

## Mental Health & The Menopause

During perimenopause and menopause, it is common to experience mood changes such as irritability, sadness, lack of motivation, aggressiveness, problems focusing, stress, difficulty concentrating, and depression. Much like constant premenstrual syndrome (PMS), these effects can cause emotional strain.

The physical symptoms surrounding the menopause such as tiredness, hot flashes, depression just to name a few can cause distress leading to a decrease in mental health.

These symptoms can include anger, irritability, anxiety, low self-esteem, forgetfulness, brain fog, decrease in motivation, decrease in confidence and focus, depression, overthinking, changes in mood and stress. These are not the only factor that has to be taken into consideration. People often overlook stressors such as romantic relationships, children, financial and career changes, societal values on ageing, youth and the re-evaluation of life expectations.

There are many forms of support such as antidepressants, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, HRT, Testosterone therapy, counselling, mindfulness, eating healthy and regular exercise.

It is important that you are aware of how much oestrogen levels can have a profound impact on women's mental health during menopause.

If you have a history of depression there is an increased risk of it during the menopause. This is also the case for bipolar due to the decrease in oestrogen, as well as schizophrenia where often an increase in medication can counteract the changes.