

## PERIMENOPAUSE OR ANXIETY?

# The 12-Question Self-Check

A structured way to see whether your symptoms carry the hormonal signature

This isn't a diagnostic tool — only a clinician can diagnose perimenopause. It's a structured way to observe your own pattern over one cycle, so you walk into your appointment with **data instead of a description**. Tick every box that's true for you, then read how to interpret your answers below.

## THE SELF-CHECK — THREE GROUPS

## Category A · The Pattern

Looking for the cyclical signature — the clearest pointer to hormones

- A1** Do your anxiety, irritability, or low mood get noticeably worse in the 7–10 days before your period starts?
- A2** Have your periods changed in the past 12–24 months — heavier, lighter, closer together, further apart, or less predictable?
- A3** Do you wake between 2 and 4am without a specific worry keeping you awake — just wide awake, sometimes with a racing heart?
- A4** Did these symptoms arrive or intensify within the last 12–36 months, without a clear life trigger that explains them?

## Category B · The Mechanism

Physical vs thought-driven — where the anxiety is generated

- B1** Does your anxiety feel physically generated — a bodily state you're trying to explain — rather than caused by specific worried thoughts?
- B2** Do you get heart palpitations or heat sensations at rest or at night, not specifically during anxious moments?
- B3** Does your mood shift seem to have no external trigger — it just arrives, and sometimes just lifts, without matching events?
- B4** Do you notice any improvement in your symptoms in the first week after your period starts?

## Category C · Rule-Out

Make sure other common causes have been excluded first

- C1** Has your doctor checked your thyroid function (TSH) recently?  
*Thyroid imbalance produces almost identical symptoms and is common in this age range.*
- C2** Has a blood panel excluded B12 deficiency, iron-deficiency anaemia, and vitamin D deficiency?  
*All three can cause fatigue, mood changes, and brain-fog-like symptoms.*
- C3** Are you currently taking SSRIs, hormonal contraceptives, or beta blockers?  
*These can alter mood, sleep, and anxiety in ways that overlap with perimenopause.*
- C4** Have you been under significant unusual stress in the past 1–2 years?  
*This might explain part of what you're experiencing — without explaining all of it.*

## WHAT YOUR TICKS MEAN

### 3–4 in A

**Strong cyclical signal.** A pattern that tracks your cycle is the single clearest pointer toward a hormonal cause. This is the group that matters most — if you ticked most of A, the next 30 days of tracking will turn that into evidence.

### 2+ in B

**Physically-driven symptoms.** Anxiety that starts in the body rather than the mind fits a hormonal cause more than a psychological one. Combined with A, this is a meaningful pattern to take to a doctor.

### Gaps in C

**Rule these out first.** Any box you *couldn't* tick in C — especially thyroid and iron — is a conversation to have before assuming perimenopause. It doesn't cancel out A and B; it just needs excluding alongside them.