

Menstrual Health

WELFARE AT WORK

STOP THE STIGMA

What are the symptoms associated with menstruation and the menopause?

Many people suffer mild to severe symptoms while menstruating or experiencing menopause, which can require extraordinary measures to mitigate.

These symptoms often include:



MENSTRUATION

abdominal cramping • some medical conditions cause severe or debilitating pain • heavy bleeding • nausea • migraines • mood swings • feeling depressed • irritability • tiredness • bloating • breast tenderness



MENOPAUSE

hot flashes & palpitations • night sweats • difficulty sleeping & insomnia • fatigue • bleeding or painful periods • changes in periods/ heavy or irregular • poor concentration • lack of energy • low mood, depression or anxiety •

problems with memory or concentration • headaches • joint aches & pains • recurring UTIs • skin irritation/dryness • taking longer to get over an illness • weight gain

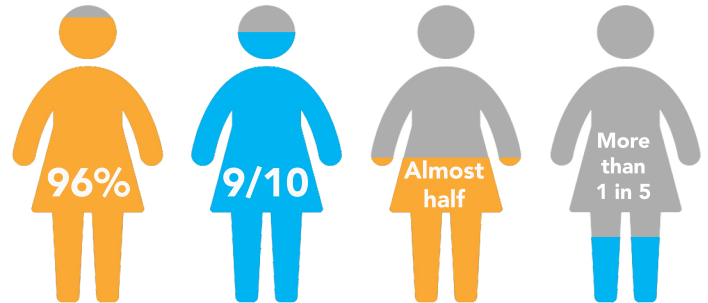
OUR WORK ON MENOPAUSE

FSU has to date completed extensive work on menopause workplace policies and has secured menopause policies in the largest Banks in ROI and NI. We will continue to campaign for implementation in workplaces throughout our sector.

FSU's 2022 menopause guide for the workplace and the results of our 2021 workplace survey are available on our website:

<https://www.fsunion.org/menstrual-menopause-health>

The results of FSU survey on Menstrual Health in March 2023 revealed staggering information about how people are coping with menstruation in their workplace.



would welcome a menstrual health support policy in the workplace

think menstrual health affects working life

are not comfortable talking about menstrual health in work and 69% say it is due to the gender of their manager

say periods are joked about in the workplace

Why is this important in the workplace?

The stigma surrounding periods and the menopause is preventing people from discussing ways to improve their quality of life in the workplace. If a worker doesn't get the support and help that is needed, it may be increasingly likely that the effects of menstruation / menopause will make them feel ill, lead to increased absenteeism, lose confidence to carry out their job, suffer work performance issues, or suffer from mental health conditions such as stress, anxiety, and depression, and potentially leave their job. Removing the stigma around periods and educating employers are essential to ensuring period dignity at work.

What can your workplace do to improve?

- Implement and communicate a menstrual health workplace policy
- Training for managers on medical conditions that have painful menstrual symptoms and training for all staff on period stigma
- Reasonable accommodation or special leave for medical conditions that cause severe or debilitating symptoms
- Absence related to menstrual medical conditions not triggering performance improvement plan
- Option to work from home during a bad period
- Access to flexible working when required
- Additional rest breaks if needed
- Environmental supports eg: office temperature, desk fans, breathable uniform fabrics, access to wash facilities, free period products