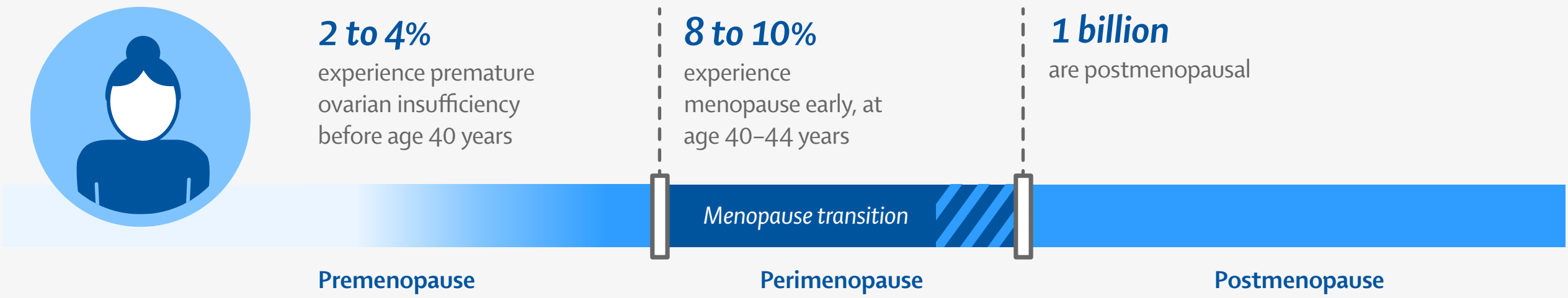


The Lancet 2024 Series on menopause

Menopause is a life stage for half the world’s population, but experiences vary hugely. *The Lancet* 2024 Series on menopause argues for a new approach supporting and empowering women transitioning this life stage.



Symptoms most specifically associated with the perimenopause and menopause include

Heavy or prolonged bleeding

Hot flushes and night sweats

Sleep disturbance

Joint pain and stiffness

Vaginal dryness

Effective treatments are available

- » Vasomotor symptoms can be treated with:
 - Menopausal Hormone Therapy (most effective)
 - Non-hormonal medication
 - Cognitive behavioural therapy, or clinical hypnosis
- » Vaginal oestrogen is effective for vaginal dryness

Access to tools supporting decision making around treatments

Challenging stigma and gender-based ageism

Access to a supportive and informed clinician willing to listen and offer treatment as needed

Access to realistic and balanced information

Shared decision making

Creating a more menopause-friendly work environment

Image: AlonzoDesign / GettyImages

Some groups experiencing menopause are often overlooked and may need specific care

Those with premature or early menopause may experience feelings of distress and isolation and be at increased risk of conditions such as cardiovascular disease, and osteoporosis.

After cancer treatment, menopausal symptoms are common and might be severe, and treatment options might be limited.

Those with severe vasomotor symptoms, previous depressive disorder and/or recent stressful life events are at increased risk of depressive symptoms.

- » **Menopause must be destigmatised** and understood as a natural part of ageing which women experience in a variety of ways.
- » **Societal shifts are needed** to better support women transitioning menopause, including by clinicians, researchers, workplaces, and wider society.
- » Concerns about increased risks of anxiety and depression may shape expectations and experiences of menopause. However, most women maintain good mental health over the menopause transition.
- » Menopausal symptoms are common after cancer treatment and many patients do not get access to effective treatments. Care should be multidisciplinary, managing common symptoms in one place.

Read the full *Lancet* Series at www.thelancet.com/series/menopause-2024