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# Retailers, it's time to stop ignoring menopausal women



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4 mins read 

It's common knowledge that Australia's population, like much of the developed world, is getting older. The latest ABS data available shows that the median age of the Australian population has increased by two years over the last two decades, now sitting at 37 years.

One thing that over half of this ageing population will experience between the ages of 40-60 is menopause. And while every woman may be talking about it, whether with friends over coffee or on online forums, the retail industry certainly isn't.

Despite the opportunities menopause presents for brands across various categories, many have been hesitant to tackle this topic, perhaps due to a lack of understanding or fear of the unknown.

Change is happening, albeit slowly. Retailers, particularly in supplements, sleepwear and skincare, are bringing products to market that help alleviate the symptoms of menopause.

These retailers are proving that there is demand, and other retailers would be foolish to ignore this segment of society.

## Natural approach

Products that are designed to alleviate the symptoms of menopause often feature in ranges of supplements and herbal remedies.

Herbal remedies retailer Happy Healthy You includes a Happy Hormones range that women can use during the transition through each phase of menopause.

"Menopause is not a disease and it is important to make this differentiation. It is a natural process and often the body just needs to be supported to do what it should naturally," said Dr Jeff Butterworth, who formulated the range.

Butterworth told *Inside Retail* that women present with wide and varied symptoms throughout each stage. The most typical during the early stage of perimenopause being mood changes, fluid retention, weight gain, irregular and heavy periods, fibroids and headaches. During menopause itself, hot flushes are the most common; however, sleep disturbances, mood changes, and energy reduction are often experienced, he explained. While post menopause, if the body is not producing sufficient hormones, women can experience weight gain, fatigue, sleeplessness, aches and pains and depression.

“Our approach is 100% holistic. Products are just tools. Education is the key to teach women how to first understand what is happening in their bodies and how to take responsibility for their own hormones rather than relying on medications,” he said.

As part of this health and education offering, the company provides an online clinic and online assessment to help classify and understand how symptoms link to hormonal changes, an online support groups of over 200,000 women who share and support each other in conjunction with the practitioner team, and hundreds of hormonally healthy recipes and articles.

## Sleepless nights

Hot flushes are one of the most commonly recognised symptoms of menopause, but there’s a surprising lack of clothing on the market to support women through this.

Back in 2017, Wendy Eade, then in her early fifties, began experiencing the dreaded night sweats often brought on by the menopause.

“I was one of those unlucky women that was having to get up and change my nightwear two and three times every single night. And the consequence of that, of course, is you can’t really function with no sleep,” Eade told *Inside Retail*.

“I became really frustrated and annoyed that there was nothing on the market for women who are going through this.”

There were a couple of companies in the UK and US catering to this need but Eade described them as looking like “hospital gowns” and not something that she would enjoy wearing.



Eaden Sleepwear was born out of frustration with lack of innovation in category.

Image: Supplied.

She began exploring various fabrics for a more comfortable sleep and discovered that the moisture-wicking properties in her sportswear top did the trick.

Despite no prior experience in manufacturing, After two years of quietly researching these fabrics, she launched a sleepwear range in 2009 specifically for women going through this life change.

Eade said the response was “overwhelming”.

What started out as wholesale turned into a direct-to-consumer business, allowing Eade to forge better connections with her customers. The business has since drawn male and female customers that experience night sweats for a variety of reasons, beyond menopause.



Hair loss is a common symptom of menopause

## Hair loss

Hair loss is another common symptom of menopause, but due to the vast numbers of people who experience hair loss for numerous reasons, there are a lot more products on the market.

Hair Folli, a natural hair loss treatment, launched in April this year and made \$800,000 in sales in the first six months. With the addition of more products, the range is on track to hit between \$3-5 million by the end of the financial year.

Trung Vien was working as a financial planner but following a stint travelling in his early twenties, he decided he wanted to set up a business “that can solve problems”.

Now the products are sold through the company’s e-commerce platform, through beauty spas and lash parlours and is soon set to move into larger retailers and pharmacies like Chemist Warehouse and Priceline Pharmacy. And that’s just in Australia.

“We’ve got an international distribution to wholesalers all across the world now in about 10 countries but we were delivering to 20-30 countries around the world. It’s been a really cool six months,” Vien told *Inside Retail*.

## Response from pharmacies



Priceline Pharmacy has long catered to the needs of older women. Earlier this year, the retailer launched a marketing campaign featuring women over 40 in recognition of this demographic after it found that many older women felt under represented in the media.

Alexa-Jane King, Priceline Pharmacy's business category manager of health, told *Inside Retail* that the retailer is about supporting women through all stages of life, including menopause.

"We stock a variety of vitamins and supplements that assist with relieving common symptoms such as hot flushes, mild anxiety and night sweats. Following menopause, women may also need more support for other health conditions including bone health, weight management and hair loss and as such we have a range of products to choose from in this space," King said.

"Priceline also acknowledges that feminine care is especially important during this time of transition, so we have ensured that our personal care products in the feminine hygiene space have an offer that support conditions such as vaginal dryness and incontinence."

Priceline's free in-store Health Stations also allow women to monitor their vitals during menopause as they are designed to track key health measures including: blood pressure, BMI, heart age, weight and diabetes risk.

The skincare and supplements range also features products designed to address ageing concerns, such as collagen supplements for hair, skin and nails to skincare ranges for mature skin.

Do menopausal women need all of these different products? Potentially not, but these retailers are showing that a demand is there and that they are listening to the needs of this demographic.

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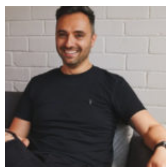
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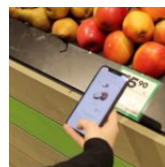
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