



HEALTHY

Menopause

GUIDE





HEALTHY MENOPAUSE

WELCOME

We are so excited to partner with you on your wellness journey. During our time together, we will let you in on some secrets to the cause of menopause symptoms, such as exhaustion, fatigue, hot flashes, low libido, hair loss, vaginal dryness, and mood shifts. If you are ready to ditch the struggle and start living energized and self-confident again, you are in the right place!

This guide will help you end the confusion around what you should and should not be eating, and we will work together to understand the nutrients your body needs to thrive through this transition.

Here's to your hormone health!



ARE MENOPAUSE SYMPTOMS AFFECTING YOUR HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE?

Check all that applies to you.

- I feel worn out most days
- I experience hot flashes
- I experience night sweats
- I experience insomnia
- I experience headaches and body pain that is new
- I fear that when I sneeze, I'll have bladder leakage
- I feel like my brain is foggy
- I frequently feel panicked or anxious
- I have excess belly weight
- I have vaginal dryness or burning
- I haven't had my period in 12 consecutive months
- I struggle to lose weight
- I'm not sleeping well
- My sex drive is gone



ANALYZE YOUR RESULTS

The above are some of the symptoms women experience during menopause. Menopause is a natural transition all women experience and not a disease process. We are here to provide options expanding your choice of how you want to move through menopause. You don't need to tolerate symptoms interfering with your health and happiness.

If you checked:

- **1-2 boxes:** You have very few symptoms of menopause. However, you should take steps to balance your hormones now. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. You may be in perimenopause, the transition period before menopause. This can start in your mid thirties or as late as your mid 50's.
- **3-5 boxes:** You have some symptoms of menopause. It's time to make some changes and check in with your healthcare provider.
- **6 + boxes:** You have numerous signs of menopause that affect the quality of your life. Ask your doctor for a full sex hormone panel, including stress and thyroid hormones.

This quiz is not intended to diagnose. It's intended to raise awareness of how menopause symptoms may be affecting your quality of life. If you have concerns about hormone health, call us at 603-249-5771 to book in for a new patient appointment to discuss further.



WHAT IS MENOPAUSE?

Menopause is the end of your menstrual cycles and ovulation. It also marks the end of your childbearing years and moving into a new perspective of inner focus to self-care. It's a natural part of a woman's life as she gracefully transitions into the stage of the "sovereign" stepping deeper into the power of self-care.

In the United States, women's average age to enter menopause is 52, but it is not uncommon to take place in your 40's. A woman officially enters menopause after 12 consecutive months with no menstrual bleeding and no presence of a condition causing the absence of periods (i.e., hypothalamic amenorrhea, PCOS).

A dramatic shift in the balance of reproductive hormones occurs as the ovaries no longer secrete the primary reproductive hormones: estrogen, testosterone and progesterone. The shift in hormones, as well as a change in the balance between estrogen, progesterone and testosterone contribute to the majority of the menopausal symptoms: namely, insomnia, hot flashes, low energy, libido, difficulty recovering from stress and vaginal dryness.

Some women go through all the symptoms of menopause with great difficulty and discomfort, while other women experience much fewer and more subtle symptoms. Symptoms and their severity greatly depend on the individual. If you are someone who is struggling through the symptoms of menopause, you do not have to suffer. There are many solutions at our disposal: bioidentical hormone replacement therapy, herbal therapy, homeopathic therapy, dietary changes, Low Dose Naltrexone and Peptide therapies.

In many cases, looking at only your reproductive hormones gives only a partial picture. It is important to find a provider that will look at multiple hormonal systems, because none function in isolation. Your thyroid, blood sugar (insulin), cardiovascular system and adrenal glands all can impact your symptoms of menopause.



Below is a list of the most common symptoms

Headaches and/or migraines

Backaches

Hot flashes, night sweats

Excessive sweating

Difficulty sleeping

Low sex drive

Vaginal Dryness

Painful intercourse

Urinary leakage

Irritability

Joint pain and arthritis

Mood swings

Low energy levels



If you're like many, when you think about menopause, you think of hot flashes, night sweats, mood swings, and weight gain, right? Here are **5 Surprising Symptoms of Menopause** that you may not have considered:

#1 Dental Issues

Surprisingly, there are estrogen receptors in your oral mucosa. Declining estrogen levels during menopause can therefore contribute to dryness within the oral cavity. This can contribute to bacterial imbalance, gum disease causing recession, and tooth decay. Make sure that you are seeing your dentist regularly.

Osteoporosis doesn't just impact the big bones in the body! Low estrogen levels can impact the integrity of jawbones: chewing, jaw mobility, and teeth (or dentures) can be compromised.

Stress can make jaw clenching and teeth grinding more prevalent. The extra pressure may cause tooth damage and headaches. Talk with your dentist about how menopause is impacting your oral health. Often, they have solutions that are easy to implement and will save you from years of discomfort.

#2 Bloating and Digestive Issues

Believe it or not, estrogen and progesterone help regulate digestion! The hormones can have an impact on motility and levels of inflammation in the bowels. Less estrogen means less bile, resulting constipation, heartburn and uncomfortable bowel movements. Lower progesterone can increase inflammation in the body and speed up bowel motility. Lower estrogen levels can weaken the esophageal sphincter causing GERD.

During menopause, the decline in estrogen level can affect the immune system's functioning. Estrogen plays a role in modulating the immune response, and its reduction may alter immune reactions in some individuals. While this is a complex area of research, there are a few ways menopause and hormonal changes might be related to food allergies:



Increased sensitivity: If you already have poor reactions to certain foods or a worsening of food intolerances.

Histamine intolerance: Estrogen can increase histamine levels in the body. This can lead to hives, gastrointestinal illness, and brain fog. Adhering to a low histamine diet can help if you are experiencing these symptoms.

Some women may experience heightened sensitivity to certain foods during menopause. This sensitivity could potentially be related to changes in the immune system function and may result in the manifestation of food allergy-like symptoms.

Intolerance versus Allergy: It's important to differentiate between food allergies and food intolerances. Food allergies involve an immune response, whereas food intolerances typically do not involve the immune and are more related to the inability to properly digest or process certain foods. Menopause might worsen existing food intolerances or make women more sensitive to certain foods, leading to digestive issues.

Histamine Intolerance: Estrogen has been shown to influence histamine levels in the body. Some women may experience an increase in histamine levels during menopause due to the hormonal changes. Histamine intolerance can cause allergy-like symptoms, such as hives, itching, poor focus or gastrointestinal issues, when histamine-containing foods are consumed.

Lower estrogen is also implicated in water retention, which can be one cause of bloating. Hormonal imbalance can also cause gas and bloating in the digestive process because of the way the body metabolizes carbohydrates and proteins changes.

As the hormones fluctuate over time you may have unpredictable bowel activity outside your norm.

Does any of this sound familiar? We work with patients to implement solutions that work best for them. Including discussing ways to shift your eating habits and what foods to focus on to support your health.



#3 Body Odor

Hormonal changes can be a bear when it comes to body odor. Decreased estrogen is to blame for an increase in BO. Estrogen helps regulate your hypothalamus; the hypothalamus is the gland responsible for regulating your body temperature. When estrogen levels drop, your hypothalamus gets confused and responds as though you are hot, even when you aren't. The result is activated sweat glands!

Hot flashes and night sweats can leave you, your clothing, and your bedding drenched in sweat. Night sweats, in particular, can breed some funk because bacteria have hours to develop while you sleep. If your sheets and clothing are smelly due to menopausal sweat, try an enzyme cleaner as a pre-soak when you do laundry. That extra step can often help!

Vaginal dryness can cause odor, too. Without sufficient vaginal lubrication to keep pH in check, odor-causing bacteria can flourish.

Breathable fabrics, a daily shower (or two), antiperspirant or deodorant, pretreating laundry, and following a healthy diet to help alleviate the symptoms in the first place can all make a difference.



#4 Dizziness

Dizziness may signify more serious health concerns, but it can be due to menopause.

Hormone fluctuations may make you experience vertigo and feel faint or lightheaded.

While experiencing other symptoms, you may also feel dizzy or unstable. Hot flashes, dehydration, anxiety, panic attacks, and stress trigger those **feelings**.

Cardiovascular disruptions and heart disease disorders that develop during menopause may leave you feeling dizzy.

Connect with us to determine the root cause of your dizziness.

Dehydration can be more of an issue as women age due to the body signals changing around water balance and impact on the adrenal glands. Taking in electrolytes while staying mindful of water intake through the day can be very helpful.

#5 Painful Intercourse & Urinary Leakage

Vaginal dryness is a hallmark symptom of menopause. In some, it brings along with it atrophic vaginitis and vaginal atrophy.

With this condition, vaginal tissues become thinner and more easily irritated — resulting from the natural decline in your body's estrogen levels during menopause. Due to this decline in hormone levels, many women experience pain with intercourse, dryness, and frequent urinary tract infections. 2 in 3 women have this issue. Still, less than 25% talk to their doctor about it. There are now many more solutions for women that we will discuss later in this guide.

5. Hair Loss

During menopause, some women may experience hair thinning or hair loss, which is often referred to as female pattern hair loss or androgenic alopecia. This type of hair loss is similar to male pattern baldness and is influenced by genetics and hormonal changes. Here's how menopause can contribute to hair loss:

Hormonal Changes: The decrease in estrogen and progesterone levels can lead to a relative increase in androgens (male hormones) in the body. Androgens can contribute to hair thinning by shrinking hair follicles and shortening the hair growth cycle.



Miniaturization of Hair Follicles: Hair follicles can become smaller and produce thinner, finer hair during menopause. This process is known as miniaturization and can eventually lead to hair follicles no longer producing visible hair.

Longer Resting Phase: Menopausal hormonal changes can prolong the resting phase of the hair growth cycle, leading to less frequent hair growth and more noticeable hair shedding.

Changes in Hair Texture: Some women may also notice changes in the texture of their hair during menopause. It may become drier, more brittle, and prone to breakage.



SEX HORMONES AND MENOPAUSE

ESTROGEN

The fluctuation in estrogen levels during menopause is responsible for symptoms such as hot flashes, poor quality of sleep, and vaginal dryness. These fluctuations in hormones can also significantly impact your mood, making you feel anxious, depressed, and stressed. While estrogen levels decline with menopause, according to the late Dr. John Lee, estrogen levels drop only 40-60% at menopause, just enough for the monthly cycles to stop.

PROGESTERONE

Progesterone levels begin to decline after age 30 (long before estrogen). However, there is a more significant decline in progesterone around age 50. The need for progesterone spans a lifetime. Once the ovaries stop producing it, the body will generally continue (to a lesser degree), providing it via the adrenal glands and nerve cells. Progesterone protects against osteoporosis, heart disease, and many other health concerns.

TESTOSTERONE

Although testosterone is predominantly a male hormone, women do require testosterone levels to be healthy and happy. Women require a healthy testosterone level for bone strength, increased cognitive performance, and an increased sex drive. Women with inadequate testosterone levels can experience low libido, becoming very frustrating and problematic for them. It can also increase the risk of osteoporosis as bones become weaker. Pomegranate juice has been shown to increase testosterone levels in both men and women. Foods that are high in magnesium also increase testosterone levels. High-magnesium foods include hemp seeds, spinach, and figs. Zinc is also a necessary nutrient for testosterone production, so look for foods that are high in this mineral.



WOMEN'S INTIMATE HEALTH & MENOPAUSE

The vagina changes as we age due to the decline of female sex hormones such as estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. Vaginal atrophy is the thinning, drying, and inflammation of the vaginal walls due to these declining hormones. Some women experience vaginal atrophy in perimenopause; however, it often becomes more apparent the closer a woman gets to menopause.

SYMPTOMS OF VAGINAL ATROPHY

The main symptom of vaginal atrophy is vaginal dryness. Dryness is what many women notice first. Other symptoms include:

- Vaginal dryness and discomfort
- Painful intercourse
- Lower libido
- Shortening of the vaginal canal
- Urinary problems
- Frequent bladder and vaginal infections
- Pain in the vulva or vagina
- Vaginal discharge
- Reduced pelvic muscle strength (think bladder leakage when sneezing!)

CAUSES OF VAGINAL ATROPHY

Hormonal changes in the body generally cause vaginal atrophy.

The following puts you at higher risk:

- Smoking
- The use of hormonal birth control medications or devices (ex. IUD)
- Synthetic hormones
- Low sex hormones (estrogen, progesterone, or testosterone)
- Autoimmunity



REMEDIES FOR VAGINAL ATROPHY

Vaginal atrophy is treatable.

#1 Change your diet

Focus on foods that support a healthy gastrointestinal tract and vaginal pH.

#2 Take a Lactobacillus-Based Probiotic

Lactobacillus acidophilus is one of the best probiotics for establishing healthy vaginal bacterial flora. Two other strains heavily researched for vaginal health are *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* and *Lactobacillus reuteri*. Always keep your probiotics in the fridge. Reach out to the clinic if you would like any suggestions on good quality brands.

#3 Use natural (non-hormonal) lubricants

Lubricants will not fix the underlying problem. However, they will help you manage symptoms and enjoy a healthy sex life. Natural lubricants work well, and they will not complicate the situation further. Many non-hormonal lubricants can be found online. Reach out to the clinic if you would like any suggestions on good quality brands.

#4 Talk to your doctor about non-invasive treatment options

Just because you've reached a certain age doesn't mean that your sex life has to disappear completely. As a first step, speak with our team of doctors about any specific sexual health issues you may be dealing with



THYROID HORMONES AND MENOPAUSE

The occurrence of many thyroid conditions: hypothyroidism, nodules, and cancer, are highest among postmenopausal women. The diagnosis of thyroid dysfunction during menopause is difficult since the symptoms can be broad or similar to other menopausal complaints. Your thyroid gland is critical for many different processes in the body, so you must take care of it now and make sure it is functioning correctly. The two most common thyroid conditions are hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism.

NUTRIENTS FOR THYROID SUPPORT

SELENIUM: Selenium is an essential mineral for our health. This element combines with other polypeptides to form the amino acid selenocysteine. The thyroid has an exceptionally high concentration of proteins that contain selenocysteine. These proteins are required to convert T4 into the more active thyroid hormone T3; therefore, they play an essential role in hormone balance. Brazil nuts are highest in selenium. Watch out if you are more prone to mold biotoxin illness and/or heavy metals because Brazil nuts can be high in barium and some mold toxins.

IODINE: Iodine is an essential mineral whose most significant role in the body is the synthesis of thyroid hormones. Your thyroid depends on iodine so much that an iodine deficiency can lead to an underactive thyroid. Unfortunately, the Himalayan salt we all use now does not contain adequate amounts of iodine.

VITAMIN D3: Vitamin D3 is a fat-soluble vitamin that your skin can produce when exposed to sunlight. Worldwide, many are deficient in vitamin D, especially those who live in colder climates and don't see enough of the sun.



INOSITOL: Inositol supplements can reduce levels of thyroid antibodies and are often taken in conjunction with selenium to reduce inflammation in the thyroid and ensure that it is functioning correctly. There are a few different forms of inositol, so reach out to our clinic if you have any questions about which one is best for you.

PROBIOTICS: The gut microbiome tremendously impacts our health more than we had previously thought. It affects every system in our body, so naturally, it also affects thyroid hormone synthesis and balance.

ZINC: Zinc is an essential mineral with many vital functions in our bodies, including metabolism and supporting the immune system. Zinc also plays a crucial role in thyroid hormone balance.

AMINO ACIDS: Amino acids are the building blocks of all the proteins in our bodies. Although our bodies can produce some of them, many amino acids are 'essential' because we must get them from our diet. The thyroid hormones consist of a specific amino acid known as tyrosine. Tyrosine can be found in all animal products, and higher levels are found in sweet potatoes and spinach.

ADRENAL HORMONES AND MENOPAUSE

Although the ovaries are the primary site of estrogen and progesterone synthesis, the adrenal glands play an essential role in producing sex hormones after the ovaries halt production. The adrenals create sex steroids that have both androgenic and estrogenic bioactivity. However, many of us have exhausted our adrenals through high stress within our daily life. The adrenal glands have to make enough cortisol to keep up with the demanding stressors of our everyday life, and eventually, they become "exhausted"—otherwise known as adrenal fatigue. Adrenal fatigue is not a medical condition per se – it is a consequence of overworked adrenal glands. Women with adrenal fatigue are known to have more severe symptoms throughout perimenopause and menopause. Taking care of our adrenal health is essential because if these glands aren't functioning correctly, the transition into menopause will be even more challenging. But don't worry – nearly every suggestion we make in this program supports healthy adrenal function!



ADAPTOGENS FOR ADRENAL SUPPORT

Maca powder, Ashwagandha, Siberian ginseng, and Rhodiola are fantastic adrenal adaptogens. They support the adrenal glands and help them create a healthy response to stressors. Adrenal adaptogens also can significantly improve hormone balance.

Each herb is energetically different, and some work to support the rebuilding of the adrenal glands, while others work to stimulate the adrenal glands further. If you have had long term periods of high stress that have drained your adrenal glands, stimulating them further may not be the best solution. Especially if there is "nothing left" to stimulate.

Call the clinic at 603-249-5771 for recommendations on good quality brands, and the combination of herbs that may work best for you.

PROGESTERONE DECLINES GREATLY AFTER 50

Progesterone naturally begins to decline around age 30 and, by age 50, has decreased significantly. According to the late Dr. John Lee (leading progesterone specialist), estrogen levels drop only 40-60% at menopause, just enough for the monthly cycles to stop. Sadly, progesterone levels may drop to near zero in some women contributing to poor sleep, anxious thoughts, poor immune health, poor skin health, night sweats and other troubling symptoms. Stress, endocrine-disrupting chemicals, and xenoestrogens (found in plastics) all accelerate progesterone's decline. During perimenopause and menopause, the sharp decline of progesterone can lead to a relative estrogen dominance. In many, this can further contribute to common menopausal symptoms.



COMMON SIGNS OF LOW PROGESTERONE

- Anxiousness Depressive states
- Gallbladder problems
- Headaches
- Highly emotional
- Hot flashes
- Low Libido
- Migraines
- Mood swings
- Night Sweats
- Weight Gain

HEALTH BENEFITS OF PROGESTERONE

- Enhances thyroid hormones
- Good for your bones
- Good for your heart
- Helps with weight loss
- Keeps estrogen in check
- It may offer protection against some cancers
- Prevent hot flashes and night sweats
- Prevent some headaches
- Promotes restful sleep
- Supports healthy mood



NATURAL SOLUTIONS...YES, IT'S POSSIBLE

Let's break it down...

MODIFY YOUR DIET

The most significant dietary adjustment you can make for optimal hormone balance is maintaining healthy blood sugar and cortisol levels. When your blood sugar is stabilized - your adrenal glands and hormone levels are happy. To support blood sugar levels, we need quality protein and healthy fats. We must also reduce refined sugar, caffeine, and processed carbohydrates. Magnesium, zinc, B6, and vitamin C also boost progesterone levels, so focus on foods with these nutrients, such as seeds, clean meats, organ meats, green vegetables, and root veggies too!

The following are foods believed to increase progesterone...

- Cherries
- Chicken
- Grass-Fed Beef
- Oregano
- Organic Eggs
- Shellfish
- Thyme
- Turmeric
- Walnuts

DITCH XENOESTROGENS

Xenoestrogens are chemicals found in the environment that mimic estrogen. They are in our care products, household cleaning products, cosmetics, fragrances, and food. Therefore, it's easy to switch out some of your most-used products to chemical-free, natural ingredients that won't increase the total estrogen in your body. Regarding food, we discussed that animals raised with hormones should, understandably, be avoided as these hormones will be transferred to us. You should also avoid endocrine-disrupting chemicals found in personal care products, such as phthalates, sulfates, BPA, and parabens. BPA is a common material found in plastic and cans. Most products that list "fragrances" in their ingredients contain phthalates, even if it's not explicitly stated in their ingredient list. Stick to products with natural fragrances, such as essential oils or herbs.



Here's what you need to avoid to reduce exposure to xenoestrogens and other endocrine-disrupting chemicals:

CAFO meat (Confined Animal Feeding Operations) meats injected with steroids and other pharmaceuticals.

Canned foods (contain bisphenol A, aka BPA)

Conventional produce, sprayed with chemicals (many are FRS toxins) Farm-raised fish treated with chemicals

Household air fresheners

Household cleaning products

Many beauty-care products

PCD's from industrial waste

Plastics - think water bottles

REDUCE STRESS

Reducing stress is key to keeping healthy in general, but it will also help treat estrogen dominance. If you're under chronic stress, the adrenal glands will shift their focus toward producing more cortisol to deal with this stress. However, that means that they are taking away the "resources" to create progesterone. Find ways to destress and relax; this can be different for each person. Take a bath, go for a relaxing walk, meditate, read a book, or practice yoga. Practice anything that helps you eliminate stress and make time for it daily or at least weekly. Although your schedule might get busy, your health (both physical and mental) should be a top priority, so don't be afraid to take time out for yourself!

2 SUPPLEMENTS THAT MIGHT HELP

- **Magnesium:** Magnesium is a fantastic stress reliever. It increases GABA, normalizes cortisol levels, and encourages healthy sleep. If there were such a thing as a 'desert island' supplement for menopausal women, magnesium would be it!
- **Taurine:** Taurine is an amino acid and neurotransmitter that calms the brain by increasing GABA.



DAILY MOVEMENT

Regular exercise can help with weight management, and it also helps the body fight hormone imbalance in other ways. It enables the liver to become more efficient at removing bad estrogen from the body, increases insulin sensitivity, improves mood (which helps with the mood swings associated with menopause), and reduces cortisol levels (the stress hormone) in the body.



NUTRIENTS THE BODY NEEDS DURING MENOPAUSE

As you undergo these changes to your hormone levels, your body might require specific vitamins more than it used to. These include vitamins that support adrenal function, help balance hormone levels, and aid in improving specific issues that arise due to low estrogen levels, such as bone loss.

VITAMIN E

Vitamin E plays an essential role in supporting the adrenal glands. These glands are responsible for synthesizing a small percentage of the body's total estrogen levels; therefore, they become significant during menopause. If the adrenal glands are functioning properly, then when the ovaries stop producing estrogen, the glands will still produce and release some estrogen into the bloodstream. This slight increase in estrogen levels can help relieve some of the symptoms of menopause. Research has shown that vitamin E supplementation during menopause helps ease symptoms such as hot flashes and night sweats. **Sunflower seeds, avocados, almonds, Swiss chard, and butternut squash are all rich in vitamin E.**

THE B VITAMINS

The B vitamins (especially vitamin B5) have several functions in the body, including regulation and support of the adrenal glands. Vitamin B5 (also known as pantothenic acid) is especially important in the production and metabolism of hormones synthesized by the adrenal glands. It plays a role in synthesizing cholesterol, the precursor to all steroid hormones (including estrogen and progesterone). The B vitamins are heavily involved in energy production and, therefore, also help with memory, regulation of mood, and cognitive functioning. This group of vitamins can minimize "brain fog," which is the difficulty concentrating and poor memory that some women experience in menopause. Vitamin B5 is found in **chicken, oats, and other whole grains, eggs, beef, and potatoes.**



VITAMIN C

Vitamin C provides adrenal support and functions in many other pathways that work hard to keep us healthy. It is an important player in the immune system and bone health as well. The adrenal glands are concentrated with vitamin C and use this nutrient to synthesize cortisol, the stress hormone.

However, if the adrenal glands become overworked and fatigued (which happens when we're under a lot of stress), the supply of vitamin C might run low. A diet rich in vitamin C ensures that you are providing your adrenal glands with enough of this vitamin for them to function properly and keep the hormones balanced, even when they're under stress. Vitamin C also provides a protective factor against bone loss because it is an important nutrient in the synthesis of collagen. Collagen is the abundant protein in our bones and connective tissues, making them durable and strong. Adequate intake of vitamin C is easily obtained through diet alone. **Citrus fruits, such as lemons and oranges, grapefruits, red peppers, and Brussels sprouts, all contain a very high percentage of your daily recommended intake of vitamin C.** One orange already contains over 100% of your needed vitamin C!

CALCIUM

Almost all of the calcium in our bodies is found in the skeletal system (over 99%). It is the main mineral component of bone. When estrogen levels decrease in menopause, the risks of osteoporosis significantly increase. Estrogen has protective effects against osteoporosis and bone loss. Thus, calcium is extremely important during this stage in your life because you need to ensure that your bones are getting enough of the nutrients they require to stay as strong and healthy as possible, even with lower estrogen levels. Dairy products (such as organic kefir and full-fat yogurt) are known for being rich in calcium, but **sardines, nuts, and seeds are also excellent sources of this mineral.** You should also make sure you're getting an adequate vitamin D intake, which many individuals are deficient in. Vitamin D is essential for the effective absorption of calcium.



SUPERFOODS FOR MENOPAUSE

POMEGRANATE

Pomegranate contains estrogen-like compounds that are structurally like the female estrogen estrone. Pomegranate contains the highest amount of steroidal estrogens than any other plant-based source. Pomegranate also helps modulate estrogen and acts as an aromatase inhibitor. While you can eat pomegranates, experts suggest pomegranate extract or pomegranate seed oil.

LIGNAN RICH SEEDS, GRAINS, AND LEGUMES

Four main plant constituent groups have demonstrated weak estrogenic activity; however, only lignans and isoflavones have shown specific human estrogenic activity. You get lignans from seeds, whole grains, legumes, vegetables, and some fruits. Because lignans are abundant in grains and legumes – I do not recommend a Paleo diet for menopausal women. However, I would suggest you soak, sprout, or ferment your grains and legumes to make them more digestible.

ISOFLAVONE RICH SOYBEANS

Soy is also well-known for its estrogenic effects. Some studies have found that women who were in menopause and who ate a diet rich in soy had improvements in their joints and bone health, something that deteriorates following the decrease in estrogen. Soy might also reduce the common symptoms of menopause, including hot flashes, excessive sweating, and heart palpitations, which can sometimes occur. It is the Isoflavones in soy that provide the estrogenic effects. Safe sources of soy are sprouted organic tofu, organic soybeans, organic miso, and organic soymilk. It's essential to purchase non-GMO and organic soy only.



PORTOBELLO MUSHROOMS

Portobello mushrooms are a good source of vitamin D and B12 that we need as we get older. Other mushrooms, such as cordyceps and reishi, have estrogen-modulating effects and may help reduce common menopause symptoms.

PROTEIN POWDERS

Blood sugar stability is essential for hormone balance. Unfortunately, many of the protein powders on the market have ingredients that may inhibit hormones. Avoid highly processed protein powders with isolates such as soy, whey, and grain-based powders. Look for hemp, pumpkin, chicken, beef, or bone broth protein powder. I suggest Nutiva, Sunwarrior, Vital Proteins, Ancient Nutrition, or Rootcology protein powders. If these are out of your budget, don't compromise on quality. It would be better to pass than bring in poor-quality proteins that may inhibit hormone balance.

PROBIOTICS

Cultured foods help keep the gut microbiome thriving. Research is emerging, demonstrating a connection between the gut microbiome and hormone health. Researchers now believe that certain microbes in the gut secrete and modulate hormones to such an extent that the gut microbiota should be classified as part of the endocrine system! To cultivate a robust gut microbiome, you should incorporate cultured foods such as cultured vegetables, sauerkraut, beet kvass, sugar-free non-dairy yogurt, and kefir waters.



ORGANIC PASTURE-RAISED EGGS

Studies show eggs boost testosterone! Organic eggs are filled with even more essential nutrients than conventional eggs – especially omega-3 fats.

Conventional eggs also have soy, as soy is a by-product in most chicken feeds. In general, eggs are a cheaper source of protein and healthy fats than meat, so it is worth investing a little more to buy organic. Eggs are a complete source of protein, containing every essential amino acid you need. They contain omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins A and E, beta-carotene, and choline, essential for fetal brain development.

SHATAVARI

Shatavari is wild asparagus. In Ayurveda, it is considered a female tonic. Traditionally it has been used to boost libido, tame hot flashes, curb night sweating, and lessen brain fog. Shatavari also has immunomodulating, apoptogenic, and anti-stress effects. Customarily Shatavari is mixed with a glass of warm milk and honey, but it can be incorporated into a wide range of dishes, drinks, and teas. You can purchase Shatavari powder on Amazon.



YOUR AMAZING 3-DAY MENU

DAY 1

Upon waking, drink warm lemon water.

BREAKFAST

SMOOTHIE

Serves 1

- 1½ cups coconut milk
- 1 scoop hemp protein powder
- 1 date, pitted
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 brazil nut
- 1 teaspoon ground flax seed

Add all ingredients to a high-speed blender.

LUNCH

KALE AND SWEET POTATO WITH A SIDE SALAD

Serves 2

- 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 cups chopped sweet potatoes
- 1 bunch of kale, chopped
- 1 15-ounce can of black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 6 cups vegetable broth



Melt coconut oil in a large pot over medium heat add onion and garlic. Stir for about 3 minutes until fragrant. Add sweet potatoes, kale, black beans, paprika, cumin, and vegetable broth. Stir well and cover. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to a simmer. Continue to cook for about 15 minutes or until the sweet potatoes are tender.

SIDE SALAD

Serves 2

- 4 cups mixed greens
- 1 handful of cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup peeled and chopped cucumber
- ½ cup broccoli slaw
- 1 avocado, diced
- 1 lemon, cut in half, tahini, for dressing balsamic vinegar, to taste, sea salt and black pepper, to taste

Combine mixed greens, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, and broccoli slaw in a large bowl and top with avocado. Squeeze the juice of the whole lemon over the top. Drizzle salad with tahini and toss with balsamic vinegar. Season with salt and pepper, as desired.

SNACK

green tea with 1 apple and 3 brazil nuts

DINNER

BEEF CHILI AND LARGE SALAD

Serves 6

- 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 2 large carrots, chopped
- 1 medium celery rib, chopped



- 2 medium red bell peppers, chopped
- 1-pound chopped portobello mushrooms
- 1 medium jalapeño pepper, chopped (optional) 1½ pounds ground beef
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped sea salt, and black pepper, to taste
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 24-ounce can of crushed tomatoes, undrained
- 1 cup beef (or chicken) broth, preferably organic

Optional Toppings:

1 large avocado, diced

½ cup fresh cilantro leaves, chopped

Heat the coconut oil in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Add onion, carrots, celery, bell peppers, mushrooms, and jalapeño pepper (if desired) and cook, occasionally stirring, until the vegetables are soft and fragrant, approximately 5 to 7 minutes.

Add the ground beef and garlic and season with salt and black pepper to taste. Cook, breaking up the meat with a wooden spoon until the meat is browned, around 5 to 6 minutes.

Add the oregano, cumin, chili powder, cayenne pepper (if desired), and tomato paste. Stir everything together and cook for another minute or two until the spices become fragrant.

Add the crushed tomatoes and the broth and bring to a boil. Once boiling, reduce heat to medium and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Remove from heat and adjust seasonings, if necessary. Top with avocado and cilantro, if desired, and serve immediately.



LARGE SALAD

Serves 4

- 2 cups mixed greens 2 cups spinach
- 1 handful of cherry tomatoes
- 1 cup carrots, shredded
- 1 cup peeled and chopped cucumber
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 avocado, diced
- 1 lemon, juiced
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil, sea salt, and black pepper, to taste

Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and serve.

Day 2

Upon waking, drink warm lemon water.

BREAKFAST

SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH AVOCADO

Serves 1

- 1 teaspoon coconut oil
- ½ red pepper, chopped
- ½ cup spinach
- 2 eggs
- sea salt and black pepper, to taste
- ½ avocado, sliced

Crack eggs into a small bowl and whisk well with a fork—season with salt and pepper. Melt coconut oil in a hot pan over medium heat. Add red pepper and spinach. Sauté for 2 minutes. Pour eggs into the hot pan and cook for about 1 minute. Use a fork to swirl the eggs around the pan until curdles start to form.



Continue to do this for about 2 to 3 minutes until you get your desired consistency. For firmer eggs, cook about a minute or two longer. Top with avocado.

LUNCH

KALE AND QUINOA BOWL

Serves 2

- 1 cup quinoa, uncooked
- 2 cups vegetable broth 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- 1 bunch of kale, torn
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 15-ounce can of lentils, drained and rinsed
- 1 avocado, diced
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 lemon, juiced

Add the quinoa, broth, and celery to a medium pot. Cover and boil for 20 minutes until all the water is absorbed. Remove from heat and set to the side.

Place a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add coconut oil. Once the oil has melted, add kale and bell pepper. Sauté until wilted.

Once the quinoa has cooled, lightly fluff it with a fork. Spoon the quinoa into a large salad bowl and add sautéed vegetables, lentils, avocado, and red onion. Add balsamic vinegar and lemon juice. Toss to combine and serve.

SNACK: ¼ cup hummus and chopped vegetables



DINNER

CAULIFLOWER RICE AND CASHEW CURRY

Serves 4

Curry Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons coconut oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 chicken breasts, cut into cubes
- 1½ cups canned coconut milk
- ½ cup puréed pumpkin
- 2 small red onions, sliced
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- sea salt and black pepper, to taste
- ¾ cup cashews
- 1 tablespoon cilantro leaves to garnish

Rice Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- 1 cup raw cauliflower rice*
- ¾ cup canned coconut milk
- ¼ cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 teaspoon raw honey
- sea salt, to taste

***NOTE:** Cauliflower rice can be purchased at Whole Foods Market, Trader Joe's, and other specialty grocery stores.

Place a large skillet over medium heat. Add coconut oil. Once the oil has melted, add minced garlic and chicken. Once the chicken becomes white on all sides, add coconut milk and puréed pumpkin to the chicken. Stir well, and add sliced onions, curry powder, cumin, cinnamon, salt, and pepper. Continue to stir for about 5 to 7 minutes to allow the mixture to thicken. Turn off the heat and set it to the side to cool.



To cook the cauliflower rice, add coconut oil to a medium pan. Once the oil has melted, add the cauliflower rice and coconut milk. Continue to stir for about 3 minutes, then add the remaining ingredients. Stir well until the liquid begins to evaporate and the rice becomes sticky.

Stir the cashews into the chicken and garnish with cilantro before serving.

DAY 3

BREAKFAST

QUINOA BREAKFAST BOWL

Serves 1

- ½ cup cooked quinoa
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds
- 1 tablespoon ground flax seeds
- ½ cup almond milk
- 1 scoop protein powder stevia, to taste

Tip: Cook quinoa ahead of time according to package instructions to make assembling this bowl a breeze.

Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Serve warm.

LUNCH

HORMONE SALAD

Serves 2

- 3 cups mixed greens
- 1 cup broccoli slaw
- 1 cucumber, chopped
- ¼ red onion, chopped
- 1 avocado, diced



- ¼ cup dried cranberries, unsulfured
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1 orange, juiced for the dressing
- 2 tablespoons flax oil
- balsamic vinegar, to taste
- sea salt and black pepper, to taste

Place the mixed greens, slaw, cucumber, and onion in a large bowl. Top with avocado and cranberries. Squeeze the juice of 1 orange over the salad. Next, top with flax oil and balsamic vinegar—season with sea salt and black pepper to taste. Mix well and serve.

SNACK: 1 green apple and 2 tablespoons almond butter

DINNER

BISON BURGER WITH SALAD

Serves 4

Burger Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground bison
- sea salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon onion powder
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil

Dressing Ingredients:

- ¼ cup tahini
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 garlic clove, chopped
- 1 teaspoon dulse flakes
- sea salt and black pepper, to taste

Salad Ingredients:

- 4 cups spinach
- 1 BPA-free can of garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cucumber, chopped



- ¼ red onion, sliced
- 1 avocado, diced

Place bison in a mixing bowl. Add salt, pepper, garlic powder, and onion powder and mix well to combine. Form into 4 patties. Melt coconut oil in a hot pan; add patties. Fry on each side for about 5 minutes until the center is no longer red. Set to the side to cool.

To make the salad dressing, combine all the dressing ingredients in a small mixing bowl and mix with a fork.

Place spinach in a large salad bowl. Top with garbanzo beans, cucumber, onion, and avocado. Pour the dressing over the top and mix well before serving.

SNACKS

SESAME KALE CHIPS

Serves 2

- 1 bunch kale
- 1 heaping tablespoon of coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon ginger powder
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Wash and dry the kale. Strip the kale leaves from the stem and tear the leaves into a large mixing bowl. Add coconut oil, garlic powder, ginger powder, salt, and sesame seeds. Mix well and spread onto a baking sheet. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes until crisp.

DATE WITH ALMOND BUTTER

Serves 1

- 1 date
- ½ teaspoon almond butter

Split the date in half, lengthwise. Spoon in almond butter and enjoy.



AVOCADO WITH SEA SALT

Serves 1

- ½ avocado
- 1 dash of garlic powder
- 1 dash of sea salt
- 1 tsp dulse flakes

Sprinkle half an avocado with garlic powder, salt, and dulse.

ALMOND SESAME PROTEIN BALLS

Serves 2

- ½ cup almonds
- ½ cup sesame seeds
- 6 pitted dates
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- ½ cup almond butter
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds

Combine the first five ingredients in a high-speed blender. Blend until the almonds are finely chopped. Scoop into 1-inch balls and lightly roll the balls in the chia seeds. Place the balls in a covered container. Refrigerate at least 1 hour before serving. Store refrigerated for up to 1 week.