

The Role of Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health

Factsheet 3: Mental Wellbeing, Stress and Menopause

These factsheets are based on the IMS White Paper *The Role of Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health: A Review of Non-Pharmacologic Interventions (2025)*. They share clear, practical information on six key areas of lifestyle medicine; healthy eating, physical activity, mental wellbeing, avoidance of risky substances, restorative sleep and healthy relationships, to support health and wellbeing during and after menopause.



World Menopause Day is held every year on 18 October.

Founded by the International Menopause Society (IMS) in 2009, it is a global awareness day that shines a spotlight on the challenges facing women during the menopause transition and highlights advances in research, education, and resources.

As the founder of World Menopause Day, IMS sets the annual theme, commissions and publishes the White Paper, and creates resources to support women, healthcare professionals, and communities worldwide.



Mental Wellbeing, Stress and Menopause

Why it matters

Midlife can be a stressful time. Many women are balancing family responsibilities, careers, and health changes - all while experiencing the physical, psychological, and metabolic shifts of menopause. This transition can increase perceived stress, which is linked to worse menopausal symptoms, including more frequent hot flashes and night sweats.

Work-related stress, low job control, and low fitness levels may also make symptoms harder to manage.

Taking care of mental wellbeing during menopause is essential for easing symptoms, protecting long-term health, and improving quality of life.



Stress and menopause symptoms



Stress can intensify vasomotor symptoms (such as hot flashes and night sweats) and worsen overall wellbeing.



Women who experience high stress often report poorer sleep, lower mood, and greater difficulty coping with daily challenges.



Mindfulness, relaxation, and stress reduction strategies have been shown to lessen symptom severity and improve resilience.

Stress management strategies

Mindfulness programs:

Effective in reducing perceived stress and improving symptom management.



Cognitive-based therapies and relaxation techniques:

Improve coping skills, lower stress levels, and can reduce vasomotor symptoms.

Art and music:

Evidence shows they can reduce stress at all life stages, including midlife.

Digital and mobile health (mHealth)

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the development and use of digital health tools, which can be highly effective for stress management. Systematic reviews show that mHealth approaches improve both psychological and physical outcomes.



Effective tools include breathing and muscle relaxation apps, meditation programs, and personalised digital guidance.



mHealth offers promising, accessible, and cost-effective ways to support stress self-management while reducing the burden on healthcare systems.

AI and conversational agents (CA)

Emerging technologies such as generative AI chatbots (e.g., ChatGPT, DeepSeek) show potential in reducing depression and supporting mental health.

Best outcomes are seen with multimodal, voice-based, or instant messaging approaches.

Success depends on engagement, communication quality, and building a sense of relationship between the user and the AI tool.



Technology in chronic disease and weight management

Digital tools can also support weight management and chronic disease prevention:



Smartphone self-monitoring improves adherence and weight loss compared to usual care.



Wearables and fitness trackers increase motivation and accountability, helping women build sustainable activity habits.



Self-set goals lead to better results than fixed targets, while motivational interviewing combined with wearables is particularly promising.



Sleep trackers provide insights into sleep patterns and can support lifestyle counselling.

Key takeaway

Stress can make menopausal symptoms worse, but the right strategies, from mindfulness and relaxation to digital tools and wearable devices, can improve mental health, reduce symptoms, and support long-term wellbeing.

Technology is opening new doors to more accessible, personalised, and equitable care. Every woman can find a combination of approaches that works best for her.



What you can do: lifestyle strategies that work

- ☐ Practice mindfulness, relaxation, or breathing exercises to reduce stress and hot flushes.
- ☐ Use CBT techniques like reframing negative thoughts or journaling to support your mood.
- ☐ Explore digital health apps for guided meditation, stress tracking, or personalised support.
- ☐ Wear a fitness or sleep tracker and set realistic goals to stay motivated.
- ☐ Take part in creative activities, such as art or music, to help manage stress.

Additional Resources

Good sleep and social support make stress easier to manage.

Explore the Restorative Sleep and Healthy Relationships factsheets for practical ideas.





The International Menopause Society hopes these factsheets will provide useful, trustworthy guidance to support conversations with healthcare professionals, families, and communities.

Together, we can continue to improve understanding of menopause and ensure women worldwide have access to the care and support they deserve.

Access all World Menopause Day factsheets on Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health online at worldmenopauseday.com

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