



Managing Menopause the Natural Way

Meno pause

Our goal is to empower women with naturopathic strategies to manage menopause holistically. Using nutrition, herbal medicine, lifestyle modifications, and mind-body techniques, participants will learn to balance hormones naturally, improve energy levels, improve their moods, and support overall well-being.

Module One

The biology of menopause
and hormone changes.

Lets start with the bad news.

During menopause, women can expect a decline in estrogen and progesterone as ovaries gradually reduce their output which leads to the end of menstrual cycles and fertility. But it's not a smooth ride down the "Bunny hill", it's more like moguls in a blizzard. Estrogen levels will fluctuate dramatically during years of Perimenopause before eventually settling consistently lower levels.

These decreases in estrogen lead to hot flashes mood swings, and loss of bone density. The pituitary gland responds by increasing production of follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) and luteinizing hormone (LH). It's like it's trying to put the paddles on the ovaries' heart and shock it back to life. Unfortunately, the ovaries are turning into raisins but not all hormones drop off. Your body still makes androgens (male sex hormone in the adrenals). But don't get too excited about big biceps and a teenage-sex-drive.

Without other hormones like estrogen to balance it, androgens can contribute to undesirable changes. This might include thicker facial hair, thinning hair on the scalp, insulin insensitivity and weight gain in the worse places... the gut. The most unhealthy place to gain fat is visceral fat which is fat around your organs in your gut.

Common symptoms and natural ways to track hormonal changes.



What can you expect? Oh, just everything that you don't want. Hot flashes, night sweats, irregular periods, vaginal dryness, mood changes, sleep disturbances, weight gain, and decreased libido. Women may also experience fatigue, headaches, joint pain, and changes in skin and hair texture.

Since it comes on slowly, you can track these changes with a symptom diary. Make a note of the frequency, duration, and intensity of symptoms like hot flashes or mood swings. Smartphone apps like Clue, Flo, and MyFlo can help you track your symptoms and manage your treatment plan. Regular check-ups with a healthcare provider can help monitor changes in hormone levels through blood tests.

Tracking weight, sleep patterns, and energy levels can also provide valuable insights. Some women find it helpful to use wearable devices that monitor body temperature or sleep quality. Oura Ring, FitBit Sense or Versa, and the new Apple Watch are great options that will provide invaluable information to your doctor.



The impact of lifestyle and diet on menopause.

“What can I do?”

You're not helpless. Don't just let the hormonal tornado carry you away. One way or another, your diet and lifestyle will have a huge impact on menopausal changes. Now is not the time to yield to father time. This is the most important time of your life to commit to a balanced diet. Fruits, veggies, whole grains, and lean proteins will help manage weight gain and provide those essential nutrients for bone health. Bone density **MUST** become a priority. Regular exercise, specifically weight-bearing activities! That's the best way to maintain bone density, improve mood, control weight gain, reduce stress, mood swings, and sleep problems. You don't have to join the power lifting team. Try a weight vest when you walk, do some light weights with your arms, a quick plank and you're done in 25 min. This **WILL** help you sleep which is crucial for overall health and hormone balance. Cigarettes and alcohol will make menopausal symptoms worse. Reducing caffeine, alcohol, and spicy foods will reduce hot flashes for most women. Make an effort to stay hydrated with some electrolytes and do you need to do to maintain healthy body weight.

Module Two

Nutritional support for
hormone balance.

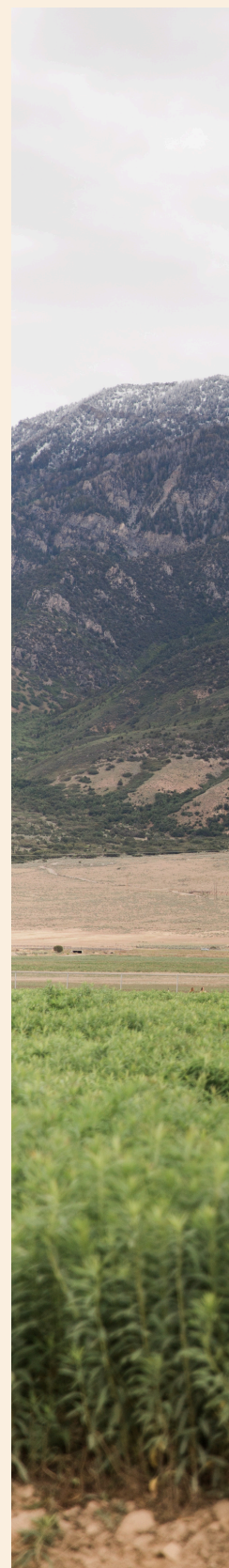


Additional Anti-Inflammatory and Hormone-Supportive Diet Tips

This is great advice for any woman but it's worth mentioning since your diet is more important than ever. Include fermented foods like yogurt and kefir for gut health, which is linked to hormone balance. Herbs and spices like turmeric, ginger, and cinnamon have anti-inflammatory properties. Limit processed foods, refined sugars, and excessive red meat, which can promote inflammation. Stay hydrated and consider green tea for its antioxidant properties and a milder caffeine boost than coffee.

Progesterone is Your Favorite Gal Pal

Progesterone plays a key role in hormone balance. Normally, it works to balance estrogen and regulate the menstrual cycles and pregnancy. During menopause, progesterone swan dives off a cliff while estrogen takes the stairs down. This imbalance leaves you with "Estrogen dominance" which is the culprit in your irregular periods, mood swings, and sleep problems. Progesterone has a calming effect on the body and mind because it is a counterbalance the stimulating effects of estrogen. Plus, it's great for thyroid function, helps maintain bone density, and has a diuretic effect that will reduce bloating. Your doctor might try to help with hormone replacement therapy. If you still have your uterus, you'll get synthetic estrogen and progesterone (progestin). The upside is, it could reduce some of your symptoms and protect the uterine lining. This is important because it reduces the risk of deadly uterine cancer but that synthetic combo also increases the chances of breast cancer. Progesterone alone doesn't carry the increased breast cancer risk, but it still reduces the risk of Uterine Cancer.



Meal Planning and Recipes for Optimal Health

You have a lot of options, they all have their own benefits so pick the one that suits your needs, your budget, your taste, and your prep time.



The Mediterranean Diet

This diet has been singled out as particularly promising for menopausal health.

Rich in vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, particularly those rich in phytoestrogens, can reduce hot flashes. Recipes with foods like soybeans and chickpeas, are excellent sources of phytoestrogens. Whole grains like oats and barley as well as flaxseeds and sesame seeds are high in phytoestrogens, plus pistachios and walnuts. For fruits look for apricots, dates, and prunes which all contain phytoestrogens. Veggies should include lots of broccoli and garlic, they're good sources. Of course Olive oil, it's not high in phytoestrogens, but its polyphenols have mild estrogenic effects. This diet's emphasis on omega-3 fatty acids from fish and nuts could contribute to hormone balance and reduce inflammation.

These foods will help reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease which jumps from 1 in 30 before menopause to 1 in 8 after menopause. This is caused by a several changes included a 15% increase in total cholesterol, while good cholesterol decreases slightly. Blood pressure tends to rise by about 5 mmHg. These increased risk factors are attributed to the decline in estrogen levels, which affects lipid metabolism, vascular function, and body fat distribution. Also, metabolic syndrome is 60% more common after menopause than it is before menopause. Metabolic syndrome kicks off all kinds of chronic diseases.

And for one last kick in the ovaries, menopause increases the risk of breast cancer and all-cause mortality. Thankfully the Mediterranean diet reduces the risk of both of those.

Meal Planning and Recipes for Optimal Health (continued)

Vegetable and Fruit-Rich Diet

Some people don't like the Mediterranean diet. Maybe you were picked on by Italian kids when you were little and you can't let it go. I get it.

You can still transition to a cleaner diet. Simply eating of the fruits and veggies that we've mentioned has been associated with less psychological symptoms, better sleep, fewer hot flashes, and somatic symptoms like joint and muscle pain due to their anti-inflammatory properties. Plus, improve sleep quality and reduce fatigue as well as skin health.. This diet will help with weight management and overall health, BUT you'll lose some of the heart benefit from the fish in the Mediterranean diet.





Menopause A La Carte

Pick what you know you'll actually eat.

Legumes - lower severity of menopausal symptoms: Lentil soups, chickpea salads, and bean-based stews

Extra-Virgin Olive Oil - Inversely correlated with psychological symptoms, meaning the more that you consume, the less you'll be called a (insert derogatory term for maniac). Cook with olive oil instead of margarine and use it as a base for salad dressings and in cooking.

Green and Yellow Veggies - better management of menopausal symptoms. Make stir-fries, roasted vegetable medleys, and green smoothies with NingXia Greens

Whole Grains - lower intensity of menopausal symptoms. Look for recipes with whole grain pilaf, quinoa bowls, and oatmeal for breakfast.

Foods to Avoid.

Processed foods are baked by demonic elves - the more you eat the worse your menopausal symptoms will be. If it's easy, microwavable and wrapped in plastic, it's probably bad for you.

Packaged snacks, sugary drinks, and fast food are hot flash landmines. The true villains are the saturated fats and sugars - both are linked to higher intensity of menopausal symptoms.

Eat less fatty meats, full-fat dairy, and sugary desserts.
We're lean meat ladies now. Own it.

Moments of Weakness.

When you REALLY need a treat, here are some safe cheater-cheater-pumpkin-eater-foods...

- Dark chocolate (70% cocoa or higher) is an excellent option, rich in antioxidants and mood-boosting.
- Oikos Greek yogurt, add some berries or low carb granola and you're getting calcium, protein, and antioxidants.
- We love the Blue Diamond Almonds. There are a dozen different tasty flavors that provide healthy fats, protein, and phytoestrogen.
- Fresh fruits like apples or pears can satisfy sweet cravings and get a dose of fiber.
- Herbal teas with chamomile or peppermint, can be soothing and hydrating.
- Small portions of dried fruits, like prunes or apricots, are far better options than double stuffed Oreos

Recipe Ideas

Mediterranean Quinoa Salad

Quinoa, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, olives, feta cheese, olive oil dressing with a splash of balsamic vinegar.

Lentil and Vegetable Soup

Lentils, carrots, celery, onions, spinach, tomatoes, your favorite herbs and spices

Grilled Veggies and Chickpea Bowl

Grilled zucchini, eggplant, bell peppers, chickpeas, tahini dressing or olive oil and garlic salt. Spice it up with Tajin Chile Lime or Adobo

Baked Salmon with Roasted Vegetables

Salmon fillet, broccoli, sweet potatoes, olive oil, lemon

Berry and Spinach Smoothie

Mixed berries, spinach, Greek yogurt, almond milk, chia seeds

Tyson's annoyingly effective workout smoothie

Costco's frozen mixed dark berries, Oikos Greek yogurt, NingXia, Whey Protein powder, Balance complete and milk. You can add chia seeds, quinoa, or flax seeds. He eats one everyday and acts like keeping weight off is mind-numbingly easy.

Module Three

Herbal and Supplemental
Support.



Top Herbs for Menopause

The top herbs for menopause are black cohosh, red clover, vitex but every woman is different. What works well for one woman might be worthless for another. This is a good time to remind you of the importance of keeping a diary or notes on your phone.



Black cohosh is one of the most widely studied and promising herbal remedies for menopausal symptoms, particularly hot flashes. People put it in tea but it's pretty bitter so getting 20 to 80 mg per day (divided up into doses) would be tough. You'll need a supplement. YL has Black Cohosh in Regenolone Moisturizing Cream, but through the skin isn't as effective systemically. FemiGen has a little black cohosh, fennel and damiana, but I feel like it's more geared toward a libido booster. There are Black Cohosh liquid extracts or tinctures, which can be added to water or NingXia.

Red clover is a source of phytoestrogens, it's most beneficial for more severe menopausal symptoms. It has isoflavones which don't help as much for hot flashes but show positive effects on cholesterol and bone loss. The capsules usually contain dried Red Clover flowers or extracts. Dosage ranges from 40 to 160 mg of isoflavones per day.

Vitex Women usually take Vitex, AKA Chasteberry or Monk's Pepper, as a supplement. The tablets usually contain dried, powdered, Vitex berries. Dosage ranges from 20 to 240 mg per day, often taken in the morning.



More Herbs for Menopause

Sage (Salvia officinalis)

Effective in treating acute menopausal syndrome. The most common method is as a tea, made by steeping dried sage leaves in hot water for 10 minutes. Some women take sage supplements in a tablet to standardize the dose. Sage essential oil can be diffused or applied topically. It's primarily used to help reduce hot flashes and night sweats. Apply it to areas where hot flashes are most noticeable... back of the neck, the chest, and the inner wrists. Some women also apply it to their temples or forehead for headache relief.

Lemon Balm (Melissa officinalis)

Basically the same info as Sage but Lemon balm is primarily used for its calming effects, helping with anxiety, sleep disturbances, and mood swings.

Fenugreek (Trigonella foenum-graecum)

Believed to help with hot flashes, mood swings, and support libido during menopause but also can help with blood sugar regulation and cholesterol levels. Overall it had modest benefits for hot flashes and vaginal dryness. It's most commonly taken in a capsule or tablet form with fenugreek seeds. Dosages range from 500 to 1000 mg per day. Fenugreek powder can be added to smoothies or sprinkled on food but I have no clue what it tastes like.

Adaptogenic Herbs for Stress and Adrenal Support During Menopause

Adaptogenic herbs not only have a cool name, they're being studied more for managing stress and supporting adrenal function, particularly during menopause. If these herbs can enhance the body's ability to cope with stressors and promote overall well-being, I'm listening.

Best Adaptogenic Herbs for Menopausal Support

Ashwagandha

Cortisol, the stress hormone, is made in the adrenals and Ashwaganda is shown to reduce cortisol levels. So that takes a load off your adrenals, but there is strong evidence from studies that showed 300mg/day of ashwaganda reduces hot flashes, night sweats, mood swings, heart discomfort, sleep problems, plus joint and muscle pain in menopause. PowerGize has Ashwaganda as the main ingredient in their 900mg blend, plus it's the KSM-66 form of Ashwaganda which is the most potent form. This sounds like your best option.

Rhodiola rosea

This one is more for the mental side of menopause. Strong scientific evidence for improving attention, cognitive function, mental performance, chronic fatigue syndrome, and mood swings and decreased energy levels. It also reduces cortisol slightly. Women took two 200 mg doses. One dose in the morning and early afternoon. This one isn't necessarily for menopause, it's for anyone, but it just so happens to help with a lot of menopause symptoms. I can't find a YL supplement with Rhodiola rosea.

Schisandra chinensis

Limited scientific evidence but a lot of traditional medicines recommend it. Helps with hot flashes, night sweats, and mood swings. It's believed to help the body cope with stress and hormonal changes. The bonus here is that it helps improve liver function and cognitive performance as well as physical and mental fatigue, and mental performance. Again, not only for menopause and no YL options.



Wolfberries are adaptogenic.

So, drink up people!

Adaptogens appear to work through regulation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, they help with modulation of stress-activated protein kinases and molecular chaperones like Hsp70". That's way out in the weeds but just know that adaptogens help tiny proteins within cells step up and do their jobs when stressful conditions hit the body.

Adaptogens also increase nitric oxide (NO) levels. This is a big deal. Increased NO levels improved blood flow by widening blood vessels which reduces blood pressure and improves heart function. We mentioned increased exercise performance and mental fatigue, that's from better blood flow which enhances oxygen and nutrient delivery to muscles and improves cognitive performance. These mechanisms help the heart which can increase longevity as well.



Essential vitamins and minerals for bone, skin, and heart health. The most serious health concerns in menopause are bone density and heart health. Without a concerted effort, both will take a potentially dangerous hit.

Bone Health.

Bones need a balance of Calcium, Magnesium, Vitamin K and Vitamin D to maintain bone density and reduce the risk of osteoporosis. If you're lacking in one, the others cannot do their jobs.

Calcium - 1200 mg/day for postmenopausal women is ideal, but going overboard is unhealthy so aim for 1000-1200. Grass fed dairy products are better than supplements because you're also getting protein, vitamin D, potassium, and phosphorus which work together to support bone health and smaller doses are better than all at once. If you prefer not to enjoy the mammary secretions of another species, supplements are fine but look for Calcium Citrate but take it with a meal since stomach acids are necessary for absorption. Try to break it up into two doses of 500-600mg.

Vitamin D - Absolutely essential for calcium absorption and bone health. The primary role of Vitamin D is regulating your calcium levels. 600 IU (15 mcg) is bare minimum for women 50-70 yrs old. This one is okay to aim high on. Yes, you can overdose on vitamin D but the symptoms are mild. If your labs show you're often low on vitamin D (below 30 ng/mL). I'd go up to 2000 IU for at least 2 months, then back off to 1000IU (25mcg). It takes a few months of being consistent to move your vitamin D levels. This is even more important in the winter months when we get no sunshine

Vitamin K - Necessary for activating the bone building enzymes and reducing the incidence of osteoporosis. Adult women should get at least 90mcg per day but for bone health. If you see recommendations for much higher they're talking about all types of K. We're focused on bone health so K2 is what we want. 100-200mcg of K2 is a good spot. Foods rich in K2 are leafy greens, egg yolks, cheeses, grass fed butter and fermented foods but one supplement to look for is NattoKinase. Japanese take it for heart health and it's a potent source of the best form of K2 (MK-7 form).

Magnesium - Important for bone health - but also, Magnesium is a cofactor for over 300 enzyme systems. You need it for everything to work properly. Aim for 400-500mg per day. Fortunately, magnesium is plentiful in a healthy diet. Leafy green vegetables, almonds, cashews, pumpkin and chia seeds. Also, brown rice, oatmeal, black beans, kidney beans, and chickpeas. Avocados, dark chocolate (70% cocoa or higher), bananas, yogurt and milk. More fish like tuna, and halibut. More tofu and soybeans. As you can see there is a lot of overlap in the foods you should be eating.

Skin Health.



As estrogen drops, your skin will be dry due to decreased oil production. Loss of elasticity from a drop in collagen leads to less firm, thinner and more saggy skin. This all leads to more wrinkles. We're not done. Your teenage acne is back and she brought friends... Facial hair and age spots. Take a moment to mumble, "this sucks", then we'll continue.

Which vitamins and minerals help? Don't get overwhelmed here, most of these are repeats and almost all of them are in Master Formula "The Easy Button."

Vitamin A (Retinol): Helps with cell turnover, collagen production, and reducing fine lines.

Vitamin C: Required to make collagen and helps even skin tone.

Vitamin E: Another antioxidant, supports skin hydration.

Vitamin D: Required for skin cell growth and repair.

B vitamins: B3 (Niacin) and B5 Help improve skin barrier function and redness.

Vitamin K: Helps with dark circles and promotes skin elasticity.

Collagen: Supports skin elasticity and hydration.

Omega-3 fatty acids: Reduce inflammation and support skin barrier function

Zinc: Aids in wound healing and skin repair.

Selenium: An antioxidant that helps protect skin from damage.

Iron: Important for overall skin health and healing.

Copper: Supports collagen production and skin elasticity.

Phytoestrogens (like isoflavones): Help counteract some effects of estrogen

Probiotics: Can help maintain skin health from the inside out.

Coenzyme Q10: An antioxidant that may help reduce the appearance of wrinkles.



| Heart Health.

I feel like Debbie Downer here but studies show the risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) nearly triples after menopause. 1 in 3 women will develop cardiovascular disease in their lifetime. The average age for a first heart attack in women is 72, which is about a decade after the average age of menopause. Don't freak out though, this puts us on the same risk level as men by the time we're 65.

Here comes another list, but it's mostly the same things for different reasons

Magnesium: Supports heart rhythm and helps regulate blood pressure.

Potassium: Crucial for heart function and blood pressure regulation.

Calcium: Vital for heart muscle contraction, but balance with magnesium is key.

Vitamin D: Helps with calcium absorption and reduces inflammation

Omega-3 fatty acids: Reduces inflammation and supports overall heart health

Vitamin E: An antioxidant that may help protect against heart disease.

B-complex: B6, B12, and folate, help regulate homocysteine levels.

Coenzyme Q10: Supports heart muscle function and energy production.

Vitamin K2: Helps direct all that calcium you're taking to bones instead of arteries.

Selenium: An antioxidant believed to protect heart health.

| One last thing.

Before you get a big orange cart at Costco, let's simplify. You can get most of the things we've mentioned in a shorter list.

Master Formula combined with Super Cal Plus and some of the foods we've mentioned should get you 90% of the way there. For example, if you want +100 mcg of K2, Master Formula has 50mcg and Super Cal has 30mcg. Eat a leafy green salad with hard boiled eggs and you're done.

Progessence is the key to balance your estrogen dominance. This will REALLY help.

Add some Green Omegas and Vitamin D and you're doing well. Remember, you don't have get everything from supplements because you're eating better from now on... right?

One last plug for exercise. It literally helps with everything that we've discussed. Set your own pace but try to do something everyday. It will make all the difference later in life.





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Tyson & Wendy Mercure

**Have any questions?
Feel free to reach out!**

f Wendy Mercure

@wendymercure

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