

Men's Health Policy Template



At [Company], we recognise the importance of supporting the health of all our employees. Men's health can be a difficult topic to address at the best of times, but especially in the workplace. It's time to break down barriers around men's physical and mental health issues and normalise taking care of ourselves in the best way possible.

Our Men's Health Policy aims to give our employees the necessary time to address any reproductive or mental health challenges.

At [Company], our Men's Health Policy is intentionally kept separate from other policies - including our pregnancy loss, fertility, and family-forming policies. The focus of this policy is to support our employees through men's health specific challenges.

Note for HR managers and People teams: Do consider outlining how this policy fits within the more general sick leave policy at your company so that employees know how their allowance is broken down and when to use each one. Be sure to signpost this document within your employee handbook, internal portal, and wherever else you think employees might look for it. You want it to be as easy to find as possible.

Our [Company] Men's Health Policy covers a range of health challenges, such as challenges with the prostate and testicles, erectile dysfunction, sexually transmitted infections, cancers, mental health challenges, and more. We've kept it broad and flexible because there's no one-size-fits-all approach to men's health challenges.



Although we use the term 'men's health' throughout, this policy is inclusive of all employees assigned male at birth, **no matter their gender identity**. If you feel like the language we've used here could be more inclusive of you, please let us know. **We are always open to learning.**

Why do we have a Men's health policy at [Company]?

Reproductive health issues can impact anyone, and we want all [Company] employees to feel empowered to take control of their health and get checked out if they think something is wrong. A dedicated policy is the first step to achieving this.



More than 52,000 men are diagnosed with prostate cancer every year on average in the UK – **that's 143 men every day**.



75% of men put off going to the doctor when they feel ill.



52% of men will experience some form of erectile dysfunction in their lifetime.



1 in 8 men will suffer from mental health problems at some point in their life.

At [Company], we are committed to providing the right support to meet your needs and to ensure that you can bring your best self to work.

The practicalities of the policy



1 How many days you are entitled to:

We trust you to do what is right for you.

You can take up to [x] days off per year for men's health challenges. How and when you use them is up to you. If you need more time than that, let your manager or HR know. We want this policy to work for you and we are happy to adjust it as needed.

If it's not time off that you need, flexible working arrangements (including working from home or adjusting working hours) are also available to support you through men's health challenges. Just let your manager know what would work best for you and we can go from there by having a confidential conversation.

Note for HR managers and People teams: It's important to clearly state here whether the leave you are offering is paid or unpaid leave for complete clarity. At Fertifa, we offer 5 days off for men's health challenges. However, in our policy, we also state that this is flexible and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

2 Where to find support:

We would encourage you to speak to your line manager, HR manager, People team or whoever you feel most comfortable speaking to about what you're experiencing. Remember, these conversations will be kept completely confidential.

We also recognise that you might not feel comfortable speaking to someone at work about this, so we've outlined some resources below that might help too.

If you need to take more than the [x] days you are entitled to (for example, for a surgery), a return-to-work discussion with your line manager or HR manager is recommended. Your reasonable adjustment form can be reviewed too, and you can create a personal plan tailored to you that our HR team can organise. This plan should be reviewed on a regular basis.

3 How to book time off for men's health challenges:

You can book time off the same way you book sick leave off, just make sure to use our designated men's health category in your HRIS.

Note for HR managers and People teams: Set this up in your internal system. You might also prefer to have an 'Other' category that people can use for men's health challenges, if they don't feel comfortable specifying that it's for men's health reasons. Be sure to emphasise that any time off will be taken in confidence, and that only HR and/or their manager will be informed.

When you book time off for men's health, you'll be asked to write a reason for your time off, as well as to include a doctor's note.

We know that getting a diagnosis for your health conditions may take time, so if you don't have a doctor's note, you can also show that you've seen a doctor about this issue, whether or not it's been diagnosed or treated.

4 How to access clinical care for men's health challenges:

 If you're a Fertifa client

At [Company], we offer men's health support through Fertifa, our reproductive healthcare provider.

To use this support, you can download the Fertifa app from the App Store or Google Play and get access to unlimited 1-2-1 support from Fertifa's in-house clinical team, for all men's health challenges.

You'll also have access to a suite of educational resources through the Fertifa App – you can browse articles, attend webinars, and join live Q&A sessions with doctors and nurses on the most common and complicated areas in men's health.

Note for HR managers and People teams: Be sure to indicate how your support for men's health is integrated within any other benefits you have, such as health insurance or a therapy allowance.



Below you can find some resources on some of the most common men's health issues. This list is by no means exhaustive, but it's a good place to start!

Prostate cancer:

[The five signs of prostate cancer all men should be aware of](#)

[An overview of prostate cancer](#)

Male menopause:

[What is the male menopause?](#)

Erectile dysfunction:

[An overview of erectile dysfunction](#)

Testicular cancer:

[How to check for testicular cancer](#)

[An overview of testicular cancer](#)

Low testosterone

[What is low testosterone and what to do if you've been told you have it](#)

Male infertility:

[What is male infertility and what causes it?](#)

[How to optimise and improve your fertility as a man](#)

Men's health terminology

We thought it might be helpful to outline the most common men's health conditions so that [Company] employees (and particularly line managers and HR teams) are all aware of what they could look like.

Benign prostate enlargement

Benign prostate enlargement (BPE) is the medical term to describe an enlarged prostate that is not cancerous. This condition can affect how you pee (urinate) and is common in men over 50. It's important to emphasise that having an enlarged prostate does not mean an increased risk of cancer.

Erectile dysfunction

Erectile dysfunction is when you are either unable to get an erection or unable to keep an erection for long enough to have sex. Erectile dysfunction is quite common, particularly in men over 40. Around half of men will experience it at some point in their life. It's usually nothing to worry about but do see a doctor if it keeps happening.

Low testosterone

Low testosterone, or male hypogonadism, happens when your testicles don't produce enough testosterone. This can be due to various causes, like conditions or injuries affecting your testicles, pituitary gland, or hypothalamus. It's typically treatable with testosterone replacement therapy.

Male infertility

Around 1 in 7 couples will experience challenges with fertility and around half of infertility cases are male-factor. This can be for a number of reasons, from low sperm production or blockages that prevent the delivery of sperm, to illnesses, injuries, chronic health problems and lifestyle choices.



Men's health terminology (continued)

Male menopause

As men reach their late 40s to early 50s, some may experience depression, loss of sex drive, erectile dysfunction, and other physical and emotional symptoms. These might include mood swings and irritability, loss of muscle mass and reduced ability to exercise, fat redistribution like developing a large belly, a general lack of enthusiasm or energy, difficulty sleeping (insomnia), poor concentration, and short-term memory. These symptoms can affect everyday life and happiness, so it's important to identify the underlying cause and find solutions. It's also important to note that this isn't equivalent to female menopause as it's not related to a sudden drop in hormones. Low testosterone can be responsible for some symptoms, but others have nothing to do with hormones at all.

Penile cancer

Penile cancer is quite rare, and mostly affects men over the age of 50. You should see a doctor if you notice changes in your penis, like a lump, rash, or discoloration.

Peyronie's disease

Peyronie's disease is a disorder in which scar link tissue, called plaque, forms under the skin of the penis and causes the penis to become curved when it's erect. The condition mostly affects men over 40, although it can happen at any age.

Premature ejaculation

Premature ejaculation affects around 20% of men and is when you ejaculate sooner than desired during sexual arousal. It's completely normal if this happens from time to time, but if it's happening more frequently than you'd like and it's a problem for you, you can see a doctor for treatment.

Prostate cancer

1 in 8 men will get prostate cancer in their lifetime according to Prostate Cancer UK. It's the most common cancer for men in the UK. However, 75% of men will put off going to the GP when something is wrong, according to a survey by Gillette. Most men should begin getting screenings for prostate cancer between age 45-55, and repeat the tests every 2-3 years, but speak with your doctor to find out what is best for you.

Retrograde ejaculation

This is a rarer type of ejaculation problem and involves the semen travelling back down into your bladder instead of up your urethra and out. You might notice it if you have cloudy pee (urine) after having sex. It doesn't pose a health risk, however, it can affect your fertility.

Sexually transmitted infections

A sexually transmitted infection (STI) is typically contracted through sexual activity. Although women have a higher risk of contracting an STI, they're also common in men. If you experience rashes, blisters, sores, or discolouration of the skin of the penis or anus, pain during urination or ejaculation, unusually frequent urination, or discharge that smells or is of a strange colour, it's a good idea to get checked out by a doctor.

Testicular cancer

Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in young men. There are around 2,400 new testicular cancer cases in the UK every year but it has a survival rate of 91%. It's really important to do self-checks of your testicles and to see your doctor if you notice any changes.

Men's health terminology (continued)

Urinary tract infections

A urinary tract infection (UTI) occurs when bacteria infect the bladder, kidneys, or the connecting tubes. Common symptoms include a sudden urge to urinate and experiencing pain or a burning sensation during urination. Typically, UTIs can be managed with pain relief medication and drinking lots of fluids. In some cases, a GP will prescribe antibiotics to treat it. While UTIs are more common in women, around 12% of men will develop one in their lifetime.

Varicocele

Varicocele is a group of enlarged veins near your testicles. It is more common on the left scrotum but may occur on either side. Often you will not show symptoms, but if the scrotum grows too large you may feel an uncomfortable heaviness. Some people describe this as a dull ache as the day wears on. Surgery is an option if this is becoming uncomfortable, or if it is affecting your fertility.

Vasectomy

A vasectomy is a permanent form of contraception. It stops sperm from being released when ejaculating. Typically performed under local anaesthetic, a vasectomy takes about 30 minutes. Mild pain for 1 to 2 weeks post-procedure is common. This service is available on the NHS, though there is often a waiting list. While reversal is possible, it's not always successful and is generally not offered on the NHS.