

Menopause

Patient Information

Note: This presentation contains links to websites, click on blue underlined text to access



Menopause

- When a woman has not had a period for 12 months
- Usually between the ages of 45 and 55 years
- Average age in UK is 51 years
- 1 in 100 women will be under 40 years
- 1 in 1000 women will be under 30 years
- 1 in 10000 women will be under 20 years
- Menopause can also follow surgery (hysterectomy) or cancer treatments



Perimenopause



When a woman is still having periods but experiences symptoms because of declining hormone levels (oestrogen)

The perimenopause can start 5-10 years before periods stop

Symptoms can start gradually and are multiple, making it difficult to diagnose

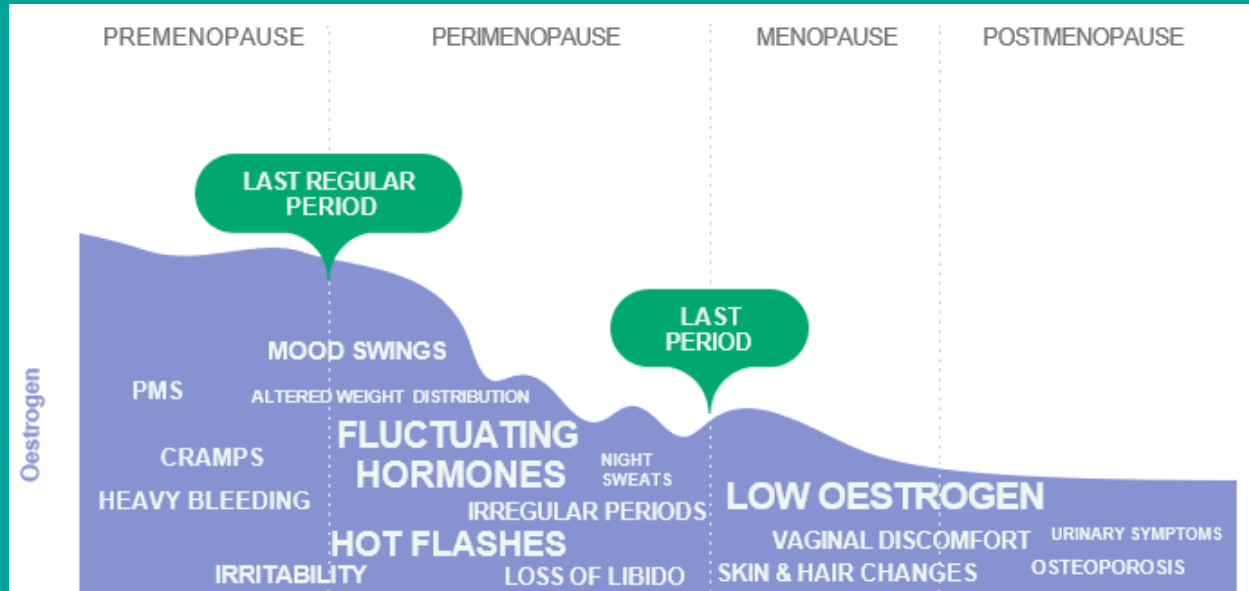
Levels of hormones and therefore symptoms can fluctuate during this time

34 Menopause Symptoms



1. Mood Swings
2. Brain Fog
3. Lack of Motivation
4. Difficulty in Focusing
5. Headaches
6. Night Sweats
7. Hot Flashes
8. Breast Tenderness
9. Digestive Problems
10. Quick Weight Gain
11. Loss of Libido
12. Vaginal Dryness
13. Periods Stop
14. Osteoporosis
15. Joint Stiffness
16. Muscle Aches
17. Decreased Confidence

18. Hair Thins
19. Dry Skin
20. Acne
21. Dry Eyes
22. Wrinkles
23. Dry Mouth
24. Bloating
25. Fatigue
26. Insomnia
27. Anxiety
28. Urinary Pain
29. Clammy Feeling
30. Burning Mouth
31. Facial Hair
32. Dizziness
33. Lack of Focus
34. Depression



What Women Say

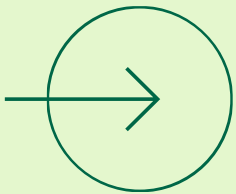


- "I feel I have lost part of myself"
- "The joy has gone"
- "I can forget the name of somebody I have known for years"

- "I feel like I have spiders crawling all over me"
- "I have never been anxious but I now struggle to leave the house"

- "I have to get up several times at night to change the sheets"
- "I lie awake at night worrying and over thinking"

Management options



01

Lifestyle measures

Diet, caffeine, alcohol, exercise/movement, sleep, smoking, mental health

02

Topical vaginal oestrogen

Pessaries, creams

03

CBT

Cognitive behavioral therapy

04

Medication

Non hormonal medication for flushes/mood

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) tablets, gels, sprays, patches, Mirena coil



Oestrogen

To reduce symptoms and improve future health

Testosterone

For some women when libido is low



Benefits

For the majority of women, benefits outweigh risks

To heart, bones and pelvic health (possibly brain)

Risks

Small increased risk of breast cancer, less than being overweight or drinking 14units of alcohol a week



Progestogen

To protect the womb

Looking after you...



- [HRT pre-payment](#) certificate available
- Book your cervical smear and attend your mammogram
- Complete the bowel screening test
- Take up STI / HIV screening
- Attend health checks if offered
- Smoking cessation service



Diet and Menopause

Why is diet & nutrition important in menopause?

- Many symptoms of perimenopause and menopause including weight gain, hot flushes, night sweats, joint pains, mental health changes.
- Perimenopause and menopause increases the risk of several chronic health conditions, for example; weight, heart conditions, diabetes, blood pressure and osteoporosis.
- Improving diet and nutrition can increase the chances of **improving symptoms** and reduce chronic health conditions in some people.

Weight Management

One of the most common conditions associated with perimenopause or menopause is weight:

- *Oestrogen levels reduce causing fat to increase
- *Metabolism slows down
- *Hunger is affected

What is the **scientific evidence** for 'long term' weight loss in menopause?

Many different 'fad diets' & popular diets on social media

- ✓ Use a registered Dietitian
- ✓ Use a registered nutritionist
- ✓ Science based information

No long-term evidence of popular diets for menopause e.g. keto / Time Restricted Eating / Fasting

Majority regain weight

Low Calorie Diets not recommended especially lower than 1200 calories

Why?

Nutrient deficiencies have been found & relapse is very common.

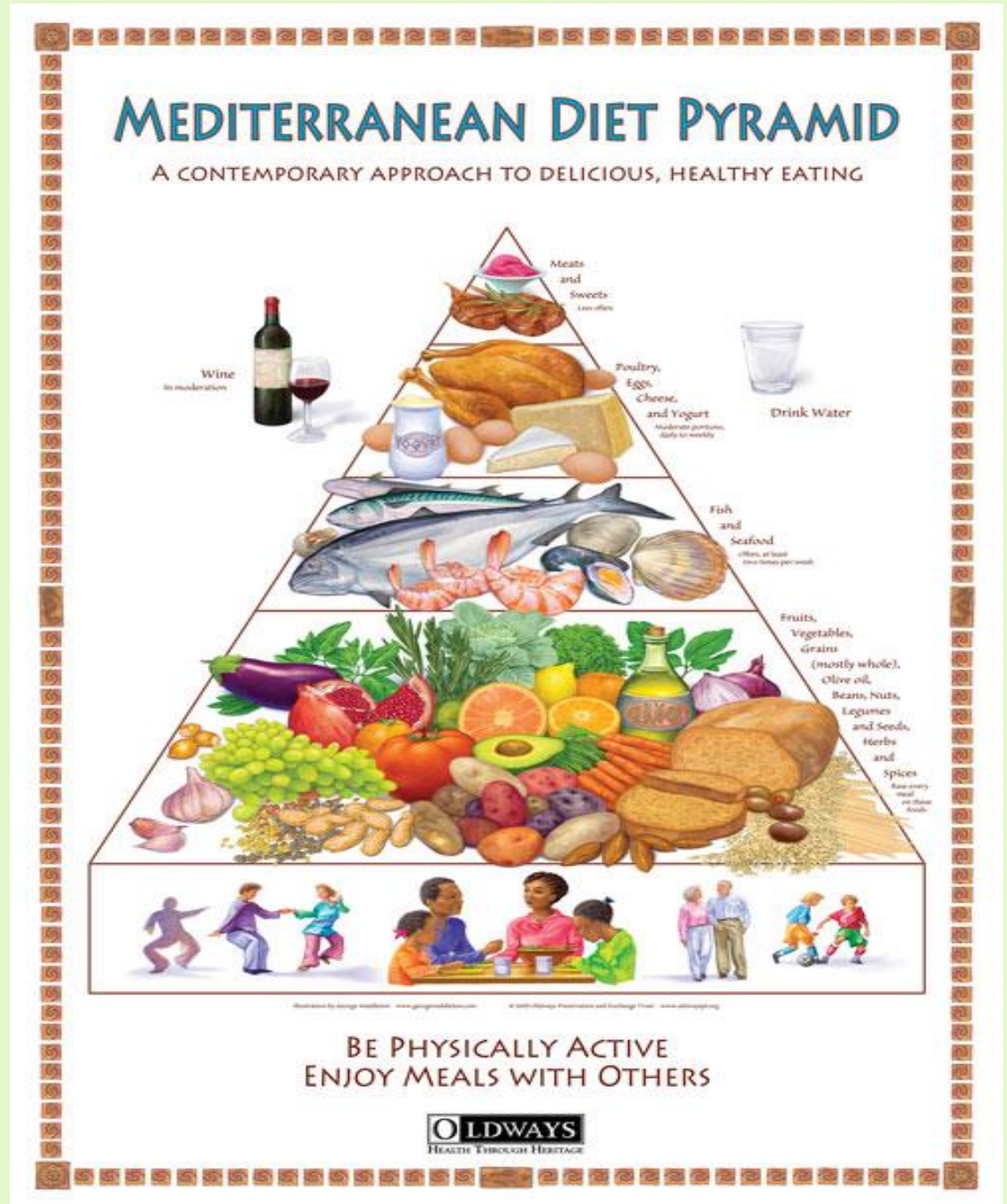


Long term weight management

- Balanced Healthy eating principles with strength training does have evidence (over 2-4 years).
- Mediterranean Diet - evidence that this diet can positively affect weight management, blood sugar control, cardiovascular disease, blood pressure & other symptoms.
 - It is anti-inflammatory & high antioxidants.
 - Recommended if can be adapted and sustained

The Mediterranean Diet:

- **High** intake (daily) to include:
 - vegetables & fruits
 - Legumes, beans, nuts, seeds & herbs
 - Cereals & grains (mostly whole)
 - Healthy unsaturated fats such as olive oil (& avocado).
 - Fish & seafood (2/week).
- **Moderate** intakes of dairy, eggs & occ poultry
- **Low** intakes of red meat
- Occasional/rare sweets

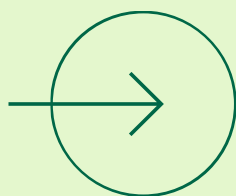


Weight management behaviours to aim for:

- Be mindful of eating and *why* you are eating
- Eat slowly, chew slowly
- Regular 'balanced' meals through day
- Reducing unplanned unhealthy/processed foods/snacks
- Stop or reduce sugar & sugar drinks
- Increase vegetables, fruit and fibre overall
- Increased protein or ¼ plate each meal (& plant proteins)
- [British Nutrition Foundation – Protein in the diet](#)
- If appropriate, smaller portions – [check your portion size](#)
 - Special care with portions of white refined carbohydrates e.g. white bread
- **Most important find what works for you from the evidence and what you can maintain.**
- Activity build in anyway can sustain & include weight bearing exercise for muscle mass



Ideal day



01 Breakfast

- x2 eggs
 - Wholegrain toast (1-2) & 1-2 veg e.g. spinach / mushrooms
- OR
- Plain/Greek yogurt, large wholegrain oats/granola, berries, nuts /seeds

02 Lunch

- Chickpea / tuna salad with olive oil & avocado & a grain & fruit
- OR
- Bean & vegetable soup & whole grain bread & fruit

03 Dinner

- Fish / chicken, vegetables 2 portions (soya beans) & grain
- Fruit & yogurt

04 Snacks

- If required: 1 handful (30g) nuts and /or piece fruit
- Fruit / seeds

Common symptom: Hot sweats/night sweats



What can worsen?

- Being overweight, alcohol, caffeine, spicy foods.
- High sugar diets

What can help?

- If overweight -> weight loss
- Mediterranean style diet or more plant based, low fat
- *Trial* including some phytoestrogens (e.g. soy-beans/soy products).
- Aim for 1- 2 servings of phytoestrogen-rich foods per day, 1 serving = 80g soya/edamame beans or 100g tofu or tempeh or 250ml soya milk or 200ml Greek-style soya yogurt. Also, pulses, beans, flaxseeds etc.

Symptoms: Sleep

What helps?

- Regular meal pattern day: 2-3 hours no eating prior to bed
- Quality of diet
- Some evidence Magnesium *may* help
- Sleep hygiene



What worsens sleep?



Mental health, brain fog & concentration



Recommend:

- Regular meal pattern
- Hydration – fluids/water ensure achieving 8 glasses/day
- Mediterranean Style Diet – tweaked with more plants, berries & phytoestrogens
- Omega-3 fats
 - Oily fish ideally 1 week or more/plant-based alternatives walnuts, seeds, or Supplement
 - (possible B vitamins)

Heart Health



What Helps?

- Managing risk factors e.g.
 - High cholesterol
 - High blood pressure
 - Pre-diabetes
- Principles of healthy eating / mediterranean diet & unsaturated fats (olive oil, avocado, nuts)
- A diet rich in fruit and vegetables, wholegrains
- Oily fish or alternative omega-3 sources (walnuts, linseeds etc).

Limit:

- Saturated fat & ultra-processed foods high fat foods
- Sugar & salt.



Osteoporosis

At higher risk during perimenopause and menopause

Recommendations:

- Ensure sufficient protein
- Vitamin D 10micrograms
- Calcium sufficient intake e.g. dairy or fortified non-dairy or supplement
- Reduce/stop alcohol
- Physical Activity & weight bearing exercises

Access the [calcium calculator](#)



Supplements in menopause:

- **Not regulated industry / heavily marketed**
- ✓ **Maximise diet first, only need supplements if lacking in diet**
- ✓ **Recommend:**
 - Vitamin D (10-25mcg or 400-1000 units)
 - Possibly Magnesium if difficulty sleeping/ anxiety/tiredness/fatigue - max dose 300-400mg
 - Correct any nutrient deficiencies
 - [British Nutrition Foundation – Managing menopause with diet](#)

Authorized health claims for different nutrients related to menopausal health

Nutrient	Menopausal-related health benefit	Food sources
Vitamin B6	Supports the regulation of hormonal activity	Meat, poultry, fish, fortified breakfast cereals, egg yolk, yeast extract, soya beans, sesame seeds, some fruit and vegetables (such as banana, avocado and green pepper)
Calcium and vitamin D	Help reduce the loss of bone mineral density in postmenopausal women. Low bone mineral density is a risk factor for osteoporotic bone fractures.	<p>Calcium: Milk, cheese, yogurt, fromage frais, some green leafy vegetables (such as kale), calcium-fortified dairy alternatives, canned fish (where soft bones are eaten) and breads</p> <hr/> <p>Vitamin D: Oily fish, eggs, fortified breakfast cereals and fat spreads</p>
Magnesium	Contributes to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue	Nuts and seeds (such as Brazil nuts and sunflower seeds), wholegrain breakfast cereals, wholegrain and seeded breads, brown rice and quinoa
Pantothenic Acid (Vitamin B5)	Contributes to normal mental performance	Wholegrains, green vegetables, tomatoes, potatoes and dairy
Zinc	Helps contribute to the maintenance of skin, hair and nails	Meat, poultry, cheese, some shellfish (such as crab, cockles and mussels), nuts and seeds (such as pumpkin seeds and pine nuts), wholegrain breakfast cereals and wholegrain and seeded breads
Thiamine (vitamin B1)	Contributes to normal heart function	Bread, fortified breakfast cereals, nuts and seeds, meat (especially pork), beans and peas

Herbal Supplements

Overall recommendations currently suggest there is insufficient evidence to recommend for menopause...

- ✓ Some people may benefit but unknown.
- ✓ If choose to take: look for Traditional Herbal Registration stamp or use Registered Herbalist.

Examples are:

Red Clover - (isoflavone)

- × Not recommended for history of breast cancer

Black Cohosh – small evidence for some studies for hot flushes / night sweats but inconclusive.

Might help some.

- × Associated with major adverse effects.
- × DO NOT TAKE IF on tamoxifen.

St John's Wort – Some effect on hot flushes / night sweats & mental health).

- × Not recommended in breast cancer as due to unknown effects of doses.

Further Information

Menopause Information

- [Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists Patient Information](#)
- [Cycle of change – understanding menopause](#)
- [NHS Menopause](#)

Dietary Advice

- [Nutrition in Menopause \(Women's Health Concern\)](#)
- [The Association of UK Dietitians – Food Fact Sheet](#)
- [Heart UK – Guide to Eating Well – During the Menopause](#)
- [British Nutrition Foundation – Nutrition and the Menopause](#)
- [British Nutrition Foundation – Managing menopause with diet](#)
- [Oldways – Cultural Food Traditions](#)
- [Heart UK – The Mediterranean Diet](#)

Recipe Idea's

- [BBC Good Food](#)
- [Healthy living - HEART UK](#)

Books

[Food for Menopause – Dr Linda Patel](#)

Other support available:

- **Social Prescribing:** Social prescribing is an innovative approach where healthcare professionals refer patients to non-clinical services to improve their well-being. **For women experiencing menopause, social prescribing can be particularly beneficial.** It includes activities like exercise classes, art therapy, and support groups, which can help manage symptoms and improve overall quality of life. Would you like to know more about specific activities or programs available through social prescribing for menopause?

Contact **ONside** on 01905 27525 to self-refer to your surgery social prescriber.

- **Wellbeing Coaching:** A wellbeing coach can be incredibly supportive during menopause, offering personalised guidance and strategies to help manage symptoms and improve overall well-being. Here are some keyways a wellbeing coach can assist:
 - **Emotional Support:** Menopause can bring about a range of emotions, from anxiety to mood swings. A coach provides a safe space to discuss these feelings and helps develop coping strategies.
 - **Goal Setting:** Whether it's health-related goals or personal aspirations, a coach can help you set and achieve these objectives, providing motivation and accountability along the way.
 - **Navigating Life Transitions:** Menopause often coincides with other significant life changes. A coach can help you navigate these transitions, whether they involve career shifts, children leaving home, or other personal developments

Contact **ONside** on 01905 27525 to self-refer to your wellbeing coach.