

CBT for Menopause

UNDERSTAND • REFRAME • MANAGE • THRIVE

Menopause is a natural stage of life — and while the changes can be challenging, CBT can help you manage the impact on your thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

Same you,
just in a new
chapter
♡

What is the menopause?

The menopause is when your periods stop, usually between the ages of 45–55, due to a natural decline in oestrogen. The perimenopause is the time leading up to this, when hormone levels fluctuate and symptoms can begin while you're still having periods.



Menopause is defined as 12 months without a period (or earlier if you have had surgery or other medical reasons).

Common symptoms

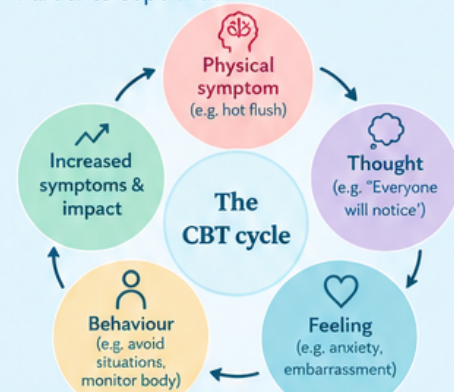
Everyone experiences menopause differently. You might notice:

- Hot flushes & night sweats
- Sleep problems & tiredness
- Brain fog & difficulty concentrating
- Low mood, anxiety & irritability
- Palpitations & headaches
- Joint & muscle aches
- Changes in libido & vaginal health
- Urinary symptoms

Symptoms can affect your emotional wellbeing, relationships, work and daily life.

How CBT helps

CBT doesn't ignore the physical changes — it helps you change the thoughts, behaviours and patterns that can amplify symptoms and make them harder to cope with.



CBT helps you break this cycle and build more helpful ways of thinking and responding.

The CBT approach



1 Understand what's happening

Learn how hormones, symptoms, sleep, stress and thoughts interact. This can be reassuring and empowering.



2 Work with thoughts

Notice unhelpful or negative thoughts and challenge them with more balanced, realistic perspectives.



3 Reduce anxiety around symptoms

Learn to be less vigilant and frightened by bodily sensations. It's not about stopping symptoms, but managing your response.



4 Improve sleep

Build better sleep habits, manage waking at night and reduce anxious thoughts about poor sleep.



5 Make helpful behavioural changes

Reintroduce enjoyable activities, gentle exercise and social connection — even when motivation is low.



6 Manage stress & emotions

Use relaxation, breathing, grounding and problem-solving. Develop healthier ways to respond to life's pressures.



7 Rebuild body confidence & identity

Challenge negative beliefs and develop a kinder, more accepting relationship with your changing body.

Common unhelpful thoughts

Menopause can make ordinary difficulties feel much bigger. You might notice thoughts like:

- "I'm not myself anymore."
- "I'm losing control."
- "I'll never feel normal again."
- "Everyone can see that I'm struggling."
- "I won't be able to cope."
- "My concentration is getting worse and something must be seriously wrong."
- "I'm exhausted, so today is going to be awful."



CBT helps you question these thoughts and find more balanced, realistic ways of seeing things.

Practical CBT tools



Breathing exercises
Calm your body and mind



Relaxation techniques
Reduce tension and improve sleep



Thought records
Spot and challenge unhelpful thinking



Graded exposure
Build confidence in social and physical activities



Pleasant activities
Boost mood and motivation



Communication skills
Express your needs and set boundaries



Self-compassion
Be kinder to yourself during change

The bigger picture

The menopause can also be a time to look after your long-term health, especially bone and heart health. CBT can support you in making sustainable lifestyle changes.



Helpful lifestyle factors

- Regular physical activity (including strength and weight-bearing exercise)
- Balanced diet and adequate calcium & vitamin D
- No smoking and limited alcohol
- Maintaining a healthy weight



When to seek support

- Speak to your GP or a healthcare professional if:
- Symptoms are affecting your quality of life
 - You're unsure if your symptoms could be menopause
 - You have significant mood changes, anxiety or sleep problems
 - You experience bleeding after menopause
 - You have symptoms before age 45
 - You'd like to discuss HRT or other treatment options