

Menstrual health in the workplace

supportive conversations

Say or use

“Menstrual health” or
“Menstrual wellbeing”

“People who menstruate”
(where appropriate)

“It’s common for hormone changes
to affect concentration or energy.”

Avoid saying

“Periods” as a blanket
term for all issues

“Women’s problem”
“girls’ issue”

“It’s just hormones”,
“that’s not professional”

Why?

“Menstrual health” is more
inclusive, professional, and
covers physical and emotional
well-being. Not everyone who
menstruates identifies as a
woman, so using inclusive
language shows awareness.

Acknowledge the physiological
basis of symptoms without
dismissing professionalism.

Menopause in the workplace

supportive conversations

Say or use

"She's having a meltdown"

"A menopausal woman"
(as a label)

"Crazy mood swings," "losing it,"
"forgetful old age"

"We all have to go through it"

"Older women at work"

Avoid saying

"The menopause transition"
"going through menopause"

"Someone experiencing
menopausal symptoms"

"Hot flushes," "brain fog," "sleep
difficulties," "mood changes"

"Menopause affects
everyone differently."

"Some colleagues may
be peri-menopausal or
post-menopausal."

Why?

Neutral, factual phrasing avoids
stereotypes and stigma.

Use person-first language
to avoid reducing someone
to a condition.

Use neutral clinical or
descriptive terms instead of
emotional or judgmental ones.

Acknowledge diversity
of experiences and
avoid generalisations.

Neutral phrasing avoids
ageism and gender bias.

General supportive conversations

Say or use

“Do you need any adjustments or support today?”

“If you need to take a break or adjust tasks during your period, that’s fine.”

“Would flexible working help?”
“Would you like to discuss adjustments?”

“It’s okay to ask for what you need - this is part of wellbeing.”

Avoid saying

“You should just push through.”

“You don’t look sick”
“It’s just your period.”

“Do you want to talk about your personal issues?”

“Maybe speak with HR”

Why?

Focus on support, not resilience or tolerance.

Avoid minimising language; acknowledge that symptoms can impact work differently for everyone.

Keep the focus on workplace support, not personal medical detail.

Reinforces openness and inclusivity.