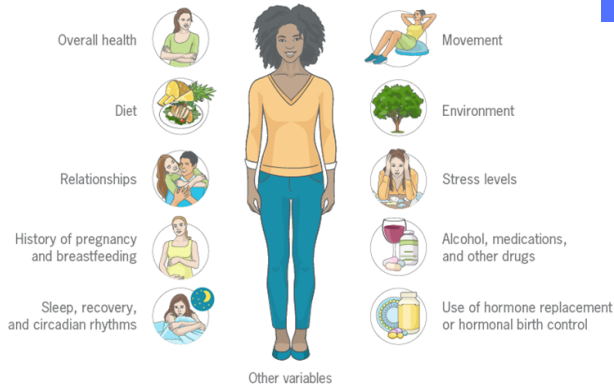


# NUTRITION & MENOPAUSE

*Achieve Health, Strength and Wellness through Diet and Exercise*



## MANY LIFESTYLE FACTORS AFFECT OUR HORMONES



## THE IMPACT OF MENOPAUSE

*Due to lowering hormone levels and the natural aging process, Many women find it harder to keep extra pounds off in their 40s and 50s. Often women lose muscle and gain fat, mainly in the belly area. Lifestyle factors come into play, too – menopausal women tend to be less active and eat more calories than they need.*

## SLEEP

## FOOD FOR GASTROINTESTINAL CHANGES

*Meet your calcium needs with:*

- lactose-free milk*
- cottage cheese*
- yogurt*

*Drinking six to eight 8-oz glasses of water daily and eating at least 25 g per day of fiber, those that are less gassy, such as chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, strawberries, and baked potatoes with the skin on vs. choosing inulin (commonly found in fiber supplements) or whole wheat fibers, which can cause more GI distress.*

*Water helps move fiber through your system, keeps you hydrated and may mitigate hot flashes. Remember that fruits and vegetables are loaded with water, and health-boosting nutrients, too.*

Sleep loss interrupts appetite regulation by elevating levels of the hunger hormone ghrelin and decreasing the satiety hormone leptin, which can raise the risk of weight gain. Some tips to improve sleep quality and include refraining from drinking caffeinated beverages four to six hours before bedtime and alcohol within three hours of bedtime, practicing a regular sleep routine, eating a light evening meal, exercising early in the day or at least three hours before bedtime, and going to bed only when tired.

## SOY FOR ISOFLAVONES!

*20 g to 60 g per day of soy protein decreases the frequency and severity of hot flashes. Soy flour, soy beans, and soy protein provide specific isoflavones. Tempeh, miso, and tofu also are good sources. Isoflavones are found in legumes other than soy, and in foods like flaxseed, green tea, broccoli, and whole grains. Other phytoestrogens can be found in a wide variety of foods, including grapes and wine, citrus fruits and juices, leafy greens, onions, tomatoes, chocolate, apples, berries, and capsicum peppers.*

# CALCIUM & VITAMIN D

Another concern for women is the depletion of bone density, which often occurs after menopause when the ovaries stop producing estrogen.


Women can lose as much as 20% of their bone density five to seven years after menopause. The best case scenario, experts say, is for women to enter menopause with sufficient bone density to minimize subsequent losses. After age 50, the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) for calcium climbs to **1,200 mg/day**.



# LEAN BODY MASS & PROTEIN

After age 40, women lose about 1% of their lean body mass per year if they're inactive. All types of exercise are important to maintain and build muscle, from cardio and strength training to yoga.

As much as 25 to 30 g of protein is needed at each meal to optimally stimulate muscle-protein synthesis.

FOOD	SHOPPING TIPS
Canned/packaged seafood, poultry	Look for pouches or pop-top cans. Choose a variety of salmon, tuna, or chicken.
Pre-cooked packaged meats	Look for pre-cooked and ready-to-eat meat. Read labels to ensure you can heat in microwave. Choose lean meats when possible, such as rotisserie chicken.
Deli meats	Look for fresh, unprocessed cuts of nitrite-free, lower-sodium meats.
Chilled seafood	Look for pre-cooked and ready-to-eat options; read the label to ensure seafood doesn't need to be cooked.
Eggs 	Look for pre-cooked hard-boiled eggs, or fresh eggs, egg whites, and egg substitute you can cook.
Beans/lentils	Look for low-sodium legumes in cans or microwavable pouches.
Nuts	Look for options that are natural or lightly salted/seasoned and lower in added sugars.
Nut butter	Look for nut butters whose ingredients are limited to nuts; avoid added sugars.

Foods such as **vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products and lean protein foods** such as beans and lentils contain the nutrients you need and should make up the majority of your meals and snacks. If you drink alcohol, **limit yourself to one drink a day**. If you suffer from hot flashes, try **cutting back on caffeine and spicy foods**, which could trigger hot flashes in some people. Watch your **sodium intake** and aim to **cook most of your meals at home** rather than eating out. Other beneficial behaviors to improve nutrition include **practicing mindful eating** and **controlling portions**. While women in midlife face many challenges, such as hormonal changes that lead to weight gain, loss of bone and muscle mass, and digestive issues, there's much we can do, with the help of Dietitians like myself, to begin a healthful transition into the postmenopausal years. Focusing on evenly distributing protein among meals, eating nutrient-dense foods, consuming fewer calories because of reduced energy needs, getting adequate amounts of vitamin D and calcium, and engaging in physical activity such as aerobic and strength training exercise will help burn unwanted fat, build muscle and bone, and prevent metabolic disease.