

Tips for Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors have an important role to play in supporting employees who are experiencing menopause. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Remember that menopause is different for everyone – some women have many symptoms lasting years, some have few or no symptoms at all. Some women will be comfortable talking about it, while others will not. Don't presume to know what someone is going through or how comfortable they are speaking about it. Nurture a culture in which employees feel generally supported, and it's more likely you'll be able to provide meaningful support.
- Has your organization taken steps to establish menopause-supportive policies? What possible accommodations are available? Get informed so you'll know how you and your organization will provide support when it's needed.
- There is a lot of misinformation, misperceptions and stigma associated with menopause. If you hear a joke, or misinformed chatter, challenge it. As a leader, others will take their cue from you – and it's never OK to belittle or be dismissive of what someone is going through.
- Foster a culture of inclusivity by talking about all stages of life, including menopause. Having a culture of openness will help women experiencing menopause to feel valued and included, not singled out. If you've experienced menopause, it may be helpful to share your own story as a conversation starter.
- You may have heard the term “psychologically safe workplaces” - workplaces in which employees feel empowered to be themselves, to talk openly, to take calculated risks, and even to fail without fearing retribution. Feeling this sense of comfort at work will help women feel they can share their experience with their manager and seek help.
- Many women report hiding their symptoms at work because they are embarrassed, or they are concerned it will change how they are perceived. Others may not be aware their symptoms are related to menopause, and don't get the health care they need to feel their best. Either way, it may be impacting their work. Managers support people through pregnancy, mental health issues and other life transitions. Menopause is just another phase of life and requires the same level of sensitivity and compassion.

The women in your workplace experiencing menopause are in the prime of their working lives, and their talents, skills and experience are far too valuable to lose. Be an advocate.

For further information, visit MenopauseFoundationCanada.ca