormone replacement therapy (HRT). A clinician can help you select the right products and ensure the dosage fits your health plan. Look for science-backed, thoroughly tested supplements without exaggerated claims. Chosen wisely, they can support your health, balance, and lifestyle during menopause.

### Essential ingredients for menopausal support

**Vitamin D, calcium, and magnesium for bone health:** Declining oestrogen can weaken bones and raise osteoporosis risk. Vitamin D and calcium support bone density, while magnesium may aid bone strength, mood, and sleep.

**B Vitamins for energy, mood, and heart health:** B6, B12, and folate help heart health, reduce fatigue, ease brain fog, and support mood via serotonin production.

**Soy isoflavones for hormonal balance:** Plant-based compounds that mimic oestrogen may reduce hot flashes and night sweats.

**Black cohosh for hot flashes and mood:** This traditional remedy may ease hot

flashes and support emotional wellbeing. **Omega-3 fatty acids for inflammation and brain function:** Found in fish oils, omega-3s help reduce inflammation, support heart health, and aid cognition.

### Quality and safety

Choose supplements made in facilities following good manufacturing practices (GMP). Avoid unnecessary fillers and steer clear of high doses that could cause digestive upset. Avoid products making bold, unproven claims, and always check with a healthcare professional for the right dose.

### Dosage and timing

Follow label instructions and consult your doctor to personalise dosing. Needs can change over time, so review your supplement plan regularly.

### Reading labels

- Check ingredients, dosages, and potential allergens.
- Be cautious with proprietary blends that hide exact quantities.

### Integrating supplements with hormone replacement therapy

Some women combine supplements with HRT, but interactions are possible. For example, St. John's Wort can reduce

HRT effectiveness. Here are some key tips:

- Consult your healthcare provider first.
- Disclose all medications and supplements.
- Start with low doses and monitor effects.
- Check in regularly to adjust your plan.

### Beyond supplements

Supplements are just one tool. A holistic approach boosts benefits:

#### Nourish your body with whole foods

Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and phytoestrogen-rich foods like soy and flaxseeds can ease symptoms.

#### Move your body for strength and stability

Cardiovascular exercise supports heart health, while strength training helps maintain muscle and bone density.

#### Manage stress with mind-body practices

Yoga, meditation, and deep breathing can reduce anxiety and improve overall wellbeing.

#### Create a wellness routine that works for you

Combining high-quality supplements with balanced nutrition, regular exercise, and stress management creates a strong foundation for health during menopause – and beyond.

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<sup>†</sup>Lipovac M et al. Gynecological Endocrinology, (2011) Study conducted on women, using Promensil Double Strength. Claim reference 4146 for Trifolium pratense (Red clover).

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*Julie, 56, London*



## Are you seeing red?



Julie Scott on tackling rosacea and menopausal skin changes

“If you're noticing new or worsening redness, flushing, or small red bumps, it could be linked to these menopausal changes.”

**Are you navigating the complex skin changes that come with menopause? You're not alone. Many women experience new or worsening skin issues, like rosacea, due to hormonal shifts during menopause.**

Over the years, I've seen many women experience new skin challenges during menopause, including the onset or worsening of rosacea. This is largely due to hormonal fluctuations, which can lead to increased sensitivity, redness, and inflammation. In fact, in my practice, about 40% of menopausal patients report noticeable rosacea symptoms for the first time or an exacerbation of existing symptoms during this time.

### How menopause affects your skin

During menopause, hormonal shifts lead to various skin changes that can

feel challenging. Declining oestrogen levels reduce collagen and natural oils, causing the skin to become thinner, drier, and more sensitive. Meanwhile, an increase in androgens can boost blood flow near the skin's surface, leading to flushing and redness, which can create a “perfect storm” for rosacea (a chronic condition marked by facial redness, visible blood vessels, and sometimes acne, particularly on the cheeks, nose, chin, and forehead).

These changes also make the skin more vulnerable to external triggers like sun exposure, hot drinks, alcohol, spicy foods, and stress, which may worsen

rosacea symptoms. If you're noticing new or worsening redness, flushing, or small red bumps, it could be linked to these menopausal changes.

In the next sections, I'll provide guidance on how to manage these skin concerns with tailored skincare, treatment options, and support, helping you feel more confident and in control of your skin health.

### Skincare regime during menopausal rosacea

During menopause, managing rosacea requires a gentle skincare routine specifically suited to your



skin's changing needs. Here are some essential steps to help support healthier, calmer skin:

- **Cleansing:** Avoid using soaps, as they tend to have a high pH that can disrupt your skin's natural barrier. Instead, opt for a mild, non-foaming cleanser with a slightly acidic pH to maintain the skin's natural oils.
- **Hydration and barrier repair:** Look for serums and products containing niacinamide, ceramides, panthenol, and hyaluronic acid to soothe, deeply hydrate, and reinforce your skin's natural barrier.
- **Targeted treatments:** Steer clear of high-pH products and harsh actives. For gentle exfoliation, consider PHAs (polyhydroxy acids), which are less irritating than AHAs. For rosacea-prone skin, retinal, a gentler form of vitamin A, is often better tolerated than retinoic acid.
- **Inflammatory flare-up protection:** Sulfur-based products can reduce inflammation and control oil, which can trigger rosacea. Sulfur masks, like the ZO Sulfur Mask, offer anti-inflammatory and antibacterial benefits, calming the skin while keeping oil levels balanced.
- **Sun protection:** Choose mineral or zinc-based sunscreens, which are usually better tolerated by sensitive skin and provide broad-spectrum protection without the irritation that chemical sunscreens can cause.
- **Hero products:** Ingredients like PHAs and salicylic acid can be beneficial if suited to your skin type. Retinal is often preferred over retinol, as it's gentler and generally better tolerated by sensitive, rosacea-prone skin.

### Some words of caution

- **Caution with vitamin C:** If your skin barrier is compromised, avoid high-pH vitamin C formulations. If you wish to use vitamin C, opt for gentler versions with a pH suited for sensitive skin.
- **Consider hormone testing:** If you experience both acne and rosacea, hormone testing may help. Checking levels of prolactin, androgens, and cortisol can provide insights into your skin's health.
- **pH sensitivity:** Aim for skincare products with a pH of 6.5 or lower to help minimise irritation and support a stronger skin barrier

### Treatments for menopausal rosacea

In-clinic treatments provide significant relief for menopausal rosacea.

- **Light therapies:** LED light masks reduce redness and visible blood vessels by targeting dilated blood vessels, which are a major contributor to redness in rosacea.
- **Chemical peels:** Peels using ingredients like lactic acid gently exfoliate the skin, improving texture and reducing redness without irritation.
- **Microneedling with PRP (Platelet-Rich Plasma):** Combining microneedling with PRP can enhance skin texture and reduce inflammation. PRP promotes faster healing and reduces irritation.
- **Medical-grade facials:** Specifically tailored to rosacea-prone skin, focusing on soothing and strengthening the skin barrier. Using medical-grade products reduces inflammation and hydrates the skin to prevent flare-ups.

### New advances in treating rosacea

In addition to traditional treatments, I am exploring more advanced options to strengthen the skin's barrier function and improve its resilience against rosacea:

- **Profilo:** Known for its hydrating and rejuvenating power, it helps reduce flare-ups by a bio-stimulatory effect, which increases collagen and elastin production.
- **Polynucleotides:** These molecules are being used to enhance the skin's cellular structure, improve elasticity, and promote tissue regeneration, reducing the severity of rosacea symptoms.
- **Exosomes:** These tiny, cell-derived particles are used in skincare to deliver growth factors and anti-inflammatory agents directly to the skin, helping to accelerate healing, reduce inflammation, and improve skin texture.

Always consult with a medical professional to create a personalised plan that addresses your specific needs and remember that you don't have to navigate these changes alone.

With the right care and support, you can manage your skin health by understanding how menopause affects your skin and using the right treatments to reduce the symptoms of rosacea and maintain healthy, glowing skin.

Whether it's through a carefully chosen skincare routine, advanced in-clinic treatments, or newer therapies like Profilo and Polynucleotides, there are many ways to support your skin during the menopause.



## You deserve more than “just get on with it”.

Remember when your body felt like home?  
Before 3pm energy crashes and wanting afternoon naps?  
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Hi, I'm Sascha Landskron - Registered Dietitian & Nutritionist and I can show you how to use nutrition to get your energy back and feel like you again.

I specialise in helping women figure out how to start fueling their menopausal body and brain in the right way.

That stubborn weight you can't shift? It's insulin resistance, not lack of willpower.

Those 3am wake-ups? Might be blood sugar crashes that the right dinner can prevent.

The afternoon energy crash? Your body needs different nutrients now.

I don't believe in restrictive diets that leave you hangry and craving the things you've cut out.

I do believe in food that works WITH your hormones.

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**Start with my Ultimate Nutrition Reset for just £5**  
A gentle, realistic program to help you understand your nutritional needs, rebalance your blood sugar, and feel energised again.

Sascha



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— Mandy, 46

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## Luinluland on Owning Your Voice

# Unfiltered & Unapologetic!

### For those new to Luinluland, how would you describe the world you've created?

I've created a movement. A Revolution! It's an honest authentic truthful, painful, joyful journey through midlife and I hope what I do is give people encouragement, empowerment, inspiration and maybe a chuckle every now and again and show them that menopause is in fact the beginning of the most incredible chapter of your life, not the highway to hell.

### Luinluland radiates with defiance and joy. How do you

### define empowerment in this stage of life?

Empowerment looks different on everybody. I like to inspire people by showing them what could be possible. If someone sees me standing naked on top of a mountain, maybe it'll make them think maybe they could be braver or "if she does that, maybe I could do something wild and free too". I like to challenge perceptions and disrupt the narrative around ageing and the menopause. We're all different. All our journeys are different. And that's the beauty of the world!

### How did the journey through the menopause shape your creative voice?

I think my journey through menopause heavily reshaped my creative vision and voice because I just give a lot less fuck these days. The freedom menopause gave me, and the liberation I felt through divorce and this midlife chapter has helped me feel free and wild. That liberation and freedom is the bedrock of Luinluland.

### What myths or narratives about older women are you

### actively trying to dismantle through your work?

I think the most important myth and social narrative for me to dismantle through my work is that 'life ends at 50 and menopause.' I am living proof that life gets better and better. I've never been more confident, strong, powerful, empowered, horny, sexy and liberated than I am at 54. We can wear what we want and do what we want!

### How does Luinluland give space to the invisible stories of the menopause?

I hope I hold space for invisible stories through my honesty. I will never lie to you. I will never pretend that this is an easy journey, just keep reminding you that you have options to make this the best phase of your life yet. But that is up to you. I hope I do things with authenticity, emotion, honesty, humour, and positivity. The events I attend and hold myself are all the most important things to me. The power of being together in common purpose for me is where it's at. Luinluland was born from and inspired by thousands of direct messages of women feeling isolated, alone, invisible, disconnected, and scared. I am driven by a very deep sense of purpose to never let another woman live feeling that way.

I hope that by throwing events, getting people get dressed up in my wardrobe, feel free to be silly, feel wild and by starting conversations that are hard to have. That might look like wearing sequins in the supermarket, speaking up for herself, finding confidence in herself for the first time or. Maybe digging deep and finding that confidence that she's lost somewhere along the way.

### Your visual style is fiercely individual. Has menopause influenced how you express yourself?

I've always had a very distinctive style. I definitely feel it gets wilder and more unapologetic as the years rolled by. I refuse to go out without looking my best. When I leave the house and people comment on my outfit, it sparks amazing connections and conversations. I always say you're never lonely in a good outfit. Of course menopause has helped me give even less fucks than I gave before. I've learnt to show up for myself. Showing up for other people. For many years I thought showing up for myself was selfish. I thought ambition was selfish. I thought making time for myself, for asking for what I needed was selfish. Turns out, self love and prioritising yourself. It's not selfish.

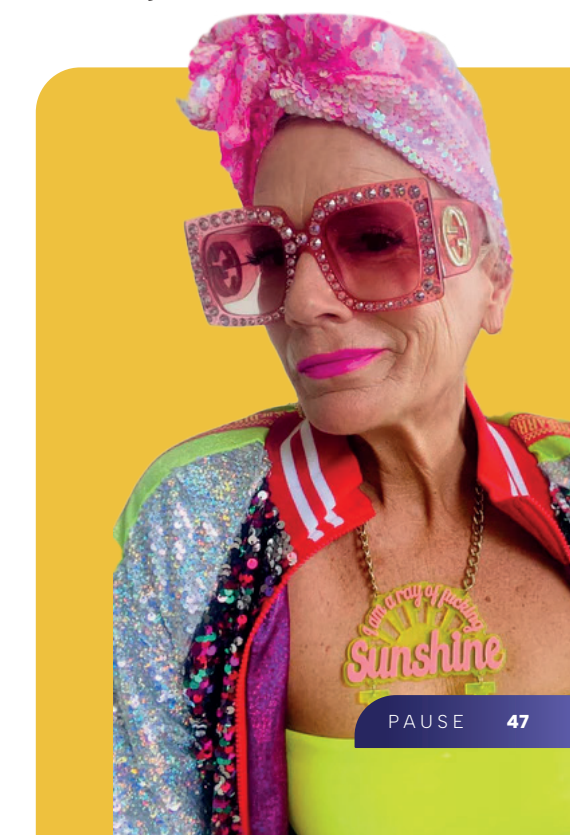
### What would you say to women who feel disempowered or invisible?

To anyone entering menopause who's feeling disempowered and invisible? Here is my message to you. Welcome aboard! This won't be an easy journey. My first point of call would be by a journal. A journal also helps you follow your feelings as they yo-yo. If you're going through a bad patch of life, a journal helps you reflect back on how far you've come or how far you haven't come. I know it's annoying, but as you go through this journey, it's incredibly powerful to understand yourself and how you think. It's powerful to know your body so work out!! It's powerful to release past pain and trauma. It's important to understand your feelings. Spend time figuring out what it is you do feel! What makes you happy?

What makes you sad? Get some boundaries...tell people to fuck off and ask for what you need. Educate yourself so you understand what's happening to you. Lift weights and move your ass. So much of your body will be out of control working out helps you understand what's happening and have more confidence to advocate yourself. And wank. Wank a lot. I know it sounds crazy but it really helped me feel sexy and in control of that power for myself. Probably for the first time in my whole life I had an orgasm for myself, not a performative one. This chapter is yours. Write it right.

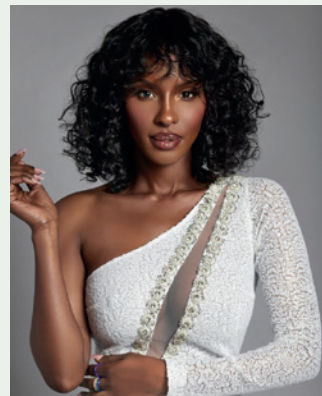
### If you could rewrite the cultural script around menopause, what would the opening line be?

If I could rewrite the cultural script around menopause I would start menopause education in primary school. We need to scream the words. We need to shine light on shame and talk about this stuff so nobody struggles in the dark alone and kids grow up knowing this cycle of life is a period where Mum needs unconditional support. And a dose of extra loving.





# Let's talk about it:



## Sarah Mulindwa on sex, menopause & the myths holding women back



As both a nurse and media personality, Sarah Mulindwa has spent over a decade on the frontline of sexual health, using honesty and humour to talk about subjects many still shy away from.

Now, she's on a mission to break down taboos around women's sexual wellbeing, especially focusing on education through campaigns such as **Know Your Normal – Check Your Vulva** which call for women to better understand their bodies and seek the advice they deserve.

"Even as a nurse, I had gaps in my sexual health knowledge," she admits. "If I didn't know these things, how would the average person?"

### Menopause isn't the end of sex

Menopause, Sarah says, is still misunderstood. "There's this narrative that your sex life just ends, but that's not true. Yes, things change, but there are solutions – HRT, lubricants, toys, different kinds of intimacy. We need to talk about that."

She's noticed an encouraging shift thanks to media figures and documentaries tackling the topic. "Women are finally realising they're

not going mad—they're not alone. It's liberating."

### We need better conversations

Education, Sarah argues, is key, but not just in your 50s. "The more you understand in your 20s and 30s – about your body, pelvic floor, hormones – the better prepared you'll be." She urges younger women to speak up, share experiences, and stop feeling shame. "You'd be surprised how many of your friends are going through the same thing. We've just been conditioned to stay quiet."

### Taking sexual health seriously

Sarah began her career in acute medicine but quickly moved into sexual health, where she noticed a worrying trend: women's issues often got sidelined. "Women are still told things like 'It's just your hormones,' or 'It's part of being a woman. Whether it's periods, menopause, or pain during sex, too often, it's dismissed.'" She highlights how public health messages often centre younger people or men, leaving women behind. "There's been great work around PrEP and HIV prevention in men, but not

much aimed at women, even though rates of HIV in women have risen. And so we miss out on women, especially women of an older demographic."

### Older women, sex & visibility

Society's view of older women is something Sarah wants to change. "I used to think turning 40 meant fading into invisibility. But now I see so many amazing women thriving in their 40s, 50s, 60s. They're sexy, confident, and deserve to be seen." She praises films like *Good Luck to You*, Leo Grande for showcasing older women's sexual agency. "We need more of that. Representation matters."

### What keeps her going

Whether she's giving advice on TV or chatting with women one-on-one, Sarah says it's the real stories that fuel her. "Women tell me, 'I wish someone like you was around when I went through this.' That's why I keep doing it." Her advice? "Don't wait for things to get bad. Learn about your body. Ask questions. Have the 'awkward' conversations, because they're never really awkward once you start."

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“From powerful conversations to big laughs and meaningful moments, PAUSE live 2024 was truly unforgettable! Here’s a little look back at what made the event so special...”

## PAUSE Live 2024

### The Live Stage – Where the Magic Happened

The Live Stage was designed to uplift our fabulous PAUSE Live community and it did not disappoint. We were treated to amazing, unfiltered talks from some truly inspiring voices. TV personality and menopause advocate Lisa Snowdon brought warmth, wisdom and honesty to the stage, while the iconic Sinitta had us laughing, reflecting and celebrating ourselves in this, sometimes, difficult journey.

And it wasn’t just our celebrity speakers who brought the house down, our incredible sponsors and exhibitors also brought their A-game. Huge shout-out to our 2024 Headline Sponsor, Ourtime, for leading the conversation around love, relationships and rediscovery in midlife. And to The Six Pack Revolution, for bringing practical tips, encouragement and that feel good energy to the stage.

Here are some of the moments that had us nodding, laughing and even tearing up!

### The Educational Stage – Where Knowledge is Power

Last year, the Educational Stage was packed all day long and for good reason! This was where the myths were busted, the science made sense and the practical, no-nonsense advice flowed. Our expert sessions were all about equipping women with the tools to better understand their bodies and take control of their health journeys.

Highlights included Dr Shirin Lakhani, who opened up the conversation around intimate health, a topic too often swept under the rug, with compassion and clarity. Dr Masud Haq tackled one of the most common topics in menopause: weight gain. His talk helped explain why it happens and what you can actually do about it. And Dr Philippa Kaye gave one of the most empowering sessions of the day, offering brilliant tips on how to speak to your GP and get the answers you need without feeling rushed, dismissed or unheard.

The Educational Stage wasn’t just informative, it was transformative. These were the conversations that left women saying, “Why didn’t I know this sooner?”



### The Best Bit – YOU!

It’s been said that the Live and Educational Stages were amazing, but let’s be honest, the real magic of PAUSE Live was you!

The warmth, the laughter, the connections that were made that day really brought the whole day to life. From genuine conversations to those unforgettable moments of joy, you made PAUSE Live so much more than just an event, it was a celebration of women supporting women.

You showed up with curiosity and a readiness to embrace it all. Asking brilliant questions during our talks, chatting with our expert exhibitors about everything from supplements to intimate health and snapping photos at our interactive photo ops with your friends!

These snapshots capture just a slice of the incredible energy you brought to the day. Thank you for being part of the PAUSE Live community and we can’t wait to do it all again this year Saturday 4th October.



# How to avoid dating disasters



**Kate Taylor, dating and relationships expert for Ourtime, shares her six tips for dating during menopause**



## Kate's tips:

Kate Taylor's six hero tips for dating during the menopause;

### 1. Find date-friendly exercise

Exercise is the best thing you can do when you're menopausal – and on dates! Take up sociable activities like dancing, tennis or hiking and invite sporty partners to join.

### 2. Start a new hobby

Pick up a new hobby as you start dating. It keeps dating from being your only excitement, boosts confidence, expands your friend circle, and gives you more to talk about on dates.

### 3. Embrace singles events

A fun way to meet new people of a similar age is to attend singles events. Ourtime hosts meet-ups where you can meet other eligible 50+ singles in person with fun activities, like wine tasting, cookery classes, or simple drinks.

### 4. Resist reassurance

If feeling clingy, avoid the urge to ask new partners for too much reassurance. Explain your insecurities and suggest ways they can help, like staying in touch or addressing issues quickly.

### 5. Reveal information on a "need to know" timeline

Get to know a new love interest gradually. If you share too much too early, you could feel vulnerable if the relationship ends. On the first few dates, focus on general, light-hearted subjects like books, music, hobbies and interests. As your relationship progresses, you can be more open.

### 6. Give partners room to help

If you've been single for a while, asking for help can be hard, but a new romantic partner likely wants to assist. Share a problem, like feeling hot at night, and give them space to offer a solution.

The menopause is a time of huge change for women. While hormonal issues can cause a range of symptoms, it can also be an empowering period, bringing increased self-awareness and confidence. This life stage encourages women to reevaluate what truly matters to them and who they want to spend their lives with, allowing them to embrace their needs and desires more fully.

Our research found that women feel there is a real lack of support and education around the menopause, which is something Ourtime and I are looking to change. We hope to empower women during this time with our Meno-Power Guide, which we have created to give women the information and help they need to make the best of this time, and to feel optimistic about the future.

## May help Menopause, Perimenopause & Periods

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## Menopause comes with many changes, don't let your vision be one of them

Hot flushes, emotional shifts and sleepless nights. You expected some changes, but dry, sore eyes? That one caught you off guard.

Menopause can disrupt tear production and trigger inflammation, leaving your eyes tired and constantly irritated.

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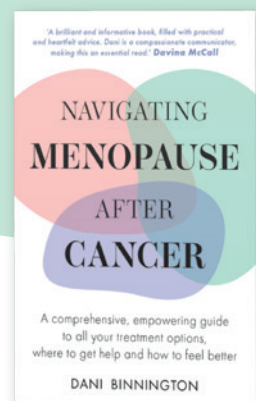
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Interview

# Dani Binnington

## Navigating Menopause After Cancer



5.0 ★★★★★

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**Your book opens a vital conversation around menopause after cancer. What inspired you to write it now?**

I wrote *Navigating Menopause After Cancer* because this is the conversation that's been missing for far too long. After my own cancer treatment and a risk – reducing surgery threw me into sudden menopause, I was shocked to find there was almost no guidance – not from my oncology team, not in the leaflets I was given, and certainly not in the wider conversation about survivorship.

I kept meeting other women who felt exactly the same: isolated, dismissed, and left to figure it out alone while dealing with debilitating symptoms that sometimes felt harder to bear than chemotherapy or surgery. My first step to change the current landscape was to set up the Menopause And Cancer podcast, next came the non-profit 'Menopause and Cancer' and the book is a summary of all the knowledge accumulated over the years.



**You've blended personal experience with expert insights throughout the book. How did your own journey with surgical menopause shape the tone and content of the book?**

While I share parts of my own story in *Navigating Menopause After Cancer*, the book is not just about me, it's a collection of insights, strategies, and evidence-based guidance from some of the leading oncologists, menopause specialists, and wellbeing experts in the field. My role was to bring their expertise together, translate it into language that feels accessible, and place it in the real-world context of what life is like after cancer treatment.

By weaving my experiences in with their knowledge, I hope readers feel both seen and supported – knowing that the advice they're getting is rooted in medical science, but also grounded in the realities of living through it.

**HRT is a complex topic for cancer survivors. What do you hope readers take away from your discussion of HRT and its alternatives?**

HRT can be one of the most complex and emotionally charged topics for cancer survivors, and too often it's

avoided entirely in conversations between patients and their healthcare teams. In the book, I wanted to create a safe and informed space to explore it openly.

Together with Dr. Talaulikar, we developed what we believe is the world's first clear, accessible table outlining which cancer types can consider HRT and which should avoid it as a first-line option – and we did the same for local oestrogen.

We also tackle challenging questions, like HRT after breast cancer, in a way that balances the latest evidence with real-life patient considerations. My hope is that readers come away feeling empowered to ask questions, understand their options, and know that this conversation is for them – it's not something to shy away from.

**The book features voices from both survivors and specialists. Why was it important to include multiple perspectives?**

Including both survivors and specialists ensures the book offers practical, lived experience alongside trusted, evidence-based guidance, making the support both relatable and reliable.

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#### 2. Strengthen Bones & Joints

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#### 3. Improve Sleep & Calm the Nervous System

Glycine in collagen supports deeper, restorative sleep, reduces night-time waking, and promotes relaxation – all crucial for recovery and hormonal balance.

#### 4. Enhance Skin, Hair & Vaginal Health

Collagen replenishment restores skin elasticity, reduces dryness, supports stronger hair, and improves hydration in delicate tissues, including the vaginal wall – helping counteract discomfort and thinning.

#### 5. Nurture Gut Health & Immunity

Collagen's amino acids repair the gut lining, support a balanced microbiome, and reduce inflammation – a cornerstone for hormonal balance and immune resilience.

#### 6. A Complete Protein for Daily Vitality

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The Hidden Science of Perimenopause

Perimenopause is more than hormones. For many women, symptoms like hot flushes, night sweats, anxiety, brain fog, joint pain, and skin flare-ups continue even with Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT).

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At Test-BasedNutrition.com, our elite experts uncover these root causes using science-led testing and protocols that transform outcomes.

### Why HRT Isn't Always Enough

HRT can be life-changing, but it doesn't address the cellular health foundations that drive symptoms.

- Gut health imbalances stop the body metabolising hormones properly.
- Cellular lipid imbalance (too much Omega-6, not enough Omega-3) fuels inflammation, worsening hot flushes, anxiety, and joint pain.
- Vitamin D & nutrient deficiencies weaken resilience, leaving fatigue, low mood, and bone health issues unresolved.

By testing and correcting the root causes, women can finally experience transformation — whether or not they use HRT.

**“When you correct the foundations — gut health, omega status, micronutrients and blood sugar — symptoms lose their power.”**

Natasha Sundharawipata, Founder, Test-BasedNutrition.com

### The gut-hormone axis

Your gut helps detox excess oestrogen, produces neurotransmitters (hello, serotonin for mood and sleep), and trains the immune system.

When the gut is off (bloating, IBS, irregular bowels, food reactions), hormone fluctuations hit harder: heavier periods, PMS, anxiety, low mood and skin issues. Restore gut balance — steadier hormones, calmer cycles, clearer head.

### The omega connection: inflammation & the brain

Most women we test arrive with an Omega-6:3 ratio around 8–12:1 (optimal is 3:1 or lower).

- Too much Omega-6 — inflammation — hotter flushes, sorer joints, pricklier skin.
- Too little Omega-3 (EPA/DHA) — foggy brain, lower mood, poorer stress resilience.
- Balance the ratio and you support hormone signalling, brain function, skin and joint comfort.

### STATS YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Up to 80% of women we see are low in Vitamin D.
- Over 90% show omega imbalance before starting protocols.
- Gut disruption is strongly associated with worse PMS/perimenopause symptoms.
- Glucose spikes can intensify hot flushes, night sweats and fatigue. (These are common findings in our testing and clinical experience.)

### SYMPTOMS — LIKELY ROOT CAUSES

- Hot flushes / night sweats — inflammation + blood sugar swings
- Brain fog / memory dips — low DHA + Vitamin D deficiency
- Anxiety / mood swings — gut-hormone imbalance + omega deficiency
- Joint pain / stiffness — chronic inflammation from high omega-6
- Heavy periods / PMS — sluggish oestrogen detox in the gut + micronutrient gaps
- Acne / rosacea / dry skin — gut inflammation + omega imbalance

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- Gut Health & Prebiotics — demonstrating how they rebuild the microbiome, calm inflammation, and support hormone balance.
- Inflammation — showing how chronic, low-grade inflammation drives fatigue, pain, and hormonal disruption.
- Cellular Lipid Balance — proving how restoring the body's natural fatty acid profile supports brain health, memory, mood, resilience, and long-term wellbeing.

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