

Supporting women with common hormonal conditions at *work*

Hormonal health is fundamental to overall wellbeing, yet conditions affecting the endocrine and reproductive systems are often overlooked. The idea that physical or mental discomfort related to hormonal changes is 'normal' or something individuals should 'just get through' shows a lack of education and understanding that negatively impacts employee wellbeing and an organisation's bottom line.

Hormonal conditions are often complex and always deeply personal, ranging from thyroid dysfunction and conditions linked to menstruation and perimenopause, to diagnoses like endometriosis and adenomyosis. For many, they represent invisible but significant daily challenges which they are left to face alone.

It's important to remember that hormonal conditions present differently in everyone, with symptom severity and frequency varying greatly. Employees managing these conditions can feel isolated, and a lack of support can severely impact their job satisfaction and careers.



Women's Health and Menopause

A quick overview of some of the most common hormonal conditions

Condition	Overview	Workplace Symptoms	Typical Accommodations
Endometriosis & Adenomyosis	Two distinct but related conditions: endometriosis is tissue similar to the uterine lining growing outside the uterus, while adenomyosis is that tissue growing into the uterine muscle wall itself. Both cause severe, chronic pelvic pain, fatigue, and heavy bleeding, and often present similarly at work.	- Severe, unpredictable pain flare-ups - Chronic fatigue - Difficulty sitting for long periods	- Flexible hours around flare-ups - Access to a quiet rest space - Paid time off for specialist appointments
PMDD & Severe PMS	PMDD is a diagnosable hormone-based mood disorder, distinct from (but often confused with) severe PMS, which describes intense symptom severity rather than a formal diagnosis. Both cause intense emotional and physical symptoms in the weeks leading up to menstruation.	- Mood swings, irritability, low mood - Difficulty concentrating - Cyclical, predictable timing	- Flexibility to reschedule demanding tasks - Reduced meeting load in symptomatic week - Confidential manager check-ins
Dysmenorrhea & Heavy Menstrual Bleeding	Painful periods and heavy bleeding (menorrhagia) involving extreme cramping and excessive blood loss.	- Acute pain, nausea - Frequent restroom breaks - Risk of leaking / anxiety about it	- Proximity to clean restrooms - Discreet access to supplies - Relaxed dress code during flare-ups
PMOS	A common hormonal disorder affecting ovarian function, causing irregular cycles, chronic fatigue, metabolic issues, mood changes, and physical symptoms like hair loss or facial hair.	- Fatigue, brain fog - Mood changes - Self-consciousness re: visible symptoms	- Flexible start times (fatigue) - Access to wellbeing / mental health support - Non-judgemental dress code
Hypothyroidism & Hyperthyroidism	The thyroid gland produces too little (hypo) or too much (hyper) thyroid hormone.	- Fatigue or restlessness - Temperature sensitivity - Weight or concentration changes	- Desk temperature control - Flexible hours during medication adjustment - Time off for thyroid function tests
Perimenopause & Menopause	The transition marking the end of reproductive years, involving fluctuating then declining hormone levels over several years.	- Hot flashes, night sweats - Brain fog, sleep disruption - Mood changes, anxiety	- Temperature control (fans/desk location) - Flexible/hybrid working - Standalone menopause policy
Others	Other hormonal health factors impacting the workplace: fertility treatments, hormonal contraception side effects, and hormone replacement therapy (HRT).	- Variable — treatment-dependent - Appointment-heavy periods	- Flexible leave for treatment cycles - Confidential HR support

1 in 10 of women of reproductive age globally are affected by endometriosis. Endometriosis UK

How *hormonal conditions* can impact individuals at work

1 in 6

employees with endometriosis take leave to manage their symptoms.

Endometriosis UK

50%

of employees diagnosed with PMOS have had to take time off work.

Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism

81%

of employees experiencing period pain report presenteeism.

BMJ Open

52%

of women report feeling pressure to go to work despite severe period pain.

Endometriosis UK

49%

Of employees do not tell their manager the reason for hormone-related absences.

CIPD

69%

of employees with hormonal conditions report a negative impact on their working life.

CIPD

How you can *support* your people in the workplace



Manager training and support

Ensure you have up-to-date Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies that encompass flexible working provisions and reasonable adjustments for hormonal health conditions. This should include a standalone [menopause policy](#).



Training

Offer manager and staff training for reproductive and hormonal health. Use it to build awareness, reduce workplace stigma, and encourage open dialogue. If possible, support senior champions in sharing their own experiences to foster trust.



Medical appointments

Encourage members of staff to attend essential medical appointments (e.g., endocrinology, specialist consultations, scan visits). Clarify flexible hours or paid time off to accommodate these, emphasising that prioritising healthcare during working hours is supported.



Reasonable adjustments

Implement practical adjustments for employees managing physical or cognitive symptoms. Examples include flexible working hours, working from home during severe pain or fatigue flare-ups, temperature control (fans/desk location), and close proximity to restrooms.



Communication considerations

Foster empathetic, confidential, and open lines of communication. Avoid making assumptions about symptom impact, normalise conversations around reproductive and hormonal health, and check in regularly with employees managing chronic or fluctuating conditions.



Signposting resources

Make sure your employees know where to find dedicated support, such as Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs), private healthcare benefits, specialised health apps, or an internal intranet hub signposting trustworthy medical resources.

What to do if an employee wants to discuss *reasonable adjustments* to help manage hormonal conditions

If somebody approaches you asking for workplace support or reasonable adjustments for a hormonal condition, the most important thing you can do is to listen to their concerns and work with the employee to implement workplace support and reasonable adjustments that will allow them to perform their job role effectively.

1

Meet with the employee

Set up a confidential meeting between HR, the employee, and their manager.

2

Workplace Needs Assessment

Initiate a Workplace Needs Assessment process for the employee if required, or consult occupational health.

3

Reasonable adjustments

Following the conversation or assessment, agree upon and implement the tailored reasonable adjustments. These might include flexible working hours, options to work from home during symptom flare-ups, access to temperature control or quiet rest areas, and adapted break schedules.

4

Review regularly

Check in with your employee at regular intervals to make sure the reasonable adjustments are working for them, as hormonal conditions and symptoms can fluctuate over time.

How Fertifa can help



Clinical expertise

We fill critical healthcare gaps in standard PMI provision by providing direct access to specialists for neurodiversity, fertility and family-forming, menopause, men's and women's health, gender identity, mental wellbeing, lifestyle health and infant care.



Retention strategies

By supporting women's health, maternity, postpartum, pregnancy and menopause, Fertifa helps companies retain senior female talent, which directly assists in reducing the gender pay gap at executive levels.



Compliance guidance

Navigating legislative shifts is easier when you have a partner dedicated to employee health and wellbeing. We advise clients on creating practical strategies and navigating upcoming regulatory changes.