

# FIND your FOUR

## A RESOURCE FOR A HEALTHY MENOPAUSE MENOPAUSE, HIV AND ME

Menopause is when your periods stop due to a change in hormone levels.<sup>1</sup>

This resource is to help you find menopause information and support, so you can access the care you need, and understand the changes in your body.

### Are you over 45 years old?\*

\*Menopause usually happens around the ages of 45-55 but this may be earlier for people living with HIV.<sup>1,2</sup>

Have your periods become less regular or changed in some way?  
Have you stopped having periods altogether?<sup>3</sup>

Have you noticed vulval or vaginal changes?<sup>3</sup>

Are you feeling any changes in your mind or body, as shown below?<sup>3,4</sup>



- Do you find it hard to concentrate or forget things?
- Are you more tired than usual?
- Do you get upset more easily?
- Do you feel more stress or anxiety than usual?
- Are headaches or migraines worse than usual?



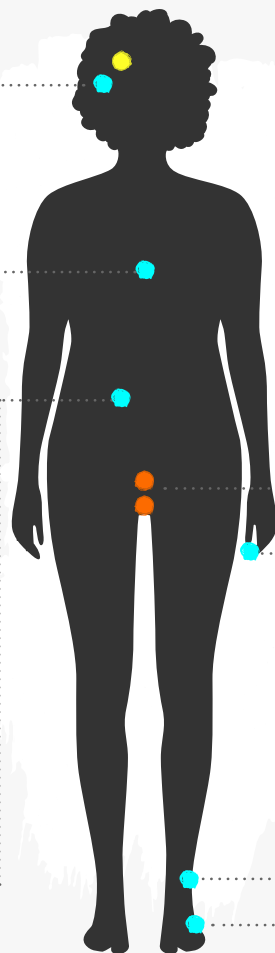
- Do you ever suddenly feel hot or cold, which can also make you feel dizzy?



- Have you noticed your heart racing or feeling it beat more strongly?



- Do you sweat in the night or wake up with sweat on your body?
- Have you noticed changes to your sleep?



- Do you have vaginal dryness, itchiness or pain?
- Are you enjoying sex less than before? Does sex hurt? Do you feel less interested in sex these days?



- Do you pee more often, or have trouble holding it in?
- Does it feel uncomfortable when you pee?
- Do you get urinary infections more than you used to?



- Have you noticed skin changes, including dry and itchy skin?



- Do you have joint pains or muscle aches?



- Has your body shape changed?
- Have you put on weight?

# MENOPAUSE HAPPENS *gradually* OVER MANY YEARS<sup>1,3,4</sup>

- Perimenopause is when your hormones start to change and you may experience symptoms and changes to your period.
- Menopause starts when you have not had a period within a year.
- Post-menopause is the last stage, when there can be a slightly increased risk of some health conditions that affect your heart, bones, and bladder health.

**THERE ARE PEOPLE THAT CAN HELP  
AT EVERY STEP OF YOUR JOURNEY**



## **SPEAK TO YOUR HIV HEALTH TEAM**

Many people living with HIV do not ask about menopause – but there are ways you can feel better and live the happy, healthy life you deserve. This can include lifestyle changes, simple advice to manage symptoms, emotional support and hormone treatments. **For more information and support, speak to your HIV health team.**



## **SPEAK TO SOMEONE LIKE YOU**

Connecting with other people living with HIV that have experienced menopause might help you. Speak to your HIV health team about 'peer support' or visit [www.hivfindyourfour.co.uk](http://www.hivfindyourfour.co.uk) for more resources and support.



## **QUEER MENOPAUSE**

Menopause happens to cis women, trans men, non-binary, and intersex people. For support and information about queer menopause, please visit [www.queermenopause.com](http://www.queermenopause.com)

## **YOUR *rights* AND *routes* TO HIV CARE**

Visit [www.hivfindyourfour.co.uk](http://www.hivfindyourfour.co.uk) to find more ways to live well with HIV. The website includes:

**Rights to HIV Care:** With this simple guide, learn about your rights to NHS care and know that you can talk to your healthcare team about what matters to you

**Routes to HIV Care:** With this simple guide, learn about the different types of NHS care so you can talk to your healthcare team about the services and support you need

1. NHS. Conditions: Menopause. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/> Last accessed: October 2022.  
2. King EM et al. Menopausal hormone therapy for women living with HIV. The Lancet HIV. 2021;8(9):E591-E59.  
3. NHS. Symptoms: Menopause. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms/> Last accessed: October 2022.  
4. NHS Inform Scotland. After the menopause. Available at: <https://www.nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/womens-health/after-the-menopause/> Last accessed: October 2022.

