

The male menopause: genuine condition or moneymaking myth?

Level 1: Elementary

1 Warmer

a. Discuss the questions.

1. What do you do to keep yourself healthy?
2. How will you take care of your health when you are older?
3. What is your favourite health tip?

2 Key words

a. Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

medical

menopause

muscle

suggest

symptom

1. _____ happens when a woman is about 50 years old and stops having her period.
2. When you _____ something, you talk about an idea or possible plan for people to think about.
3. If something is _____, it is related to doctors, illnesses, or treatments.
4. A _____ is a change in your mind or body caused by a disease or condition.
5. A _____ is a part of the body that works with bones to help you move.

benefit

estrogen

factor

level

testosterone

6. _____ is a hormone produced in men's bodies that causes them to develop into men.
7. The amount or number of something is its _____.
8. _____ is a hormone produced in women's bodies that causes them to develop into women and prepare their bodies to have babies.
9. A _____ is one of many things that cause something else.
10. A _____ is a helpful or valuable effect of something.

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b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity. You might have to change the form of the word.

1. What are some _____ of the flu?
2. The runner wasn't allowed to race because he took extra _____.
3. Diet, exercise, and sleep are key _____ of a healthy lifestyle.
4. I'd like to _____ that we start going to the gym more often.
5. My grandmother has diabetes, and I help her check her sugar _____ every day.
6. During a woman's cycle, the amount of _____ changes.
7. When she started getting hot flashes regularly, she knew that it was the _____.
8. Students will be excused for _____ or dental appointments.

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1 There were recent reports that it was possible to get sick pay for “male menopause” at several NHS trusts. Some HR managers suggested staff could receive up to a year of sick pay. However, the NHS says male menopause is not a medical condition and does not offer leave for it.

2 **What is the “male menopause”?**

The male menopause is often used to describe symptoms in some men in their late 40s to early 50s, such as problems sleeping and loss of muscle.

3 But the NHS says this is an “unhelpful term sometimes used in the media”.

4 **So, this isn't a male version of what women go through?**

In a word, no.

5 Dr Ravinder Anand-Ivell, of the University of Nottingham and the European Academy of Andrology, says the two are quite different.

6 When a woman's eggs are nearly all gone “at around 50 plus or minus five years,” she explains, this causes the symptoms of menopause. “Men have no equivalent.”

7 Prof Richard Sharpe, from the University of Edinburgh, agreed and said that normally, testosterone levels go down starting in the late 30s. However, he notes that this can't be compared to the change in women's estrogen levels during menopause. What happens to men can be different, but menopause happens to 100% of women, and the changes in men are not as fast.

8 **Does that mean the “male menopause” is made up?**

Not exactly.

9 “There is a condition in some men, known as ‘late onset hypogonadism’,” said Anand-Ivell. But this happens in about 2.1% of men, almost all over the age of 65.

10 Most men will have some symptoms, ‘but they are almost always driven by other factors,’ said Sharpe.

11 **So, what is behind these symptoms?**

Anand-Ivell said men who reported symptoms might have another health problem.

12 Worries about life and money may also play a part, as could poor diet and lack of sleep, the NHS notes.

13 Prof Frederick Wu of Manchester Royal Infirmary said the treatment is: “Lifestyle change, weight loss and improve general health.”

14 **Why is the male menopause getting attention?**

Experts say a key reason the “male menopause” is a hot topic is money.

15 Anand-Ivell said that it comes “from business interests, particularly in the USA ... in order to sell testosterone-related products” and there is no proof of any benefits.

16 Sharpe said: “I am amazed that any health board would even talk about male menopause, and they certainly shouldn't suggest time off.”

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3 Comprehension check

a. Answer the questions using information from the article.

1. What were the recent reports at the NHS about?
2. What does the NHS say about male menopause and sick pay?
3. What does the term 'male menopause' mean?
4. What Does the NHS say about this term?
5. How does Dr Anand-Ivell explain menopause in the article?
6. What percentage of women go through menopause?
7. What percentage of men have 'late onset hypogonadism' or LOH?
8. According to the article, why can these symptoms in men happen?
9. What does Professor Wu recommend men do to treat those symptoms?
10. What is the key reason 'male menopause' is a hot topic?

4 Key language

a. Find these sentences in the article. Fill in the missing modals for possibility.

1. Some HR managers suggested staff _____ receive up to a year of sick pay.
2. However, he notes that this _____ be compared to the change in women's estrogen levels during menopause.
3. What happens to men _____ be different, but menopause happens to 100% of women.
4. Anand-Ivell said men who reported symptoms _____ have another health problem.
5. Worries about life and money _____ also play a part, as _____ poor diet and lack of sleep, the NHS notes.

b. Write three personalised sentences using the modals for possibility from task A.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- “Health products should have real health benefits.”
- “Women need better sick leave for menopause.”
- “Getting older affects everyone in a different way.”

6 In your own words

a. Do some research about menopause.

- When does it happen?
- What are some symptoms?
- Which countries have sick leave and/or other support for women?

b. Report your findings to the class and share your opinion about the issue. Here are some phrases to help you when you talk about facts.

The doctors said ...

Their research showed ...

This happens when ...

According to my research, ...

They still need to learn more about ...

Here are some phrases to use when stating your opinion.

I think (that) ...

I want to understand why/how ...

From my point of view, ...

In my understanding/opinion, ...

I (still) have questions about ...