

Unlock Your Vitality Your Ultimate Menopause Nutrition Guide

Gillian McConnell
Registered Dietitian



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Introduction to Menopause



Perimenopause describes the years leading up to menopause when the body begins to produce fluctuating amounts of oestrogen, and symptoms that go with it.

Menopause is a natural biological process that marks the end of a woman's reproductive years. It typically occurs in middle-aged women, usually between the ages of 45 and 55, although it can occur earlier or later in some cases. Menopause is defined as the point when a woman has not had a menstrual period for 12 consecutive months.

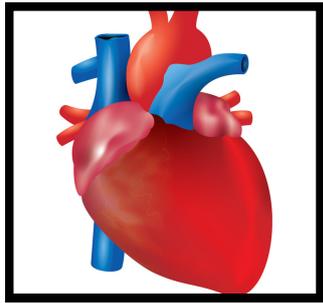
Symptoms of Perimenopause & Menopause



- Changes in the menstrual cycle
- Hot flushes and night sweats
- Sleep disturbances
- Vaginal dryness
- Gut issues, like bloating & constipation
- Urinary tract changes
- Weight changes, especially around the mid section
- Mood changes

Key Features of Menopause

Menopause is a normal part of the aging process for women. Hormonal changes related to menopause not only may result in symptoms, but they also increase health risks



Heart



Bone



Brain



Gut

1. **Cardiovascular Health:** Oestrogen plays a role in maintaining heart & blood vessel health. After menopause, there is an increased risk of heart disease due to stiffening of the arteries with associated build up of plaque.
2. **Bone Health:** The decline in oestrogen during menopause can lead to increased bone turnover, a decrease in bone density, increasing the risk of osteoporosis, a condition characterised by brittle and fragile bones.
3. **Cognitive Changes:** Some women report changes in memory & cognitive function during menopause, although the extent & impact of these changes can vary widely.
4. **Gut Health:** Menopause can also cause secretions in the gut to dry up, often leading to slower motility which can lead to constipation, bloating and wind.



Nutrition Tips For Perimenopause & Menopause

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Eat whole-foods that are nutrient rich

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Eat protein at each meal and snack

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Drink adequate fluids to stay hydrated

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Fill up on gut healthy prebiotic foods

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Limit alcohol as much as possible

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one

Eat whole-foods that are nutrient rich

What are nutrient-dense foods:

Nutrient-dense foods are foods with an abundance of vitamins and minerals, fibre and phytochemicals. These include fruits, vegetables, wholegrains, nuts, seeds, legumes and lean proteins such as fish and poultry. Eating more nutrient-dense foods supports overall health during perimenopause and menopause.

How to eat more nutrient-dense foods:

- Plan meals in advance as this will help you be more successful in serving them regularly.
- Consider healthy convenience foods such as bagged leafy green, tinned beans, frozen veggies & berries.
- Add beans & pulses to dishes such as stir fries, casseroles and bolognese.
- Add herbs, spices, nuts and seeds to boost flavour and increase texture.



two

Eat protein at each meal and snack

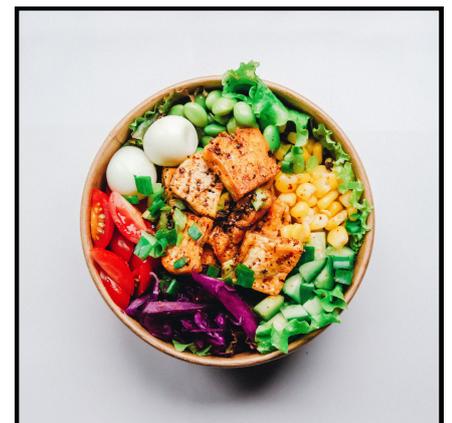
Why do I need to eat protein during menopause:

As you age, there is a natural decline in muscle mass which also increases the risk of muscle weakness. Consuming good quality protein, spread throughout the day, will help preserve & build muscle, maintaining your strength. Protein also helps to keep your metabolism nice and high supporting a healthy weight and metabolic function. Protein is also known for keeping you fuller for longer, as it is slower to digest, this is why we recommend it at each meal and snack.

What foods are a good source of protein:

When incorporating protein into your diet, it's essential to choose high-quality sources, such as;

Lean meats poultry, fish, dairy products, eggs, legumes, and other plant-based options like tofu and tempeh.



three

Drink adequate fluids to stay hydrated

Hydration is extra important at this time in your life:

Hormonal fluctuations can lead to a variety of symptoms that could increased fluid losses, such as hot flushes and night sweats. Dehydration can also affect cognitive function, concentration and mood. During menopause, women may already be dealing with cognitive changes and mood swings, so staying hydrated can help alleviate these symptoms.



You'll be glad to know...

It's not just water that counts towards your hydration. Up to 6 cups of tea and up to 4 cups of coffee per day, milk, soup fruit juice and squash are all great for hydration. Even more watery fruits & vegetables count.

four

Fill up on gut healthy prebiotic foods

What are prebiotics:

Prebiotics are non-digestible fibres that serve as food for the beneficial bacteria in your gut. Maintaining a healthy gut microbiome is crucial for overall health, as it influences digestion, nutrient absorption, and the immune system. During perimenopause & menopause, hormonal changes can impact gut health, potentially leading to digestive issues. Prebiotic foods can help support a balanced gut microbiome, reducing the risk of digestive problems.

Where can I find prebiotics:

These include high-fibre fruits and vegetables (e.g., garlic, onions, leeks, asparagus, bananas), whole grains, and legumes. Including these foods in your diet can help promote a healthy gut microbiome and support overall well-being during perimenopause and menopause.



five

Limit alcohol as much as possible

Why is reducing alcohol important:

Your hormones have changed and therefore, the way our body operates changes. One of the significant changes is how your liver functions, including how it clears out chemicals and detoxifies the body. An increase in alcohol consumption can increase the 'chemical body burden.'

Your liver is the organ responsible for breaking down these chemicals and making them into compounds that the body can excrete. But the liver is also responsible for the metabolism and clearance of hormones, including oestrogen.

Your liver can only clear a certain amount of chemical and hormones at a time. During this time in your life, you are experiencing oestrogen peaks and troughs, and the liver will be unable to clear them out if it is overloaded with other toxins. This leads to higher hormonal imbalances and increased symptoms.

Tips for reducing alcohol:

- Reduce the amount of days per week you consume alcohol, even reducing it by 1 - 2 days will make a difference.
- Use ice to dilute and make your alcoholic beverage last longer

Key Nutrients During Perimenopause & Menopause



Unsaturated fats:

Also known as heart healthy fats which are found in mostly plant foods such as olive oil, avocado, nuts, seeds, as well as oily fish. Try to include oily fish once per week consistently.



Calcium:

Aim to include dairy foods in your diet three times per day. Other sources include leafy greens, nuts, dried fruit & pulses. If you take plant alternative milks, ensure they are fortified with calcium & vitamin D.



Vitamin D:

Vitamin D is needed for bone health. Food sources include fortified milk, egg yolks, cheese, mushrooms & fatty fish. The body can also make vitamin D from sun exposure. Because foods and sun may not be the most reliable ways to get adequate vitamin D, you need to supplement with 15ug vitamin D from Halloween to Easter.



Supplements During Perimenopause & Menopause

Supplements in Menopause:

Women who experience the various symptoms of menopause may turn to over-the-counter supplements to ease their discomfort. Some natural compounds have been shown to be helpful. Remember to stick to supplements with studies verifying safety at a particular dose and keep in mind that there are a lot of under-researched supplements on the market.

Which supplements have showed to be of benefit in menopause:

Isoflavones: Soy isoflavone extracts (from soy or red clover) containing 30-60mg daily may reduce hot flashes for some women, with no side effects reported.

Unfortunately other supplements like Black Cohosh, Evening Primrose Oil, Vitamin E, Wild Yam and Dong Quai **have shown NO beneficial effects.**

Always discuss supplements with your GP, Dietitian or Specialist before commencing.

Vitamin D: is important for bone, immune function and mood. A 15ug (600IU) supplement is recommended daily from Halloween to Easter.



Supporting Overall Health During Menopause

On average, the transition into menopause is about 7 years but can be as long as 14 years. While hormonal changes are inevitable, you are in control of your diet and lifestyle. Simple changes can help support your menopausal transition.

Eat mainly whole-
foods that are
nutrient rich

Link in with your
GP for tests /
examinations
when needed

Stay on top of
hydration to
support your body
systems

Try to get in 150 -
200 minutes of
moderate-
intensity exercise
per week,
including at least
2 strength training
sessions



Recipes to Help You Feel Great in Menopause



Strawberry Rhubarb Chia Pudding

Prep: 15 mins. | Total: 4 hours

Serves 4

Ingredients for Jam

- 2 cup strawberries, fresh, chopped
- 1 cup rhubarb, fresh (or frozen)
- 2 Tbs maple syrup
- 4 Tbs chia seeds

Directions for Jam

Prep

1. Hull and chop strawberries
2. Peel rhubarb if using fresh. Chop.

Make

1. Add strawberries, rhubarb, and maple syrup to a small saucepan.
2. Simmer until the fruit breaks down, then bring to a boil and simmer for an additional 10-15 minutes until fruit is soft and the mixture is thickened.
3. Stir in chia seeds and set aside to cool.

Per serving:

- C** 272 calories
- C** 35g carbohydrates
- F** 13g total fat
- P** 6g protein



Ingredients for Pudding

- 1 3/4 cup Coconut Milk, unsweetened (or other milk)
- 1/2 cup chia seeds
- 2 Tbs maple syrup
- 2 tsp vanilla extract

Directions for Jam

1. Add all ingredients to a mason jar fitted with a lid and shake to combine. Set aside for 10 minutes.
2. Shake or stir again. In separate serving jars, layer chia pudding with cooled strawberry rhubarb jam and place in the refrigerator for 4 hours or overnight.

Apple Pie Overnight Oats

Serves 4

Prep: 10 mins. | Total: 8 hrs.

Ingredients

- 2 cup Oats
- 4 cup Oat milk, plain, unsweetened (Or Other Non-Dairy Milk)
- 2 tsp Vanilla Extract
- 2 Apple, medium, Chopped
- 1/2 cup Water, or more if needed
- 2 tsp Cinnamon (or other spice)
- 4 Tbs Pumpkin Seeds
- 2 Tbs Coconut Flakes

Per serving:

- C** 297 calories
- C** 45g carbohydrates
- F** 11g total fat
- P** 9g protein

Prep

1. Evenly divide the oats, oat milk, and vanilla extract among containers with sealable lids (mason jars are perfect). Seal and shake well. Refrigerate overnight to allow oats to soften.

Make

1. Wash and chop apples.
2. Heat a small sauce pan over medium heat. Add the water, chopped apple, and pumpkin pie spice. Cook until the water has evaporated and the apples are softened and fragrant.
3. To assemble: Remove the oats from the refrigerator and take the lid off of the container. Evenly divide the apple mixture between the containers. Top with pumpkin seeds and coconut flakes.



Recipes to Help You Feel Great in Menopause



Red Pepper Dip with Walnuts

Serves 4

Prep: 10 mins. | Total: 10 mins.

Ingredients

- 4 roasted red peppers, jarred, drained and rinsed (fresh roasted red peppers work too)
- 1 Tbs olive oil
- 3 Tbs balsamic vinegar (pomegranate molasses)
- 1/2 tsp cumin, ground
- 1 lemon, juiced (for 2 Tbs juice)
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 cup walnuts, raw
- 1 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- salt, to taste

Per serving:

C	242 calories
C	8g carbohydrates
F	23g total fat
P	5g protein



Directions

Prep

1. Drain and rinse roasted red peppers. If using freshly roasted red peppers, you can leave the skin on.
2. Chop garlic.

Make

1. Add all ingredients to a food processor and process until creamy with a bit of texture.
2. Garnish with some additional walnuts and a drizzle of olive oil. Season with salt to taste.
3. Serve with fresh vegetables like endive.

Quick Shakshuka

Serves 3

Prep: 10 mins. | Total: 30 mins.

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 lb tomato sauce (Raos' is our favorite brand)
- 1 Tbs olive oil
- 8 cups collards, spines removed and chopped
- 1/2 cup basil, fresh, chopped (optional)
- salt, to taste
- black pepper, to taste
- 6 large eggs

Per serving:

C	396 calories
C	17g carbohydrates
F	27g total fat
P	19g protein



Directions

Prep

1. Remove spines from collards and chop leaves.

Make

1. Heat olive oil in a 12-inch non-stick skillet with sides over medium heat. Add collards and sauté until softened and bright green - about 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low.
2. Add tomato sauce and stir.
3. Make 6 wells, one at a time, and drop eggs into wells in a circle. Make sure heat is low then cover and cook until eggs are cooked through.
4. If you prefer, you can scramble eggs into shakshuka too. Just make sure eggs are completely cooked before serving.
5. Season with salt and pepper and top with fresh basil if desired.

Recipes to Help You Feel Great in Menopause



Chicken and Wild Rice Harvest Bowl

Serves 4

Prep: 20 mins. | Total: 50 mins.

Ingredients

- 7 cup kale, spines removed and chopped
- 2 cup Brussels sprouts, halved and roasted
- 1 medium sweet potato, peeled, cubed, and roasted
- 1 lb chicken breasts, cooked
- 1 cup wild rice, cooked according to the package directions
- 1/2 cup pomegranate arils

Prep

1. Roast Brussels sprouts and sweet potato.
2. Massage kale until softened.
3. Cook chicken or purchase pre-cooked chicken
4. Add dressing ingredients to a mason jar and shake to combine.

Make

1. To assemble, divide the shredded kale evenly in the bottom of five shallow bowls.
2. Top with cooked wild rice, chicken, Brussels sprouts, sweet potato, almonds, and pomegranate arils.
3. Drizzle with the vinaigrette to taste. (or dressing of choice)

Per serving:	
C	169 calories
C	20g carbohydrates
F	9g total fat
P	4g protein

Dressing

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup tart cherry juice
- 1/2 lemon, juiced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp maple syrup
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- salt and pepper to taste



No-Cook Power Bites

Serves 4

Prep: 15 mins. | Total: 15 mins.

- 1/2 cups oats, quick-cook (gluten free, if needed)
- 1/4 cups peanut butter, creamy
- 2-3 Tbs maple syrup
- 1/4 cups chocolate chips, mini
- 2 Tbs hemp seeds

Per serving:	
	265 calories
	33g carbohydrates
	13g total fat
	8g protein

Make

1. Mix all ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl. The moistness of the mixture will depend on the type of peanut butter. Add more oats if too wet. If the mixture is too dry, add a tablespoon of water at a time to make the mixture come together.
2. Roll the mixture into bite-sized (~1-inch) balls.
3. Enjoy immediately or store in the refrigerator.

Variations

1. Nut |seed butter options: peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, pumpkin seed butter, soy nut butter, etc. The key is to select an option that is smooth and creamy.





What's Covered on My Menopause Quest:

Level 1: Intro & goal setting

Level 2: Sleep & De-stress

Level 3: Eat to sustain

Level 4: Manage your waist gain

Level 5: Hydrating habits

Level 6: Restore your gut health

Level 7: Mind those bones

Level 8: Take it to heart

Level 9: Movement matters

Level 10: Embedding Habits

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It's a unique 12-week community based virtual nutrition programme designed for you! Led by your very own live & interactive expert Dietitian to give you the confidence & know-how to feel great in your skin, hair & body. **Scan to join My Menopause Quest** or reach out to Gillian on gillian@insideoutnutrition.ie



Open your camera to scan

