

Talking to your Healthcare Practitioner about Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

It's World Menopause Day on 18 October and the theme for 2024 is Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT). We're doing lots to celebrate at Greenwich and this article is part of our resources to support our colleagues.

Although the theme this year is HRT, it is important to remember there is no "one" right way to manage menopause symptoms. Some may choose to take HRT, others may not be able to, or feel it's not the right approach for them.

If you've decided you want to explore HRT, discussing this with a healthcare practitioner can feel daunting. But it is essential to make any decisions around HRT with a qualified medical professional.

Top tips

Here are some top tips to help you make the most out of your appointment:

1. Do Your Research:

- Track your symptoms and understand what's happening in your body.
- Familiarise yourself with guidelines that healthcare professionals use to advise patients. For example, in the UK the [NICE Guidelines on managing menopause](#).

2. Go Prepared:

- Make a list of your symptoms, questions and concerns.
- Bring any relevant medical history or test results.
- Think about your priorities – what is important to you?
- Find out who is the best person to see about menopause
- If possible, ask for a longer appointment to give you enough time

3. Know What to Say:

- Clearly express your symptoms and how they impact your daily life - take along a friend or family member if needed.
- Discuss your understanding of HRT and why you're considering it.

4. Working together:

- Work with your healthcare practitioner to find the best solution for you.
- Understand your rights. You can choose treatment as long as you fully comprehend the implications, including any risks. The [NICE guidelines on shared decision-making](#) may be helpful.

5. Overcome Obstacles:

- Some healthcare practitioners may be unfamiliar with the latest evidence and guidelines. Be prepared to advocate for yourself.
- If you encounter resistance, seek a second opinion or consider consulting a menopause specialist.

6. Persistence Pays Off:

- If your first attempt doesn't succeed, keep advocating for your health. You deserve the best care.

Remember healthcare practitioners want the best for their patients, and you have the right to be informed and involved in your treatment decisions.

How we're supporting menopause in our workplace

Since 2021 we have celebrated World Menopause Day and provided training for line managers and colleagues to increase awareness and provide support for menopause. Along with this there is menopause [guidance](#) and resources on a [menopause webpage](#) that provide a framework for support. There are regular informal cafés and webinars, and a [Teams Hub](#) where colleagues have the opportunity in a safe space to talk about their menopause experiences and provide support to others. Locally, there are [Menopause Champions](#) in each Faculty/Directorate who are listening ears and can signpost to resources.

Further Resources:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23>

<https://henpicked.net/menopause-hub/hrt-top-tips-dr-heather-currie/>

<https://henpicked.net/menopause-hub/hrt-menopause/>

[Women's health concern – HRT factsheet](#)