

# Creating a period positive workplace



While discussions around mental health and employee wellbeing have become more commonplace in recent years, there is still a recognisable stigma around openly discussing the impact of menstruation and its symptoms on those who have periods.



Workplaces, therefore, need to create a more supportive and positive culture surrounding menstrual health at work, where talking about periods is unremarkable.

# 93%

of women say that period-related pain or discomfort impacts their working day. \*Source 1

## WHY DO WE NEED TO BE PERIOD POSITIVE

Many people who have periods find themselves lying about their reasons for being sick, as opposed to feeling empowered to share the truth as to why they are suffering.

### ALMOST £6BN

a year could be lost due to menstrual health. (That's 9.3 days per employee on average.)

\*Source 2

### 90%

of those with periods experience menstrual symptoms.

\*Source 3

### 89%

experience stress or anxiety at work due to their period.

\*Source 4

### 63%

say normalising conversations around periods at work is beneficial.

\*Source 5

# 40%

of women experience pain so severe they have to take time off work. \*Source 6

In fact, some even feel forced to use their own annual leave for sickness, rather than sick leave, due to the shame and embarrassment associated with menstruation. \*Source 7

## COMMON SYMPTOMS



Abdominal cramps and lower back pain



Mood swings



Depression and anxiety



Decreased concentration



Low energy



Headaches

## IF YOU EXPERIENCE PERIODS YOURSELF... Be honest about how it affects you



Where you feel comfortable, be open with how your period affects you at work, and tell your manager when you are struggling due to your menstrual cycle.



Try to organise your workload so you're not stretching or over-scheduling yourself if you're not feeling your best.

## IF YOU ARE A MANAGER OR LEADER... Educate yourself and provide support.



Educate yourself on menstrual health so that you're comfortable talking about these topics.



Create a culture of honesty in your team, so each employee has a safe space to talk about health issues affecting their work.

## IF THIS DOESN'T IMPACT YOU DIRECTLY... Educate yourself



Understand the impact the menstrual cycle has on women and those who have periods and become comfortable talking about them respectfully.



Where appropriate, ensure your colleagues with menstrual cycles know you are here to talk or support if they need it.

## REFERENCES

- 1: TOTM, Five ways to be a period positive workplace article, 2022
- 2: Brabners, Menstrual health in the workplace article, 2022
- 3&6: LinkedIn, Why we need a period-friendly workplace article, 2019
- 4,5&7: Bloody Good Period, Bloody good research: periods and menstrual wellbeing in the workplace, 2021

## USEFUL RESOURCES

[https://www.bloodygoodperiod.com/\\_files/ugd/ae82b1\\_66bbbfefcf85424ab827ae7203b2c369.pdf](https://www.bloodygoodperiod.com/_files/ugd/ae82b1_66bbbfefcf85424ab827ae7203b2c369.pdf)  
<https://thriveglobal.com/stories/how-to-create-a-period-friendly-workplace/>  
<https://workplace.totm.com/>  
<https://periodpositive.com/>