

The male menopause: genuine condition or moneymaking myth?

Level 2: Intermediate – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article debunks male menopause as a clinical condition

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Modal verbs (*can, can't, may, could*)

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to get students to think about health issues and concerns, to consider how we might change how we care for ourselves as we age, and to think of some health tips to share.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs or small groups. You may wish to note that the opposite of *psychological* is *physical*.

Key:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>menopause</i> | 8. <i>declines</i> |
| 2. <i>policy</i> | 9. <i>estrogen</i> |
| 3. <i>symptom</i> | 10. <i>controversial</i> |
| 4. <i>depression</i> | 11. <i>range</i> |
| 5. <i>muscle mass</i> | 12. <i>sudden</i> |
| 6. <i>ovaries</i> | 13. <i>lifestyle</i> |
| 7. <i>testosterone</i> | 14. <i>psychological</i> |

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use some of the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they understand and know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. <i>symptoms</i> | 6. <i>sudden</i> |
| 2. <i>depression</i> | 7. <i>menopause</i> |
| 3. <i>decline</i> | 8. <i>estrogen</i> |
| 4. <i>controversial</i> | 9. <i>testosterone</i> |
| 5. <i>range</i> | |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. They may do this in different ways, e.g., in item 1, they may say, 'The recent reports were about male menopause sick pay' or similar.

Key (suggested answers):

1. *male menopause sick leave policies*
2. *that male menopause is not a medical condition and that they do not have a national sick leave policy for it*
3. *features such as depression, problems sleeping and loss of muscle mass in men in their late 40s to early 50s*
4. *It is an unhelpful term sometimes used in the media.*
5. *Menopause happens when a woman's ovaries run out of eggs, usually around 50 years of age.*
6. *There is a 100% occurrence of menopause in women.*
7. *2.1% of the time*
8. *because of another health problem*
9. *lifestyle change, weight loss, and improved general health*
10. *Money. Companies are trying to sell testosterone-related products to men.*

4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. Remind students that *possibility* means something can happen, but *probability* expresses how likely a thing will or won't happen. The sentences are all used in the article. As an extension activity, you could ask students to go back to the text and find where they appear.

Key:

1. *This can't be compared to the sharp drop in estrogen levels in women.*
2. *What men experience can vary.*
3. *Some men with late-onset hypogonadism (LOH) may benefit from testosterone replacement treatment.*

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4. Features that have been linked to a "male menopause" could be because of lifestyle factors or psychological problems.
 5. Financial and life worries may also play a role in the symptoms some men experience during ageing, as could poor diet and lack of sleep.
- b. Allow the class to try out the modals on their own. Monitor and assist students as you walk around the class. Allow time for feedback so students can share some of the sentences they have written.

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to research menopause in women.
- b. Students could then present their reports to the class. Encourage students to share their gathered information and their opinions about the issue. Encourage students to use some of the given phrases in their presentations when stating facts and their opinions.