

New Survey Highlights The Impact Of Menopausal Symptoms On Women In The Workplace

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Key Findings Show What Many Are Doing to 'Keep Their Cool'

A new national survey released today by Working Mother Media and Pfizer (NYSE:PFE) on the impact of menopausal symptoms on women in the workplace finds that managing menopausal symptoms in their work life is extremely or somewhat difficult for nearly half (48 percent) of working women ages 45-65 who have experienced these symptoms in the past year. And yet, despite the commonly held belief that menopause can be an embarrassing subject, just over half of women surveyed (54 percent) strongly or somewhat agree that their colleagues have been supportive as they deal with these symptoms on the job.

Some menopausal symptoms can be more problematic than others in the workplace. Hot flashes (31 percent), changes in memory and concentration (19 percent), and fatigue due to sleep disturbances (18 percent) rank most troublesome. The good news is that a few simple adjustments to everyday routines and understanding co-workers may help.

"Menopausal symptoms impacted the women in our survey — for example, approximately one in 10 women strongly or somewhat agrees that she had passed up a more demanding position due to her menopausal symptoms. And yet, our research also suggests a cultural shift in women's comfort with being open at work about menopause," said Jennifer Owens, editorial director of Working Mother Media and director of the Working Mother Research Institute. "The increasingly positive reception women report from their bosses and co-workers is encouraging."

The survey also shows that:

- A majority (59 percent) believe that it's acceptable to be open with co-workers about health issues and general wellness.
- While most women (89 percent) didn't miss any work because of their menopausal symptoms – those who did (11 percent) missed approximately three days over the past 12 months.
- Approximately one in 10 (12 percent) women strongly or somewhat agrees that she had passed up a more demanding job or promotion because of her menopausal symptoms.

To better cope with the effects of menopause in the workplace, many women often take matters into their own hands. Three out of four respondents (75 percent) reported making changes to the way they dressed at work, including wearing lightweight clothing (46 percent) and jackets or cardigans (41 percent) that could be easily removed. One in five women (22 percent) also indicated she had made modifications to her work schedule in the last 12 months.

“For some women, simple lifestyle changes are helpful in managing menopause-related symptoms. For others, these practical adjustments just aren't enough,” said Ivy Alexander, PhD, APRN, ANP-BC, FAAN, clinical professor and director of advanced practice programs at the University of Connecticut School of Nursing. “I encourage women who are finding the management of their menopause-related symptoms difficult to have a proactive, open, and honest conversation with a healthcare provider to discuss and weigh available options.”

Women of menopausal age play a critical role in the United States (U.S.) workforce. In 2012, 26.8 million working women ages 45-64 made up almost 20 percent of the total civilian labor force, and these numbers continue to rise. Between 2012 and 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the number of working women of this age to grow by 3.8 million.

A summary of the survey results can be found here on workingmother.com.

For more information about menopause and its symptoms, as well as tips for managing menopausal symptoms at work, please visit personalmenopauseanswers.com.

About Menopause

Menopause is a normal, natural event. It marks the permanent end of fertility and is usually confirmed when a woman has not menstruated for 12 consecutive months and is not due to other medical causes. Menopause is associated with reduced functioning of the ovaries due to aging, resulting in lower levels of estrogens and other hormones. Changes in these hormones may cause symptoms of menopause, which may include hot flashes and bone loss.

About The Survey

Working Mother and Pfizer partnered to conduct the “Working Through Menopause” national survey of 1,500 full-time or part-time working women who had experienced menopausal symptoms within the past 12 months. The survey was fielded by Research Now from August - September 2013.

About Working Mother Media

Working Mother Media, a division of Bonnier Corporation (bonniercorp.com), publishes *Working Mother* magazine and its companion website, workingmother.com, and the Working Mother Research Institute. The National Association for Female Executives (nafe.com), Diversity Best Practices (diversitybestpractices.com) are also units within WMM. Working Mother Media's mission is to serve as a champion of culture change. *Working Mother* magazine reaches more than 2 million readers and is the only national magazine for career-committed mothers; Workingmother.com gives working mothers @home and @work advice, solutions, and ideas. The magazine's signature research initiative, the *Working Mother 100 Best Companies*, is published annually in the October/November issue of the magazine. Follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/workingmother), Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest.

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Disclosure: Dr. Ivy Alexander is a paid spokesperson on behalf of Pfizer Inc.

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