

Kavu



It wasn't that long ago that menopause was seen as a taboo subject, with many of us surrounded by a deafening wall of silence. Happily, that is starting to change and many women, especially celebrities, are speaking up and sharing their experiences and their symptoms. It is heart-warming to think we may be the last generation to be so ill-prepared.

There is, however, a slight downside to all of this. We've gone from being pretty much ignored by mainstream media, and not catered for, to being seen as quite the profitable demographic. Suddenly, we are being forcefully encouraged to try this special supplement, use this special cream, spray this special spray and so on. We are big business ladies! Everyone wants to help us... for a price! But how do we know who to trust?

How about someone who created a product not because she wanted to jump on the bandwagon, and make a fast buck, but because she was desperate and couldn't find a solution for herself? Ten years ago, Amanda Linney was running a small cleaning company, constantly on her feet, cleaning houses and holiday lets. She was 45 and exhausted - not by the physical nature of her work but by the fact that she rarely slept - thanks to hot flushes and night sweats. She would spend each night changing her bedding, changing her nightie, trying to cool down.



Unimpressed by the few nighties that were available on the market which she found ineffective, unflattering and uncomfortable; Amanda set out to find a solution. At the end of every long working day, she would come home and start researching fabrics and materials and sending off for samples; eventually settling on bamboo because of its natural, breathable and wicking qualities. Amanda, however, was still not happy as she realised that after a while the material started to look a little scruffy.

Many months of trial and error later, she eventually combined bamboo and eucalyptus – something that had not been done before – eucalyptus adding shine and durability to the material. Necessity has indeed been the mother of invention for Amanda who has become the sole powerhouse behind kavuclimbing, selling a range of cooling nightwear. Nightwear that is extremely comfortable and flattering and stays dry and cool. 'Kavu', the Swahili word for 'dry', also meaning 'the perfect day' after the night before.

So, when we might sometimes feel a little lost, as we experience menopause symptoms for the first time, it is good to know that it is not just celebrities speaking up. What we also have, which to my mind is even more powerful, are 'ordinary' women on a mission to help other 'ordinary' women navigate menopause.