

Menstruation and Menopause as a Workplace Health and Safety Issue

Support for [*ISO 45010:2026 - Occupational health and safety management — Menstruation and menopause in the workplace*](#)

[*ISO45010*](#) situates menstruation and menopause as a priority for Occupational Health and Safety. Here are 5 reasons why this alignment is important

1. It aligns with legislative responsibilities in many countries

In many countries, employers have a duty to identify, assess and control workplace factors that could cause harm or worsen existing health conditions and keep employees safe. This means looking after all bodies at work.

2. Work can aggravate symptoms and health conditions

Several workplace factors can make menstrual or menopausal symptoms worse. This includes workplace temperature, including limited access to toilets, washing facilities or drinking water, prolonged standing or sitting, ill-fitting uniforms and high levels of stress. All of these represent hazards due to potentially compromising the health and safety of people at work.

3. Symptoms can affect safety-critical activities

For some workers, menopause or menstrual health conditions may involve, fatigue, sleep disruption, dizziness, heavy bleeding, difficulty with memory and concentrating and pain. A health and safety approach encourages employers to undertake risk assessments that consider these possible symptoms and consider whether adjusting work practices are needed to ensure people can work safely.

4. Traditional health and safety approaches have often overlooked women's health

Occupational health and safety has historically been based on a model of work and health that reflects predominantly male manual and industrial labour as the norm, resulting in women's health needs receiving less attention. This can mean that hazards affecting menstruating or menopausal employees remain invisible or excluded from workplace health and safety considerations.

5. Health and safety provides a practical route to prevention

Viewing menopause and menstruation through a health and safety lens shifts the focus from 'fixing the individual' to examining workplace risks and controls. This includes considering workplace design, temperature control, job design and workplace, risk assessment practices, and management education and training. Improvements made in these areas typically benefit the wider workforce, not only workers experiencing menopause or menstruation.