

Menopause : Nutrition & Lifestyle

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What's Happening in Your Body

End of the reproductive period in women (between ages 40-55) marked by **decreased estrogen and progesterone levels** → both hormones not diminishing at the same rhythm creates a **hormonal imbalance** causing symptoms associated with menopause

Common Changes You May Notice

- Body changes: average weight gain of 2-5 kg, ↑ in waist circumference, redistribution of body fat toward the abdomen
- Psychological & cognitive: mood changes, anxiety, forgetfulness, difficulty concentrating
- Physical symptoms: hot flashes, night sweats, fatigue, joint or muscle pain, bloating, water retention
- Metabolic health: ↑ LDL cholesterol, ↑ insulin resistance, ↓ bone, ↓ metabolism

Building Balanced, Nourishing Meals

Balanced plate formula:

- ¼ protein
- ½ vegetables
- ¼ whole grain

General tips:

- Eat regularly to avoid large blood sugar swings
- Prioritize protein and fiber at each meal

A Mediterranean-style, plant-rich diet (fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes and whole grains) has shown to support weight management, reduces comorbidities and helps alleviate menopausal symptoms

Recommendations

Protein (preferably lean)

Why? Supports satiety, preserves muscle mass and helps maintain bone density

Aim for 20-30 g = every meal; 10 g = every snack; minimum of 1.2 g/kg of body weight
 Examples: fish, poultry, tofu, eggs, Greek yogurt, cottage cheese

High fiber carbohydrates

Why? Fuel the brain, support gut health and help regulate blood sugar & mood

Aim for 25-50 g of fiber/day
 Examples: vegetables, fruits, whole grains (oats, quinoa, brown rice), legumes

Fats

Why? Support hormone signaling, reduce inflammation and protect heart health

Focus on unsaturated fats
 Examples: olive oil, avocado, nuts & seed, fatty fish

Hydration

Why? Helps with hot flashes, digestion, fatigue and appetite regulation

Tips: have a water bottle at proximity, limit hot beverages (if triggers hot flashes), flavor water with fruits or herbs
 Limiting alcohol can also be helpful, especially with the management of hot flashes

Added & concentrated sugars	Why? Limiting them helps reduce hot flashes and cardiovascular risk, support weight management and improves sleep quality Examples: sugary drink, pastries, cookies, white bread & rice
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Supplementation

	Reasoning	Dosage
Vitamin D	Bone health, immune support	800-2000 UI/day (supplement)
Calcium	Bone density	1000-1500 mg through food mainly (dairy products, fortified plant-based beverages, salmon, leafy greens)
Omega-3	Cardiovascular health, inflammation	1 g/day (fatty fish, chia seeds, flaxseeds)
Vitamin B12	Absorption may decrease with age	2.4 µg/day (from supplement or fortified products)
Magnesium	Sleep quality, stress	100-250 mg/day (nuts & seed, legumes, whole grains, leafy greens)
Phytoestrogens (isoflavone)	May help with hot flashes	>50 mg/day (soy products: natto, tempeh, tofu, edamame, TPV, soy milk)

Move to Feel Strong

Physical activity helps manage weight, insulin resistance, bone density, mood and sleep!

Aim for 150 minutes/week, can include:

- Aerobic movement (walking, cycling, swimming)
- Streght training (2-3x/week)
- Flexibility and stress reducing activities (yoga and stretching)

Happy Gut, Happier You

A healthy gut supports quality of life and general mental well-being

Support gut health by including:

- Fiber rich foods: vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, nuts and seeds
- Prebiotic foods: garlic, onions, asparagus, banana, barley, oats, legumes
- Fermented foods: yogurts, kefir, sauerkraut, miso, tempeh

Taming Commun Symptoms

Bone Health	Heart & Metabolic Health	Hot Flashes & Night Sweats	Sleep, Mood & Brain Health
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adequate protein ○ Calcium rich foods ○ Vitamin D 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole grains ○ Healthy fats ○ Limit ultra-processed foods and added sugars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consistent meals and adequate hydration ○ Limit alcohol, spicy foods and hot beverages ○ Adequate fiber and carbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Balanced evening meals (protein & complex carbs) ○ Limiting caffeine later in the day ○ Supplement when appropriate (magnesium, omega-3 and vit B)