

# Bleeding & Menopause:



It is often very much welcomed that we will no longer have periods when we are post menopausal but sometimes things can be more complicated.

Bleeding can stop and start at unpredictable times as a normal part of the peri menopause phase or if something isn't quite right.

Vaginal bleeding can also arrive unexpectedly if you are post menopausal which can be part of your HRT settling in, but may need some attention too.

Unexpected bleeding is really not that uncommon in women during or after the menopause, even when HRT is not part of the picture and although in over 80% of cases, the cause is not a cause for concern it is still very important to speak to your doctor re unexpected bleeding



## *Peri Menopausal Bleeding*

*Our cycles are of course very individual so it's only to be expected that our menopause would be too.*

*If you are perimenopausal it's worth remembering that your periods can become erratic and may become heavier or lighter, but this is considered relatively normal at that time of life.*

*It's common for estrogen levels to be high whilst progesterone levels are low, and this can result in heavier periods that may also be more frequent than previously.*

*Later, as estrogen levels become consistently lower, periods may become less frequent and lighter. This may mean that you miss one or two periods and then have a heavier and/or longer period.*



## *Post Menopausal Bleeding*

If you're post menopausal (this means you have gone more than 12 months without a period) then any bleeding, whether heavy or light, is considered '*post-menopausal bleeding*' and is not considered normal so you must check this with your doctor.

You will need to ask for a pelvic scan and you may need a procedure called a hysteroscopy which can involve a small biopsy.

*\*Make sure you ask whether this is part of your procedure if you are referred for a scan.*

*I have had a number of these procedures (before I had a hysterectomy in 2022) and you have no need to be scared of them. They are sometimes very necessary BUT you have the right to pain relief and to be treated with dignity.*



The most common cause of bleeding around the menopause is your own ovarian hormonal changes.

When you have higher levels of estrogen in your blood, it can cause some bleeding (unless you take daily progesterone or have a Mirena coil). However, there are many potential causes of vaginal bleeding such as fibroids, polyps, or overgrowth of the cells that line the uterus.

Very occasionally, changes in the cells that line the uterus (the endometrial lining) can become cancerous, and bleeding may also indicate a problem with the cervix, vulva or vagina.

It is really key to discuss any unexpected bleeding with your doctor.

## Bleeding with HRT

The aim of the **sequential regime** is to have a 'withdrawal' bleed around the time after you stop taking the progesterone part of your HRT each month. (it's not your real period but it's your new cycle)

This is usually appropriate for those who are perimenopausal but some peri menopausal women are on the other regime as they prefer not to have bleeds (for example they may struggle with heavy bleeding or pain when they bleed).

The sequential regime of HRT is trying to recreate your monthly cycle while you continue to transition through to the menopause.

On occasions you may notice you bleed when you're not supposed to be bleeding. Conversely, you may not have a bleed at all, and this is nothing to worry about.

The other regime is the **continuous regime** (daily progesterone) which is usually for those who start HRT when they are already menopausal or for those who started on cyclical/sequential HRT but have moved onto the continuous regime.

This involves taking your estrogen and progesterone continuously with no breaks and is not meant to create any bleeds BUT it can take a while to settle and it is very common to experience unscheduled bleeding when moving from a cyclical regime to a continuous one.

Some bleeding can occur if you increase your dose of estrogen or change the way you take your HRT or if there is a change to the progesterone or testosterone components of your HRT.



## Other reasons for unscheduled bleeding are:

Forgetting to take your HRT exactly as it has been prescribed.

Illness

Stress

Changes to medications

It's important to tell your doctor about any bleeding you experience if you were not expecting it OR it is heavy and of concern to you.

Any post menopausal bleeding needs to be discussed with your doctor or menopause specialist.

Even if you have been settled on your HRT regime for a while, with no problems, but you start to experience unexpected bleeding, it is important to report this to your doctor..



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I hope that was useful.

If you're not in the lovely VIP Health Membership you can join that HERE Wishing you happy hormones

*Jane x*

[www.menopausalnotmad.co.uk](http://www.menopausalnotmad.co.uk)