



The *Menopause Toolkit*

These easy to implement tools can help you live better and be stronger

M E N O P A U S E

T O O L K I T

Doctor

Disclaimer

The information contained in this Menopause Tool Kit Workbook is for educational and informational purposes only. It is intended to be a self-help tool for your own use and does not constitute medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

Not Medical Advice

I am not a doctor, nurse, or medical professional. The content in this workbook is based on personal research, experiences, and my training with the Integrative Women's Health Institute as well as my 14 years as a wellness practitioner and general knowledge regarding menopause, and it is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

Consult Your Physician

Always consult a doctor for medical conditions or before starting a new health regimen, and never ignore professional advice based on this workbook.

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About Me

I've been a full time Massage Therapist & Esthetician for more than 14 years now, focusing on Holistic Wellness and as my practice evolved, I had more and more women talking about their symptoms of menopause and looking for advice on what to do, where to go & what questions to ask once they got there... After having gone through my own Menopause journey, starting in 2008, I was well versed in what I had learned along the way and I was happy to help anyone who needed my insight. So, early in 2026, I enrolled in the nationally accredited Integrative Women's Health Institute to become credentialed in Helping Women manage this new territory.

And, I'm so glad you're here. As a Coach, I'm here to support YOU through every phase of menopause with compassion, clarity, and practical tools. This workbook was created to help you better understand your body, track what's changing, and feel more confident navigating this transition. You don't have to figure this out alone — I'm here to help guide you every step of the way.

Robbin Gregory

A scenic view of a forest path with evergreen trees and mountains in the background. The path is dirt and rocky, with a large log lying on the left. The trees are lush green, and the mountains in the distance are partially covered in snow or light-colored rock. The sky is clear and blue.

WELCOME TO A

New Chapter of Life

Menopause is a natural and transformative phase in every woman's life. While it's often surrounded by myths and misconceptions, it's also an opportunity to embrace new beginnings, focus on self-care, and rediscover yourself. Whether you're approaching menopause, experiencing symptoms, or want to prepare for the journey ahead, this guide is here to empower you with knowledge, tools, and tips.

In this workbook, we'll explore everything from understanding the hormonal changes your body is going through to managing symptoms and thriving in all areas of your life. Think of this guide as your supportive companion—a mix of science-backed insights, practical advice, and encouragement to help you navigate menopause with confidence and grace.

This isn't just about surviving menopause; it's about thriving and embracing this stage as an integral part of your journey as a woman.

Let's dive in together!

Read This First

Start Here:

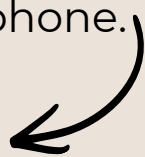
On the next page you will find a “Symptoms Tracker”. Go ahead and fill it out. There is another identical one at the end of the workbook for you to do each month or as often as you want to compare your progress.

There is also a Symptoms Checklist under the “finding the Right Doctor” section of this workbook. This one is meant for you to print off and take with you when you have an appointment with your doctor.

Make sure and join our little Facebook group, “Menopause Mentor” for even more helpful tools and information. THERE IS NO “AI” bots in this group, just real participants.



Scan the QR code with the camera on your phone.



- 1.) open your phone, focus camera on the box
- 2.) when a yellow tag appears, touch that and it will take you to the facebook group.

All the Trackers and notes sections are “fillable” on your device. Otherwise feel free to print the workbook!



Symptoms Tracker

Your Menopause Snapshot: Today's Date _____

A self-reflection to help you pause, check in, and gain clarity before diving deeper.

1. Circle how much each symptom is affecting you right now.
(1 = mild / barely noticeable, 5 = severe / significantly impacts your day)

Symptoms	Very Mild	Mild	Moderate	affects my well being	Difficult to Function
Hot flashes	1	2	3	4	5
Night sweats	1	2	3	4	5
Mood swings	1	2	3	4	5
Fatigue	1	2	3	4	5
Brain fog	1	2	3	4	5
Sleep disturbances	1	2	3	4	5
Anxiety/irritability	1	2	3	4	5
Libido changes	1	2	3	4	5
Gut Health	1	2	3	4	5

Top Symptom Check-In

What's bothering you the most right now? This helps you notice patterns and set priorities.

Surgical Onset Menopause

It's helpful to distinguish between the **type of surgery** and the **hormonal outcome**. While a hysterectomy stops your periods, the onset of menopause depends entirely on what happens to your ovaries.

1. Surgical Menopause (The "Sudden" Shift)

This occurs if your **ovaries are removed** (oophorectomy) at the same time as your uterus.

- **Instant Onset:** Menopause begins the moment you wake up from surgery, regardless of your age.
- **Intensity:** Because hormone levels (estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone) plummet instantly rather than declining over years, symptoms like hot flashes and mood swings are often significantly more severe than in natural menopause.
- **Health Impact:** Sudden loss of estrogen at a younger age increases long-term risks for bone loss (osteoporosis) and cardiovascular disease if not managed.

2. Hysterectomy with Ovaries Intact

If you have a **total** (uterus and cervix removed) or **partial** (only the upper uterus removed) hysterectomy but keep your ovaries, you do not enter menopause immediately.

- **No "Period Clue":** Since the uterus is gone, you won't have the typical sign of "skipping periods" to tell you when perimenopause starts. You have to track other symptoms like sleep changes or night sweats instead.
- **Early Ovarian Failure:** Even if the ovaries stay, the surgery can disrupt their blood supply. On average, women who keep their ovaries after a hysterectomy still enter menopause **about 4 years earlier** than they otherwise would have.
- National Institutes of Health

3. The "Hidden" Gut & Pelvic Connection

Whether partial or total, the physical removal of the uterus can impact your gut health:

- **Bowel Changes:** The pelvic region must "re-settle" after the uterus is removed, which can lead to temporary constipation or difficulty with bowel movements.
- **Pelvic Support:** Reduced support for the pelvic floor can sometimes affect how effectively your digestive tract moves waste.



Introduction to Menopause

WHAT IS MENOPAUSE?

Menopause marks the end of a woman's menstrual cycles. It is officially diagnosed when you've gone 12 months without a menstrual period. This transition is a normal part of aging and usually occurs between the ages of 45 and 55, although some women experience it earlier or later. As stated on the last page, you may have entered menopause through surgical intervention & the following Introduction is geared towards women who have entered through the natural biological progression. Either way, the tools in this workbook will help you navigate the process.

THE THREE STAGES OF MENOPAUSE

PERIMENOPAUSE

This is the transition phase leading up to menopause

- and can last several years.

Symptoms such as irregular periods, hot flashes, and mood changes often begin during this stage.

- Hormonal fluctuations are at their peak here.

MENOPAUSE

The moment when 12 consecutive months have

- passed without a period. Hormone levels (especially estrogen and progesterone)
- significantly decline.

POSTMENOPAUSE

The stage after menopause, lasting the rest of your life.

- Symptoms may ease for some women, but the lower
- hormone levels can lead to long-term health considerations like bone density loss, torn ligaments and systemic, chronic inflammation

AVERAGE AGE AND DURATION

The average age for menopause is 51, but it can occur anywhere between the late 40s and early 50s.

Perimenopause can last 4–10 years, starting as early as age 35, while postmenopause is lifelong.

WHY UNDERSTANDING MENOPAUSE MATTERS

Knowing what to expect can help you make informed decisions about your health and well-being. Menopause is not something to fear but to embrace as a natural part of life. With the right information and strategies, you can navigate it with confidence and find balance and vitality during this phase.



Hormonal Changes Explained

THE ROLE OF HORMONES DURING MENOPAUSE

Menopause brings significant hormonal changes, and understanding these shifts is key to managing the symptoms effectively. Three main hormones play a crucial role:

ESTROGEN

- Often referred to as the “key” hormone of menopause.
- Regulates the menstrual cycle, bone density, skin elasticity, and mood. As estrogen levels drop, symptoms like hot flashes, vaginal dryness, and mood swings often appear.

PROGESTERONE

- Works alongside estrogen during the menstrual cycle.
- Declining progesterone can lead to irregular periods and may affect sleep and anxiety levels.

TESTOSTERONE

- Known as the “male hormone,” but women produce small amounts too.
- Plays a role in libido, muscle mass, and energy levels.
- A decline in testosterone can contribute to reduced sex drive and fatigue.

HOW HORMONAL FLUCTUATIONS AFFECT THE BODY

PHYSICAL CHANGES

- **Hot Flashes & Night Sweats:** Sudden heat surges caused by declining estrogen affecting the hypothalamus (the body’s temperature regulator).
- **Skin & Hair:** Skin may become drier, and hair can thin due to reduced collagen production.
- **Weight Gain:** Hormonal shifts can slow metabolism, making it easier to gain weight, particularly around the abdomen.

EMOTIONAL IMPACT

- **Mood Swings:** Estrogen influences serotonin levels, affecting mood. Sudden drops can cause irritability, sadness, or even anxiety.
- **Cognitive Effects:** Many women report “brain fog,” forgetfulness, or difficulty concentrating, linked to hormonal imbalances.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

- Vaginal dryness and reduced elasticity are common, making intimacy uncomfortable.
- Lower testosterone can decrease libido.



THE TIMELINE OF HORMONAL CHANGES

EARLY PERIMENOPAUSE

Estrogen and progesterone begin to fluctuate, causing irregular cycles, heavy periods, hot flashes, heart palpitations, and/or joint pain (As early as 35 years old)

LATE PERIMENOPAUSE

Estrogen levels drop more significantly, often triggering more pronounced symptoms.

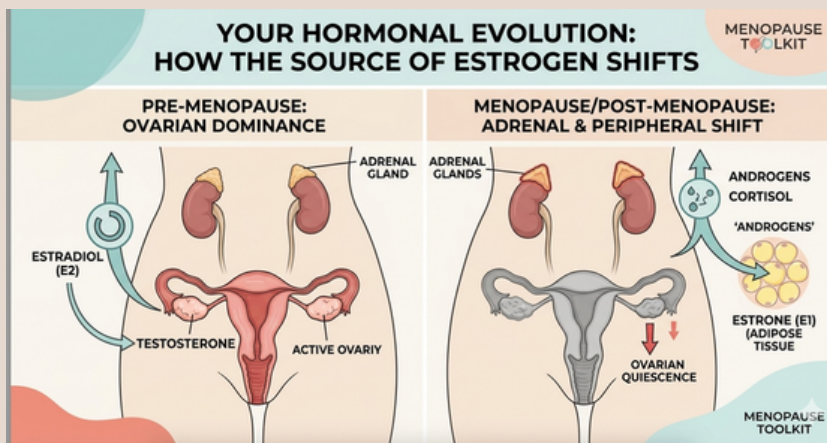
POSTMENOPAUSE

Estrogen and progesterone remain consistently low, requiring attention to long-term health concerns like bone density. (As early as 45 years old)

WHY THESE CHANGES HAPPEN

Menopause is the body's natural way of ceasing reproduction. The ovaries gradually reduce hormone production as they transition out of their reproductive role. While the changes may feel disruptive, they're part of a biological process that every woman experiences differently.

As women enter perimenopause and eventually menopause, the body transitions from producing high levels of estrogen (specifically estradiol) in the ovaries to a state where hormone production is driven primarily by peripheral tissues, leading to a permanent decline in sex hormone levels. Instead of the ovaries, the adrenal glands take over as the main source of androgens, which are then converted into a weaker form of estrogen, called estrone, primarily within adipose tissue (fat cells) and other organs. This shift from ovarian-driven to peripheral-driven hormone production means lower overall estrogen levels, which can impact bone density, heart health, and metabolism. Although reproductive hormone levels drop, the body continues to produce other crucial hormones, such as thyroid hormones, cortisol, and insulin, which are managed by the hypothalamus and pituitary gland to maintain balance. While this transition can cause symptoms like hot flashes, brain fog, and weight changes, the body adjusts by adopting this peripheral, fat-driven hormone production to support continued health in the postmenopausal years.



WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?

While you can't stop hormonal changes, you can manage their impact with a combination of:

✔ LIFESTYLE ADJUSTMENTS

Exercise, a balanced diet, and stress management.

✔ NATURAL REMEDIES

Herbal supplements and mindfulness practices.

✔ MEDICAL SUPPORT

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) or other medical treatments if symptoms are significant. More doctors are thankfully getting on board with these interventions, but don't be surprised if your provider dismisses your symptoms. Find another provider who specializes in hormones.

Nervous System Regulation

Why Nervous System Regulation Matters

When your nervous system is dysregulated, it can lead to a cascade of symptoms like poor sleep, emotional swings, foggy thinking, and even long-term impacts on heart and cognitive health. It truly is the very first step in managing menopause. The good news is that regulation is possible. There are simple practices that help the body return to harmony and support you in feeling grounded and at ease.

Practices to Support Nervous System Balance

1. **Breathwork:** Try gentle breathwork like 4-6 breathing. Inhale for 4 counts and exhale for 6. This slows the heart rate and signals safety to the brain.
2. **Mindfulness and Meditation:** A few minutes of quiet time each day can reduce anxiety, improve focus, and restore calm. Mindfulness also strengthens the vagus nerve and builds inner resilience.
3. **Movement and Exercise:** Regular movement—especially walking, yoga, or strength training—supports mood, sleep, and nervous system tone. It also helps the body process hormonal shifts more effectively.
4. **Prioritize Sleep:** Disrupted sleep is common in perimenopause. Support your rest by keeping a cool, dark room, avoiding screens before bed, and creating a calming evening ritual.
5. **Avoid Known Triggers:** Caffeine, alcohol, spicy foods and stress can worsen symptoms. Tracking patterns and adjusting habits can bring significant relief.
6. **Nourish Your Body:** Focus on whole, anti-inflammatory foods and stay hydrated. Omega-3s, magnesium, and B vitamins support both the nervous system and hormone balance.

When to Consider Medical or Hormonal Support

For some women, lifestyle practices are not enough. Menopausal Hormone Therapy (MHT) or HRT- Hormone Replacement Therapy remains the most effective treatment for moderate to severe hot flashes, mood fluctuations, and sleep issues. There are also non-hormonal therapies for those who cannot or prefer not to take hormones. For personalized guidance, consult a “menopause-informed healthcare provider”.

Trust your body's wisdom—you are evolving, not breaking down. This transition is an invitation to listen deeper. As you nurture your nervous system with gentleness and curiosity, you will find you can navigate this change with more ease and strength. You deserve to feel supported, informed, and truly empowered every step of the way!



Nervous System Regulation & Boundaries

In menopause, setting boundaries is not just a social skill—it's a biological necessity for protecting your nervous system. When you lack boundaries, your body stays on a constant state of alert, interpreting every external demand or "energy leak" as a threat. This keeps you trapped in a loop of chronic stress that amplifies menopausal symptoms like hot flashes, anxiety, and insomnia.

How Boundaries Regulate Your Nervous System

- **Shifting Out of Survival Mode:** Boundaries stop chronic stress at the source, helping your body shift from a "fight, flight, or freeze" state back to a grounded state of rest.
- **Creating Emotional Safety:** Setting clear limits tells your internal system that you are looking out for its well-being. This builds the self-trust necessary for your nervous system to relax.
- **Reducing Emotional Overload:** When you absorb the emotions and responsibilities of others, your system becomes overwhelmed. Boundaries help you distinguish your own feelings from those of others, allowing your body to stop fighting "battles that aren't yours".
- **Conserving Limited Energy:** Hormonal shifts in perimenopause and menopause can significantly reduce your emotional and physical bandwidth. Boundaries protect your energy, ensuring you don't reach a point of complete exhaustion or burnout.

Practical Boundaries:

- **Time Boundaries:** Reserve a non-negotiable "me time" block for rest or hobbies and inform others you won't be responding during this time.
- **Digital Boundaries:** Decide not to respond to work emails or group texts after a certain hour. Constant digital "dings" keep your threat system active.
- **Emotional Boundaries:** Limit time with people who drain your energy or dismiss your feelings. It's okay to distance yourself from relationships that consistently dysregulate you.
- **Physical Boundaries:** Listen to your body and say "no" to activities that are physically taxing. This includes being clear with partners about changes in your physical needs and comfort levels.

Setting a boundary may cause temporary anxiety as your body adjusts to new signals of safety, but it is the first step toward moving from reaction to true regulation.





Sleep

These are easy to implement tools that can help you sleep better, think clearer & be stronger

Sleep and Menopause

Sleep plays a vital role in overall health and well-being, yet menopause often brings with it a host of

challenges that can disrupt restful nights. From night sweats to anxiety, understanding these issues and finding strategies to improve sleep quality can make a significant difference.

HOW MENOPAUSE AFFECTS SLEEP

Menopausal women often experience unique sleep disturbances due to hormonal changes, including fluctuations in estrogen and progesterone. These hormones regulate body temperature, mood, and sleep cycles, so their decline can lead to:



- **Night Sweats:** Sudden and intense hot flashes during the night can wake you up and make it difficult to fall back asleep.
- **Insomnia:** Trouble falling or staying asleep is a common complaint during menopause.
- **Restless Sleep:** Hormonal shifts can reduce the time spent in deep, restorative sleep, leaving you feeling tired even after a full night in bed.
- **Increased Anxiety or Stress:** Emotional changes can make it harder to wind down at the end of the day.
- **Frequent Waking:** You may wake up multiple times due to discomfort, bathroom trips, or vivid dreams.

TIPS FOR IMPROVING SLEEP QUALITY DURING MENOPAUSE

- **Create a Sleep-Friendly Environment:**
 - Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet. Use blackout curtains and white noise machines if necessary.
 - Invest in breathable, moisture-wicking bedding to manage night sweats.
 - Consider cooling pads or a fan near your bed for added comfort.
- **Establish a Relaxing Nighttime Routine:**
 - Follow a consistent bedtime and wake-up time, even on weekends.
 - Wind down with calming activities like reading, journaling, or meditation before bed.
 - Avoid stimulating activities like watching TV or using your phone in the hour before sleep.
- **Be Mindful of Your Diet:**
 - Avoid caffeine and heavy meals in the late afternoon and evening.
 - Opt for a light snack before bed if you're hungry—try a banana or a handful of nuts, which promote sleep.
- **Exercise Regularly:**
 - Engage in physical activity earlier in the day to tire your body and improve sleep quality.
 - Avoid intense workouts within three hours of bedtime, as they can be stimulating.
- **Manage Stress and Anxiety:**
 - Incorporate relaxation techniques like deep breathing, yoga, or progressive muscle relaxation into your day.
 - Keep a gratitude journal to focus on positive aspects of your life, which can reduce bedtime worries.





Menopause can bring about numerous changes, including disruptions in sleep patterns. Insomnia is a common issue, but with the right strategies, you can improve your sleep quality.

This list provides practical tips to help you combat menopause-related insomnia.

✔ Establish a Consistent Sleep Routine

Regular sleep schedules help regulate your body's internal clock.

- **Set a Regular Bedtime and Wake Time:** Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends.
- **Create a Pre-Sleep Ritual:** Develop a calming routine before bed, such as reading a book, taking a warm bath, or practising relaxation exercises.

✔ Create a Sleep-Conducive Environment

A comfortable and quiet sleep environment can significantly improve sleep quality.

- **Keep Your Bedroom Cool:** Aim for a temperature between 60-67°F (15-19°C).
- **Darken Your Room:** Use blackout curtains or an eye mask to block out light.
- **Reduce Noise:** Use earplugs or a white noise machine to minimise disruptive sounds.
- **Invest in a Comfortable Mattress and Pillows:** Ensure your bedding is comfortable and supports a good night's sleep.

✔ Manage Stress and Anxiety

Stress and anxiety can exacerbate insomnia and disrupt sleep patterns.

- **Practice Relaxation Techniques:** Try deep breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation, or guided imagery.
- **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Incorporate mindfulness practices or meditation into your daily routine to reduce stress.
- **Journaling:** Write down your thoughts and worries before bed to clear your mind. This is often referred to as a "Brain Dump"!

✔ Watch What You Eat and Drink

Certain foods and beverages can impact your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep.

- **Limit Caffeine and Alcohol:** Avoid having caffeine and alcohol at least 4-6 hours before bedtime.
- **Avoid Heavy Meals Before Bed:** Try to finish eating at least 2-3 hours before going to bed.
- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink enough water during the day, but limit fluid intake close to bedtime to prevent nighttime trips to the bathroom.
- **Include Protein and Complex Carbohydrates in Your Evening Meal:** These nutrients can help promote better sleep by maintaining steady blood sugar levels and providing calming effects. Consider meals like grilled chicken with quinoa, or salmon with brown rice and vegetables.



✔ Incorporate Physical Activity

Regular exercise can help regulate your sleep patterns and improve overall sleep quality.

- **Exercise Regularly:** Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days of the week.
- **Timing Matters:** Avoid vigorous exercise within 2-3 hours of bedtime as it may interfere with your ability to fall asleep.

✔ Consider Natural Sleep Aids

Certain natural remedies can help with relaxation and help you fall asleep.

- **Herbal Teas:** Try chamomile or valerian root tea before bed.
- **Essential Oils:** Use essential oils like lavender in a diffuser or apply them on your pillow.
- **Supplements:** I personally use Calm Sleep by zipfizz. You can get it on Amazon. Zipfizz Calm Sleep is a 3-in-1 sugar-free powdered drink mix designed to promote relaxation, reduce stress, and improve sleep quality. It uses a blend of natural, non-habit-forming ingredients to help you achieve deeper, more restorative rest.



✔ Limit Screen Time Before Bed

The blue light emitted from screens can interfere with your body's production of melatonin, the sleep hormone.

- **Power Down Devices:** Turn off electronic devices **at least** an hour before bedtime.
- **Use Blue Light Filters:** If you must use a device, enable a blue light filter or wear blue light-blocking glasses.

✔ Seek Professional Help if Needed

Please Note: Persistent insomnia can indicate an underlying issue requiring professional intervention.

- **Consult a Healthcare Provider:** Talk to your doctor about your sleep issues to rule out medical conditions.
- **Consider Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT):** CBT for insomnia (CBT-I) is an effective treatment that can help change the thoughts and behaviours that contribute to sleep problems.

Incorporating these tips into your daily routine can help combat menopause-related insomnia and improve your sleep quality. Remember, good sleep hygiene is crucial for overall health and well-being.



DISCLAIMER: THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS CHEAT SHEET IS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT INTENDED TO REPLACE PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ADVICE, DIAGNOSIS, OR TREATMENT. ALWAYS SEEK THE ADVICE OF YOUR PHYSICIAN OR OTHER QUALIFIED HEALTHCARE PROVIDER WITH ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING A MEDICAL CONDITION OR SLEEP ISSUES DURING MENOPAUSE. NEVER DISREGARD PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ADVICE OR DELAY SEEKING IT BECAUSE OF SOMETHING YOU READ IN THIS CHEAT SHEET.

Nighttime Routine Builder

Build Your Evening Routine for Better Sleep

Your nighttime routine sets the tone for better sleep, balanced hormones, and next-day energy. Use this space to create a calm, intentional rhythm that supports your body's natural rhythm.

EVENING ROUTINE CHECKLIST

Check off the habits you'd like to include in your ideal wind down:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gentle stretching or slow movement | <input type="checkbox"/> Magnesium- | <input type="checkbox"/> Dimming the lights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rich snack (e.g., pumpkin | | <input type="checkbox"/> Warm/cool Bath or Shower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> seeds, banana with almond butter) | <input type="checkbox"/> Herbal tea | <input type="checkbox"/> Breathing Exercise or Guided Meditation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (e.g., chamomile, lemon balm, rooibos) | | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Something calming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20+ minutes of screen-free time | | <input type="checkbox"/> Turn on a low fan to move the air and keep you cool |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Journaling or meditation | | |

Evening Routine (30–60 Mins):

Use this section to sketch out a realistic wind-down routine.

Ex: 8:00 – Herbal tea + stretch, 8:30 – read in bed

TIME:

ACTIVITY:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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Insulin Resistance

These easy to implement tools help curb the blood sugar spike and keep your insulin under control.

BLOOD SUGAR AND INSULIN CONTROL

Insulin plays a vital role during menopause, as the decline in estrogen levels leads to insulin resistance, significantly increasing the risk of weight gain (particularly around the abdomen), metabolic syndrome, and Type 2 diabetes.

With increased insulin resistance, the body becomes less efficient at burning fat and more prone to storing it, leading to weight gain despite maintaining the same diet or lifestyle.



Plenty of quality protein, healthy fat, and fiber.

This is where blood sugar control starts. A diet high in quality protein (ex: wild caught fish, pasture raised eggs, grass fed beef, organic beans), healthy fats (ex: nuts, seeds, olive oil, fatty fish), and natural fiber (ex: non-starchy vegetables), will promote blood sugar control. If eating a packaged food high in carbohydrates, look for 5:1 ratio of carbohydrates to dietary fiber.

Prioritize the first meal of the day.

Breakfast time (whether that be at 6am or 11am) is when our bodies are the most reactive to sugar. Eating a breakfast high in healthy fat and protein, and low in carbohydrates, can improve our blood sugar balance throughout the day. Go for the savory breakfast over the sweet options.



Re-organize the food on your plate.

By eating your fibrous vegetables first, followed by your healthy fats and protein, and lastly any starchy or higher carbohydrate food can blunt the blood sugar spike by 70%. An amazing result for a simple strategy. If everything on your plate is mixed, start with a side salad. If you must have bread or a sugary drink, save it for the end of the meal.

Consider adding vinegar

Having vinegar before a meal can curb the blood sugar spike by up to 30%. Consider drinking 1 tbsp of vinegar with a 12oz glass of water before your meal to reduce the blood sugar spike. Any food grade vinegar will work. You can also have the vinegar over a bed of leafy greens at the start of your meal to blunt the spike.



BLOOD SUGAR AND INSULIN CONTROL

CONTINUED



Avoid or minimize snacking.

Waiting to eat for your next meal rather than snacking allows for your blood sugar and insulin to return to baseline. This is necessary to improve our insulin sensitivity. If insulin is always elevated, our bodies stop responding and more insulin needs to be released to get the job done. This has a negative impact on our reproductive hormones. Drink water or tea instead!



Move after eating.

Exercising or going for a walk after a meal reduces the blood sugar spike and allows our muscles to uptake more sugar from the blood stream without the use of insulin. This is a very good thing! If you have the time, go for a walk or do squats after a meal.



Add fat to your carbs.

If you must snack on occasion or have dessert, add healthy fat. This slows the uptake of carbohydrates from our gut to our blood stream. Examples of this would be to add raw peanut butter to an apple or cracker, or to add a spoonful of Greek yogurt to your dessert. This also helps keep us feeling fuller for longer.



Check the label.

Sweeteners (even artificial calorie free sweeteners) increase our insulin release and can lead to insulin resistance. If something tastes sweet, it is likely effecting your insulin levels. Be sure to avoid artificial sweeteners as they also have a negative impact on our gut microbiome. Add your own flavoring to things like seltzer water.





Whole Foods

These easy to implement foods will support your hormone production & give you strength

WHOLE FOODS FOR HORMONE SUPPORT



Hormone Supporting Foods to Consider:

Fatty Fish (Salmon, Mackerel)

- Benefits- Rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for hormone production and can help reduce menopausal symptoms.

Nuts (Almonds, Walnuts)

- Benefits- Provide healthy fats, protein, and magnesium, supporting mood stabilization and hormone balance.

Seeds (Flaxseeds, Chia Seeds)

- Benefits- High in omega-3s and lignans, they help balance estrogen levels and provide fiber.

Legumes (Chickpeas, Lentils)

- Benefits- Excellent sources of protein and fiber, they help regulate blood sugar and support hormone production.

Whole Grains (Quinoa, Brown Rice)

- Benefits Provide complex carbohydrates that help stabilize blood sugar levels and offer essential nutrients.



WHOLE FOODS FOR HORMONE SUPPORT



Hormone Supporting Foods to Consider:

Beets

- Benefits- Rich in nitrates and antioxidants, they can support blood flow and reduce inflammation.

Dark Chocolate (70% cocoa or higher)

- Benefits- Rich in magnesium and antioxidants, it can help improve mood and reduce stress.

Bone Broth

- Benefits- Provides collagen and amino acids that support gut health and may help regulate hormones.

Olive Oil

- Benefits- A source of healthy fats, it supports heart health and hormone production.

Eggs

- Benefits- A complete protein source rich in vitamins and minerals, they support overall hormone health.

Maca Root

- Benefits- An adaptogen known to help balance hormones and improve energy levels.

Green Tea

- Benefits- Rich in antioxidants, it can help reduce inflammation and support metabolism.



WHOLE FOODS FOR HORMONE SUPPORT



Hormone Supporting Foods to Consider:

Sweet Potatoes

- Benefits Rich in vitamins A and C, they support immune health and help regulate estrogen levels.

Greek Yogurt

- Benefits Contains probiotics that support gut health, which is linked to hormonal balance and mood regulation.

Turmeric

- Benefits Contains curcumin, known for its anti-inflammatory properties, which can help balance hormones. Be advised, it can thin your blood.

Ginger

- Benefits Known for its digestive benefits, it can help with inflammation and may alleviate menopausal symptoms.

MTC OIL CONSISTING OF C8 & C10

- Benefits Contains medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs) that support hormone production and brain health.





Smoothies

These easy to implement recipes will help keep your hormones balanced & give you strength

BASIC SMOOTHIES FOR HORMONE SUPPORT



Hormone Balancing Smoothie

1 cup unsweetened vanilla almond milk
1 small avocado (approximately 3 ounces), pitted, peeled
½ cup baby spinach
½ ripe banana, frozen
½ tsp. cinnamon
½ Tbsp. freshly ground flaxseed
3 scoops of protein powder (equivalent to 30 grams of protein)
½ cup ice cubes



Orange Creamsicle-Adrenal support

- 1.5 cups milk of choice,(almond,soy, ect)
- 1 frozen banana,
- 1/2 peeled orange,
- 1/2 cup frozen pineapple,
- splash of vanilla,
- 1 scoop of protein powder
- ice



Cocoa Banana Bliss

-1 banana
-1 tablespoon raw cacao powder
-1 tablespoon almond butter
-1.5 cup oat milk
-1 tablespoon maca
-Ice

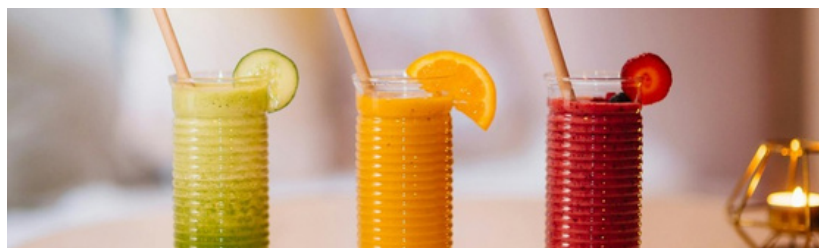


Nutty Berry Protein shake

- 1 cup mixed berries
- 1 scoop protein powder (preferably plant-based)
- 1 tablespoon almond butter
- 1 cup almond milk
Ice



SMOOTHIES FOR HORMONE SUPPORT



Hormone Balancing Smoothie- Ingredient Information:

Leptin is a hormone made by fat cells. It has a few jobs, but one is regulating appetite and metabolism.

When fat stores in the body go down, leptin goes down, too. Your brain interprets this as entering starvation mode. Satiety (the feeling of fullness) decreases — so you feel hungrier — and metabolism drops to conserve energy. Then what? You might eat more, burn fewer calories, and experience weight gain.

When there are enough fat stores in your body, leptin increases, signaling to your brain to increase satiety and metabolism. So, you eat less and burn more calories, avoiding over-eating and weight gain.

At least, that's the idea. As with everything, things can go wrong.

Research shows fiber may improve leptin levels, and protein might help, too. This Hormone Balancing smoothie (on the previous page) is packed with both. It also has flaxseeds, a great source of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids.



SMOOTHIES FOR HORMONE SUPPORT



Hormone Support Smoothies- Ingredient Information:

Key Ingredients & Their Roles:

- Maca Powder: An adaptogen known for hormone production support and energy stabilization.
- Flax & Chia Seeds: Rich in omega-3s and fiber, aiding hormone balance and regularity.
- Leafy Greens (Spinach/Kale): Provide magnesium, vitamins, and antioxidants.
- Berries (Blueberries/Strawberries): Antioxidants and natural sweetness.
- Healthy Fats (Avocado/Nut Butters/Olive Oil): Support hormone synthesis and satiety.
- Cinnamon & Cacao: Blood sugar balance and mood support.
- Protein (Powder/Yogurt/Hemp Seeds): For satiation and building blocks.
- Collagen/Greens Powders: Added nutrient boosts.



SMOOTHIES FOR HORMONE SUPPORT



Hormone Balancing Smoothies- Ingredient Information:

Here's a Basic formula for creating your own recipes:

Example Hormone Support Smoothie Formula:

1. **Liquid Base:** Almond Milk, Coconut Milk, or Water.
2. **Greens:** Spinach or Kale.
3. **Fruit:** Berries, Banana (for creaminess/sweetness).
4. **Healthy Fats/Seeds:** Flaxseed, Chia Seeds, Avocado, Almond Butter.
5. **Boosters (Optional):** Maca, Cinnamon, Cacao, Protein Powder, Collagen

Oranges are an excellent addition to smoothies designed for hormone support. They are rich in **vitamin C**, which is essential for adrenal gland function, reduces the stress hormone cortisol, and can help boost progesterone levels. Oranges also contain **fiber and antioxidants** (like hesperidin) that assist in detoxifying excess estrogen and supporting thyroid function.

For the best results, avoid adding excessive sweeteners, as high sugar consumption can conflict with the hormonal benefits of the nutrients in the smoothie.

And, as always, check with your doctor or dietician for further guidance on what may be best for you and your body.



SMOOTHIES FOR HORMONE SUPPORT



Hormone Balancing Smoothies:- My Favorite Protein Shake

Hands down, my favorite pre-made shake powder is Ka'Chava. I buy it online and I started using it about 3 years ago. Ka'Chava is a plant-based nutritional shake with ingredients grouped into functional blends, featuring plant proteins (pea, rice, sacha inchi), a fiber/omega blend (flax, chia, oat), superfoods/greens (maca, acai, spinach, kale, mushrooms, adaptogens, probiotics,) digestive enzymes, and a full vitamin/mineral complex, sweetened naturally with coconut nectar and monk fruit, containing no artificial colors or flavors or sugar, designed for holistic wellness.

If your interested in trying it, you can get a \$15 discount by using my link:

[**Click Here**](#)

Or scan the QR
code here:



Remember This:

- **No "Instant" Fix:** A complete, permanent fix in 10 days is not realistic.
- **Consistency is Key:** The best results come from long-term lifestyle changes.
- **Seek Advice:** If symptoms persist, it is important to consult a healthcare provider for proper, targeted advice.



Gut Health

Is everything you eat going straight through you? I hear this complaint often when talking to women in the early stages of menopause mayhem. Don't worry, you are not alone and there are some easy things we can do to calm the chaos.

Sauerkraut is often recommended during menopause as it is a potent source of probiotics, specifically Lactobacillus bacteria, which can help rebalance a gut microbiome often disrupted by declining estrogen levels.

For your specific concern like, "everything goes straight through you," sauerkraut may help by:

- **Improving Stool Consistency:**The combination of probiotics and fiber can help absorb excess water in the gut, which may help solidify stools if you are experiencing diarrhea.
- **Soothing Inflammation:**Fermented foods like sauerkraut have been shown to reduce inflammatory markers and help repair the intestinal lining.
- **Feeding "Good" Bacteria:** It acts as both a probiotic (live bacteria) and a prebiotic (fiber), which together support a diverse and resilient microbiome.
- **HealthyWomen +3**

Tips for Incorporating Sauerkraut

- **Start Small:** If your gut is currently sensitive, start with just one tablespoon a day to see how you tolerate it before gradually increasing your intake.
- **Choose "Live" Versions:** Look for raw, unpasteurized sauerkraut in the refrigerated section of stores like Whole Foods Market or Trader Joe's. Avoid shelf-stable jars pickled only in vinegar, as they do not contain live probiotics.
- **Monitor Histamine Sensitivity:** Some women become more sensitive to histamines during menopause. If you notice increased headaches or discomfort after eating aged foods like sauerkraut, you may need to try different fermented options like Biotiful Kefir or fresh yogurt.



Gut Health

During menopause, focus on soothing the digestive tract by eating smaller, frequent meals, increasing fiber intake gradually (aiming for 25–30g daily), and consuming fermented foods like kefir or yogurt. Key strategies include avoiding trigger foods, managing stress to aid motility, staying hydrated, and potentially adding prebiotic/probiotic supplements to rebalance your gut microbiome.

Key Tips to Manage Menopause Digestive Issues

- **Identify Trigger Foods:** Keep a food diary to identify what causes issues, such as reducing refined sugars, alcohol, dairy, and processed foods.
- **Add Probiotic/Prebiotic Foods:** Incorporate kimchi, sauerkraut, yogurt, and miso to boost good bacteria. Include prebiotic foods like bananas, oats, and garlic to feed these bacteria.
- **Fiber Intake:** Increase fiber slowly to avoid excessive bloating, focusing on vegetables, whole grains, and legumes to stabilize digestion.
- **Mindful Eating & Smaller Meals:** Chew food thoroughly to release digestive enzymes, and eat smaller, more frequent meals to avoid overwhelming your system.
- **Hydration:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day to help regulate transit time.
- **Lifestyle Changes:**
 - **Manage Stress:** Use yoga or deep breathing to calm the nervous system, as stress can slow digestion.
 - **Regular Exercise:** Brisk walking or light exercise can help massage the digestive tract and improve motility.
 - **Prioritize Sleep:** Consistent, high-quality sleep is crucial for gut health.

Fasting can help realign and heal your gut during menopause by providing a "digestive rest" that allows your system to shift energy from constant processing to cellular repair and microbiome rebalancing. Giving the gut a scheduled break can help stabilize motility and strengthen the intestinal barrier. More about this on the next page...



Gut Health

How Fasting can help Heal your Gut:

- **Activates the "Clean-Up" Wave:** Fasting triggers the **Migrating Motor Complex (MMC)**, a pattern of electrical activity that acts as a "housekeeping wave" to sweep undigested food and unwanted bacteria out of the GI tract. This process only occurs when you haven't eaten for at least 90–120 minutes.
- **Promotes Autophagy:** Extended breaks from eating activate **autophagy**, a cellular "self-cleaning" process where your body removes and recycles damaged components, which is crucial for repairing the gut lining.
- **Reduces Gut Permeability:** Fasting can help reduce "leaky gut" (gut permeability) by giving the intestinal wall time to repair its barrier, which may help manage symptoms like chronic diarrhea or bloating.
- **Rebalances the Microbiome:** Short-term fasting can increase the diversity of beneficial bacteria (like *Akkermansia*) and reduce harmful overgrowths, helping to stabilize a microbiome often disrupted by declining estrogen.
- **National Institutes of Health**

Recommended Fasting Protocols for Menopause

During menopause, it's often safer to use **gentler fasting windows** to avoid spiking cortisol (the stress hormone), which can worsen symptoms like anxiety or sleep loss.

- **The 12:12 "Overnight Reset":** A natural starting point—finish dinner by 7 p.m. and wait until 7 a.m. for breakfast. This provides 12 hours of digestive rest while you sleep.
- **The 14:10 Method:** A moderate approach that provides metabolic benefits while minimizing the stress response. For example, eat between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m..
- **The 16:8 Protocol:** Fasting for 16 hours and eating during an 8-hour window. This is popular for weight management but may be too stressful if your body is already under high menopausal stress.





Exercise

These easy to do exercises are ability appropriate tools that can help you live better & be stronger

Interval Training

During menopause, the hormonal landscape shifts dramatically, particularly with the drop in estrogen, which means our bodies no longer recover from high-stress exercise the way they did in our 20s and 30s. Pushing through long, intense cardio sessions—what used to be our go-to "burn"—now acts as a stressor that spikes cortisol levels. Chronically elevated cortisol can lead to the "menopause paradox," where excessive exercise actually backfires, causing the body to hold onto stubborn abdominal fat, increase inflammation, and break down muscle tissue, leading to fatigue rather than fitness.



Instead of a daily "grind," short bursts of interval training (SIT) are superior for midlife women because they provide a powerful stimulus to maintain fast-twitch muscle fibers—which we rapidly lose with age—without overloading the nervous system. By doing all-out efforts for 15–30 seconds, followed by several minutes of recovery, women can activate anabolic hormones that build muscle, improve insulin sensitivity, and boost fat-burning metabolism in just 10–20 minutes. This "smarter, not harder" approach protects joints and optimizes energy levels, making it possible to achieve better body composition and heart health results than hours of steady-state cardio.

Effective interval training for menopause focuses on Sprint Interval Training (SIT), which emphasizes maximal effort for a very short duration followed by long, complete recovery periods to keep cortisol in check



Low Impact Examples

Low-impact exercises are ideal for menopause as they support heart health and maintain muscle mass without overstressing sensitive joints or triggering excessive cortisol. These movements focus on controlled intensity rather than high-impact pounding.

Here are specific low-impact exercises you can swap into your interval bursts:

Standing Exercises (No Jumping)

- **Marching High Knees:** Fire up your core and glutes by lifting your knees as high as possible at a fast pace while pumping your arms.
- **Modified Jumping Jacks:** Instead of jumping, step one foot out to the side while reaching your arms overhead, then switch sides quickly to keep your heart rate up.
- **Wall Push-Ups:** Build upper body strength by pushing off a wall; it provides a cardio challenge during fast bursts without the strain of floor-based moves.
- **Speed Squats (or Box Squats):** Use a sturdy chair for a "sit-to-stand" motion, focusing on speed as you stand up and control as you lower back down.
- **Butt Kicks:** Jog or march in place, bringing your heels toward your glutes to engage the hamstrings with zero impact.

Seated Exercises (Chair-Friendly)

- **Seated March:** While sitting tall, march your feet as fast as possible to elevate your heart rate while supporting your spine.
- **Seated Leg Extensions:** Extend your legs straight out in front of you quickly and lower them with control to build quad strength and support joint health.
- **Seated Shadow Boxing:** Punch the air in front of you with speed and force while seated; this is an excellent high-intensity, zero-impact burst for your upper body.

Swimming or Water Aerobics: Water naturally supports your body weight, removing almost all impact while providing constant resistance for strength.



SIMPLE, PRODUCTIVE EXERCISES

Exercise is crucial during menopause to manage symptoms, maintain bone density, control weight gain, and protect heart health. It counteracts the effects of falling estrogen levels, which can cause muscle loss, increased body fat, and higher risks of osteoporosis



Floor Stretches

Low impact floor stretches improve flexibility, reduce muscle tension and improve joint mobility. These stretches allow the body to feel grounded, making it easier to hold for 15-45 seconds.



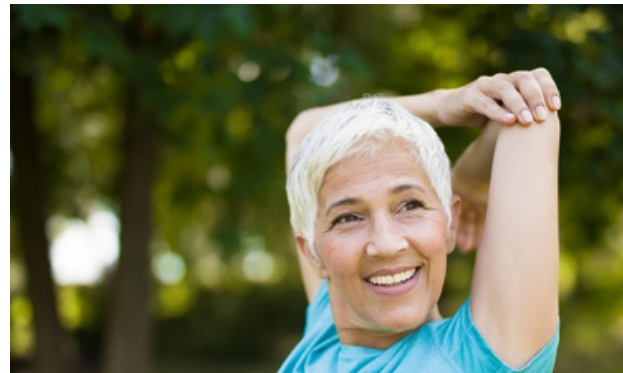
Cross-Arm Stretch

This stretch will not only increase flexibility, in the shoulder blade area, it also helps the deltoid muscle and the upper back to relieve tension. Hold 5-10 seconds, each side.



Resistance Bands

Resistance bands come in a variety of thicknesses to help you work up to stronger resistance. Use Youtube and search for Resistance band exercises for seniors. This will help you get started in a way that will not create injuries!



Shoulder & Hip Stretches

Consistent, gentle and controlled movements are best for improving joint health. Search for Shoulder & Hip stretches for Seniors on Youtube. Starting small & easy will ensure you can build up flexibility without injury.

SIMPLE, PRODUCTIVE EXERCISES

Youtube is a great place for “follow-Along” videos for the following Exercises



Meditation

By reducing cortisol (the stress hormone) and activating the parasympathetic nervous system, it helps counteract the hormonal fluctuations that lead to mood swings, hot flashes, and insomnia.



Tai Chi

Its gentle, weight-bearing movements strengthen bones, while its meditative, slow-motion approach reduces stress, improves sleep, and balances hormones, easing symptoms like hot flashes and anxiety. It offers a low-impact, accessible way for menopausal women to manage cardiovascular health and improve flexibility.



Yoga

Yoga helps by lowering stress (cortisol), balancing hormones, and improving physical, emotional, and cognitive well-being. Specific practices help reduce hot flashes, night sweats, joint pain, and anxiety while increasing bone density, flexibility, and sleep quality.



Walking

Walking is an ideal, low-impact exercise for managing menopause symptoms because it helps stabilize weight, boosts mood, reduces stress, and protects bone density. Brisk walking supports heart health, mitigates hot flashes, and improves sleep quality.

A collage of natural ingredients including a banana, a green leaf, a wooden bowl with powder, and a glass bottle.

Skincare

These easy to implement skincare tools will help you have more radiant skin

HORMONES & YOUR SKIN



Hormonal effects on your skin:

The loss of estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone during menopause significantly affects facial skin, leading to various changes. Here's a detailed look at how each hormone impacts skin health:

Estrogen: Effects on Skin- - Collagen Production: Estrogen helps maintain collagen levels, which provide elasticity and firmness. Its decline can lead to sagging and wrinkles. - Moisture Retention: Estrogen supports the skin's ability to retain moisture. Loss can result in dryness and thinning skin. - Blood Circulation: Estrogen promotes healthy blood flow, which nourishes the skin. Reduced circulation can lead to a dull complexion.

Progesterone: Effects on Skin - Oil Production: Progesterone influences oil production in the skin. A decline can lead to both dryness and an imbalance in oil levels, potentially causing acne in some women. - Skin Elasticity: This hormone also contributes to skin elasticity. Low levels can lead to a loss of firmness and more pronounced fine lines.

Testosterone: Effects on Skin- -increases dermal thickness, promoting firmness, and boosting collagen production.



HORMONES & YOUR SKIN



Top Picks to have more Radiant Skin:

Creamy Cleanser Use a white, creamy cleanser both morning and evening to wash your face. Gel cleansers are made for oily skin.

Hyaluronic Acid - Product Type: Look for serums, creams or toners that contain hyaluronic acid. This ingredient holds moisture, plumping the skin and reducing fine lines. - Application: Use daily after cleansing, both morning and night.

Vitamin C Serums - Product Type: Opt for a stable vitamin C serum to brighten skin and reduce pigmentation. - Application: Apply in the morning before sunscreen for added protection.

Regular Exfoliation - Product Type: Use gentle exfoliants like alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) or beta hydroxy acids (BHAs). Or a physical exfoliant like jojoba beads. - Application: Exfoliate 1 time per week to remove dead skin cells and promote renewal.

Collagen Supplements - Type: Consider hydrolyzed collagen powders or capsules. These can support skin elasticity from within. - Usage: Follow the recommended dosage on the product label.



HORMONES & YOUR SKIN



Top picks continued:

Hydrating Face Masks - Product Type: Look for masks with ingredients like aloe vera, honey, or glycerin. - Application: Use 1-2 times a week for an instant hydration boost.

Facial Oils - Type: Choose oils rich in fatty acids like jojoba, or rosehip oil. - Application: Apply a few drops to damp skin to lock in moisture.

Regular Facial Massages - Technique: Use your fingers or a jade roller to massage the face, promoting circulation and lymphatic drainage. - Frequency: Incorporate into your skincare routine a few times a week.

Stay Hydrated** - Strategy: Aim for at least 6 glasses of water daily. Hydration is key to maintaining skin's plumpness. - Tip: Consider herbal teas for added antioxidants.

By integrating these practices into daily routines, you'll notice the softness and glow returning to your skin in no time!

If you don't already have a copy of my book, "Being Beautiful at 50 and Beyond" you can get a digital copy [here](https://robbingregory.systeme.io/5d933f4d):

<https://robbingregory.systeme.io/5d933f4d>





Specialty Topics

What If I also Have.....

But, what if I have MCAS?

Getting MCAS under control during menopause involves **balancing fluctuating hormones**, which act as a major trigger for mast cell degranulation. Estrogen can stimulate mast cells to release histamine, while progesterone typically helps stabilize them. Managing this transition requires a multi-pronged approach that stabilizes the immune system first before carefully addressing hormonal gaps.

Hormonal Management Strategies

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) can be beneficial, but it must be tailored specifically for MCAS patients: [1, 2]

- **Prioritize Progesterone:** Clinicians often recommend starting with **progesterone alone** before adding estrogen to help stabilize mast cells first.
- **Choose Bioidentical Options:** Bioidentical progesterone is frequently preferred over synthetic progestins, which can sometimes worsen symptoms.
- **Transdermal Estrogen:**
 - If estrogen is needed, transdermal (patch or gel) forms may be better tolerated than oral versions as they bypass the first-pass metabolism that can trigger reactions.
- **Low and Slow:** Introducing any hormone therapy gradually is key to avoiding sudden flares.

Medical and Natural Stabilization

Before or alongside hormonal adjustments, standard MCAS treatments remain critical:

- **Baseline Medications:** Daily use of **H1 and H2 antihistamines** (e.g., cetirizine and famotidine) to block histamine receptors.
- **Mast Cell Stabilizers:** Prescription options like **Cromolyn Sodium** or natural stabilizers like **Quercetin** and **Luteolin** can help prevent the release of inflammatory mediators.
- **Supplements:** Vitamin C (to lower histamine), Vitamin D, and Magnesium can support the immune and nervous systems.



MCAS continued...

Lifestyle and Diet Adjustments

- **Low-Histamine Diet:** Reducing "histamine bucket" contributors like aged cheeses, alcohol, and fermented foods can lower the overall inflammatory load.
- **Nervous System Regulation:** Stress is a potent mast cell trigger. Techniques like breathwork, meditation, and yoga help keep the body out of a "fight or flight" state.
- **Trigger Identification:** Use a symptom journal to track how changes in temperature, food, or stress levels correlate with your hormonal cycle.

What Is MCAS?

Mast Cell Activation Syndrome (MCAS) is a chronic immune disorder where mast cells inappropriately release excessive inflammatory mediators, causing multi-system symptoms like hives, flushing, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and anaphylaxis. It is managed primarily with antihistamines and stabilizers to prevent degranulation.

Symptoms of MCAS

Symptoms can appear suddenly, vary in severity, and affect multiple organs, often mimicking allergic reactions or anaphylaxis:

- **Skin:** Hives, itching, flushing, swelling (angioedema).
- **Gastrointestinal:** Diarrhea, abdominal pain, cramping, nausea, vomiting.
- **Cardiovascular:** Lightheadedness, tachycardia, low blood pressure (hypotension).
- **Respiratory:** Shortness of breath, wheezing, throat tightness.
- **Neurological:** Brain fog, headache, fatigue.

Causes and Triggers

MCAS occurs when mast cells are oversensitive. Causes are not fully understood but may include genetic factors, chronic inflammation, or autoimmune tendencies.

Common triggers include:

- Temperature changes (heat/cold)
- Specific foods, beverages, or alcohol
- Stress (emotional or physical)
- Odors, perfumes, or chemicals
- Bug bites, medications (e.g., NSAIDs), or infections

Diagnosis

Diagnosis can be challenging, as tests may show normal results between flares. It is often a clinical diagnosis based on symptoms, a positive response to treatment, and laboratory tests confirming elevated mediators (like tryptase, histamine, or prostaglandins) during an episode.



What is POTS?

Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS) is a chronic autonomic nervous system disorder where a person's heart rate increases excessively.

Normally, when you stand, your blood vessels constrict to push blood toward your heart and brain. In POTS, this coordination fails, causing blood to pool in the lower body. To compensate for the lack of blood reaching the brain, the body releases a surge of adrenaline, causing the heart rate to spike—typically by 30 beats per minute or more within 10 minutes of standing—without a significant drop in blood pressure

How it Shows Up During Perimenopause

Hormones like estrogen and progesterone directly influence blood volume and how well blood vessels "squeeze". When these levels fluctuate during perimenopause, three main patterns typically emerge:

- **Symptom Exacerbation:** Existing POTS symptoms often worsen in the mid-to-late 40s due to hormonal volatility.
- **New-Onset POTS:** Some women develop POTS for the first time during perimenopause as the shifting hormones unmask a previously hidden autonomic vulnerability.
- **The "Anxiety" Mimic:** Many POTS symptoms—like racing heart, internal shakiness, and shortness of breath—look identical to perimenopausal anxiety or panic attacks, often leading to misdiagnosis.

Overlapping Symptoms:

Distinguishing between perimenopause and POTS can be difficult because they share a nearly identical list of symptoms:

- **Heat Intolerance:** Both conditions can make you feel extremely sensitive to temperature.
- **Brain Fog:** Difficulty concentrating and memory lapses are hallmark features of both.
- **Sleep Disturbance:** Insomnia and excessive night sweating are common in both transitions.
- **Cardiovascular Changes:** Heart palpitations and flushing occur in both, though POTS symptoms are specifically triggered or worsened by standing.



POTS continued...

POTS Continued....

Management and Hope

For many, POTS symptoms actually **improve or resolve** once they reach full menopause and hormone levels stabilize, as the constant "volatility" that stresses the nervous system disappears. In the meantime, managing POTS often involves increasing salt and fluid intake, using compression garments, and engaging in specialized "supine" (laying down) exercises to rebuild stamina without triggering a heart rate spike.

Hormonal & Medical Considerations

Because data specifically on POTS in menopause is still developing, a **personalized approach with a specialist is essential.**

- Tailored HRT: While menopausal hormone therapy (MHT) doesn't "treat" POTS itself, it can reduce the hormonal volatility that causes flare-ups. Experts often suggest transdermal estrogen patches and micronized progesterone as they may be better tolerated than oral forms.
- Non-Hormonal Options: For those who cannot use HRT, medications like beta-blockers can manage flushing-associated tachycardia, while clonidine may help with sympathetic overactivity and insomnia.
- Neurological Retraining: Some clinics focus on "recalibrating" the autonomic nervous system through vestibular and breathing mechanics training to improve baseline resilience.

If you think you may have POTS, please schedule a visit with your health care provider right away!





The Right Doctor ...

The Questions to ask when
looking for help

Finding the Right Dr.

Finding a menopause-specializing doctor who actively addresses symptoms and prescribes Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) requires targeting practitioners with specific certifications, rather than general gynecologists or primary care physicians. The most effective route is to use certified databases, ask specific vetting questions, and prepare to present your case.

Detailed Steps to Find a Menopause Specialist

1. Use The Menopause Society Certified Practitioner (MSCP) Directory
 - Action: Go to the Menopause Society (formerly NAMS) website at menopause.org and click on "Find a Provider."
 - Why: These clinicians have passed a certification exam demonstrating specialized knowledge in menopause management, including HRT, non-hormonal options, and lifestyle counseling.
2. Look for Specialized Women's Health Clinics
 - Action: Search for local hospital systems that have "Center for Women in Midlife" or specialized menopause clinics.
 - Why: These centers often bring together endocrinologists, gynecologists, and internists who specialize in the holistic, long-term care of menopausal women.
3. Consider Telehealth Specialized Clinics
 - Action: Research online platforms that specialize only in menopause, such as Gennev or Midi Health.
 - Why: If you live in a rural area or local specialists are not available, these offer access to experts familiar with the latest HRT guidelines.
4. Vetting/Referral Search
 - Action: Ask for referrals from local pharmacists, your internal medicine doctor, or friends who are currently in menopause, specifically asking, "Who actually listens and prescribes HRT?"



Finding the Right Dr.

Questions to Ask Before Booking an Appointment

Do not waste time going to a doctor who is not up-to-date. Call the office and ask the receptionist or nurse these questions to vet them beforehand:

- "Does the doctor have specific training in menopause management?"
- "Does the Doctor see other patients for perimenopause/menopause?"
- "Is this doctor comfortable prescribing Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) or Bio Identical HRT for women in their 50s?"
- "Does the doctor offer non-hormonal, FDA-approved treatment options as well?" (if you don't want HRT)
- Be kind and willing to listen, but also know that you'll know right away when you've found the right doctor for the type of treatments your looking for.

Questions to Ask During the Appointment:

Once in the office, use these questions to gauge if they are the right doctor for you:

- "What is your approach to HRT?" (Red Flag: They automatically refuse or only offer it for extremely short periods)
- "Do you prescribe bio-identical hormones (estradiol/progesterone)?"
- "What are the benefits vs. risks of HRT for me specifically?"
- "What are my options if I have a history of [insert your health concern, e.g., blood clots/breast cancer]?"
- "How do you manage vaginal symptoms, such as dryness or painful intercourse?"
- "Will you do a holistic assessment of my heart, bone, and brain health?" (Menopause is not just gynecology)



Talking points worth the research

Things you may want to talk to your doctor about...

It's imperative that you learn as much as possible so you can advocate for yourself

According to Pharmacist Steve Hoffart, "There is a massive difference between bio Identical Progesterone and synthetic Progestins.

Synthetics, by the names of Provera, Norethindrone and Levonorgestel can actually raise breast cancer risk, raise your LDL, tank your mood, wreck your sleep and can even cancel out the benefits that estrogen provides you.

Bio Identical progesterone does exactly the opposite. It protects your breast tissue, calms your nerves and acts as an anti Inflammatory."

So, if your bottle does not say PROGESTERONE, its most likely a synthetic version.

Estriol: is the Beta Estrogen your body might be missing. If your on Estradiol-only HRT but still dealing with dryness, burning, urinary urgency or recurrent UTIs, you might be missing the benefits of ER-B activation. Estriol binds ER-B far more than ER-a, targeting tissues like the vagina, urethra, bladder trigone and even certain brain and immune cells, while being gentler on ER-a rich tissues like the breast and uterus.

- The New England Journal of Medicine Trial: Vaginal estriol restored lactobacillus, lowered pH and cut UTIs in half.
- Post Menopause RCTs: Improved hot flashes, urinary symptoms and vaginal health without stimulating the endometrium.
- Breast Cancer Survivor data: Showed Ultra-low dose vaginal gel relieved atrophy symptoms with negligible systemic hormone changes.

*Steve Hoffart- Pharmacist @ Magnolia pharmacy, Magnolia, TX



Talking points Continued...

Lab Tests to talk about with your doctor/clinician:

Lipid Panel: LDL and HDL, Total Cholesterol, Small Dense LDL Particles, ApoB (Apolipoprotein B), Lp(a) (lipoprotein a)

Why: Estrogen loss changes how cholesterol moves in the body, LDL often rises and small dense LDL particles can increase. (these are more likely to stick to the walls of your arteries) ApoB shows the total number of particles putting pressure on your arteries. Lp(a) is a genetic risk factor for heart disease. Together these tests give your doctor a better picture of your cardiovascular risk.

Blood Sugar & Insulin: Fasting Glucose, Fasting Insulin, Hemoglobin A1c, HOMA-IR (insulin resistance score)

Why: Hormone changes during menopause shift how your body stores fat and handles sugar. Insulin resistance can lead to weight gain and higher risk for diabetes. HOMA-IR shows how your body is responding to insulin, often years before developing full diabetes.

Bone Health: Baseline DEXA scan (Bone density), Vitamin D

Why: Loss of estrogen speeds up bone loss and many women lose up to 20% of their bone mass in the first 5 years of menopause without knowing it. A DEXA scan checks the hips and spine where fractures matter most. Vitamin D is essential for calcium absorption and bone strength.

Thyroid Check: TSH, Free T3 & Free T4

Why: An underactive thyroid can mimic menopause symptoms- fatigue, mood swings, brain fog and hair loss. A simple blood test can rule this out or find a treatable cause for symptoms that should not be dismissed.

Hormones: Estradiol LC/MS-can help confirm where you are on the menopausal timeline if you're not having regular periods. FSH & Testosterone.

*This is not the only tests your provider may want and this list is not a complete list of all tests available. Talk to your provider about it.



Talking Points Continued...

Additional Lab Tests to consider:

Chronic Inflammation Tests: HsCRP (High Sensitivity C-Reactive Protein), ESR (Erythrocyte Sedimentation Rate)

Why: These tests are a great way to see if you are inflamed, then use them as a marker after nutrition/lifestyle changes to track progress. Note: these markers are non-specific, meaning they will not tell you what is wrong, but since lifestyle and nutrition changes fight so many of the causes of chronic inflammation, its a great test to do.

Hormone Definitions and Explanations:

Estrogen: There are 4 different estrogens produced by the body, in different stages of life. The four estrogens are essentially "generational"—each one takes center stage during a specific phase of life. Here is the breakdown of what they do and where they come from:

E1: Estrone (Post-Menopause)

- Where it's made: Mostly in fat tissue (adipose) and muscle. A small amount is also made in the ovaries and adrenal glands.
- Function: It serves as a "backup" estrogen. After menopause, when the ovaries stop producing E2, your body converts other hormones into Estrone. It is much weaker than Estradiol but is the primary source of estrogen for post-menopausal women.

E2: Estradiol (Reproductive Years)

- Where it's made: Primarily in the ovaries. Small amounts are also produced by the adrenal glands and, in men, the testes.
- Function: This is the strongest and most active form. It is responsible for breast development, the menstrual cycle, bone health, and maintaining the lining of the vagina and urethra. Because it is so potent, it's the form most commonly measured in blood tests and replaced in HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy).



Hormones

Hormone Definitions and Explanations:

Estrogen: Continued...

E3: Estriol (Pregnancy)

- **Where it's made:** The **placenta**.
- **Function:** During pregnancy, E3 levels soar to help the uterus grow and prepare the body for birth. Outside of pregnancy, it is barely detectable. Because it is very weak and doesn't stimulate tissue growth as aggressively as E2, it is sometimes used in topical creams to treat vaginal dryness.

E4: Estetrol (Fetal)

- **Where it's made:** Exclusively by the **fetal liver**.
- **Function:** It only exists during pregnancy, circulating from the baby to the mother. While its exact natural purpose is still being studied, scientists have discovered it acts "selectively"—it provides estrogen benefits to the brain and bones while largely ignoring the breasts and liver. This has led to its recent use in new, "cleaner" versions of birth control.

Progesterone:

- **The "Calming" Effect:** Progesterone crosses the blood-brain barrier and interacts with GABA receptors. This helps reduce anxiety, promotes better sleep, and acts as a natural antidepressant.
- **Bone & Heart Health:** It works alongside estrogen to help build bone density and has a slightly protective effect on the cardiovascular system.

During perimenopause, progesterone is often the first hormone to drop. Because you may stop ovulating every month, the corpus luteum doesn't form, and progesterone levels plummet. This "estrogen dominance" is often what causes the irritability, heavy periods, and insomnia common in the early transition.



Hormones Continued

Progesterone vs Progestin: The simplest way to think about it is natural vs. synthetic. While they do some of the same things, they are built differently at a molecular level and behave differently in your body.

Progesterone (The Natural Version)

- What it is: Identical to the hormone your ovaries produce. In medical settings, it is often called "micronized progesterone" (brand name: Prometrium).
- How it feels: Because it is molecularly identical to your own hormones, it fits perfectly into receptors in your brain and body. It typically has a "sedative" or calming effect, helping with sleep and anxiety.
- Key Benefit: It is generally considered "breast-neutral," meaning it doesn't carry the same increased risk of breast cancer that some synthetics do when used in HRT.

Progestin (The Synthetic Version)

- What it is: A lab-made chemical designed to mimic some of the effects of progesterone. Examples include Medroxy-progesterone (Provera) or the Levonorgestrel found in some IUDs and birth control pills.
- Why it's used: Progestins are often "stronger" and more stable than natural progesterone. They are excellent at thinning the uterine lining to prevent heavy bleeding or pregnancy.
- Potential Downsides: Because the molecule is slightly different, it can plug into other receptors (like testosterone or cortisol receptors). This can lead to side effects like bloating, mood swings, acne, or breast tenderness—side effects you rarely get with the natural version.



Hormones Continued

Testosterone:

Testosterone in women is produced in three main areas:

- **The Ovaries:** Responsible for about 25% of your total testosterone. Even after menopause, the ovaries continue to secrete testosterone, although at lower levels.
- **The Adrenal Glands:** These contribute another 25% directly.
- **Peripheral Tissues:** The remaining 50% is made through "conversion." Your skin and fat cells take precursor hormones (like DHEA and androstenedione) produced by your ovaries and adrenals and convert them into active testosterone.

What it Does for You in Menopause

According to the Cleveland Clinic, while estrogen and progesterone levels drop sharply at menopause, testosterone declines more gradually starting in your late 20s or 30s. By the time you reach menopause, your levels may be half of what they were in your prime.

Its functions during this stage include:

- **Sexual Function:** It is the primary driver of libido (desire) and arousal. It also increases blood flow to the vulva and clitoris, affecting physical pleasure.
- **Brain & Mood:** Testosterone is vital for motivation, focus, and "brain fog" relief. It interacts with dopamine and serotonin to help stabilize your mood and improve your general sense of well-being.
- **Muscle & Bone Density:** It helps maintain lean muscle mass and strength. Alongside estrogen, it is critical for preventing the bone loss (osteoporosis) that often accelerates after menopause.
- **Energy & Sleep:** Many women find that adequate testosterone levels improve their physical stamina and energy throughout the day and lead to higher-quality sleep.



Hormone Replacement Therapy HRT

Here's Some Statistics:

According to Dr. Mary Clair Haver-MD & Board Certified OB-GYN, 68% of women suffer from depression in perimenopause and many are told it's just stress.

Anxiety, depression and mood swings are neurobiological events. Estrogen and progesterone directly modulate serotonin, gaba and dopamine. When these hormones fluctuate, these levels of neurotransmitters fluctuate with them. If you have a history of depression, your risk during perimenopause more than triples. Women with a history of major depression have a 59% increased risk of developing symptoms in perimenopause.

FIGO,(Federation of International Gynecology & Obstetrics) is now states that transdermal estrogen is the preferred primary method of treatment for mood symptoms in perimenopause. Meaning that hormone therapy is considered a first line treatment.

Studies also indicate that HRT can improve sleep quality, cognitive function, and bone density while significantly lowering osteoporosis-related fractures. Research shows that starting HRT within 10 years of menopause may actually reduce risks of coronary heart disease and stroke.

Current studies show HRT is highly effective in preventing menopausal bone loss and reducing hip/vertebral fractures.

*Only you can and your doctor can determine if HRT/MHT is a right choice for you. Please research as much as you can so you are informed of risks and side effects that you may have due to your own personal health situation.

What do I say if the doctor tells me my lab results look normal?

Emphasize Quality of Life: "I understand my labs are within range, but my symptoms are preventing me from doing my daily activities".

Target Specific Symptoms: "My brain fog/joint pain/insomnia is severely affecting my life. What can we do for this?".

At the end of the day, if your doctor is not educated on, or reluctant to, prescribe HRT (if that's what your wanting) seek help elsewhere. It's never wrong to get another professional opinion.



Labs Cheat Sheet

Hypothyroid Testing " TSH Testing: Optimal 0.3 mIU/L - 1.5 mIU/L (or 2.0 mIU/L) " "Recent laboratory guidelines from the National Academy of Clinical Biochemistry indicate that more than 95% of normal individuals have TSH levels below 2.5 mU/liter. The remainder with higher values are outliers, most of whom are likely to have underlying Hashimoto thyroiditis or other causes of elevated TSH. Importantly, data indicating that African-Americans with very low incidence of Hashimoto thyroiditis have a mean TSH level of 1.18 mU/liter strongly suggest that this value is the true normal mean for a normal population

Note: "In patients with subclinical hypothyroidism, the presence of thyroperoxidase (TPO) antibodies predicts a higher risk of developing overt hypothyroidism, 4.3% per year versus 2.1% per year in antibody-negative individuals. Furthermore, it raises the concern that such patients may be at increased risk of developing other autoimmune diseases, such as adrenal insufficiency and type 1 diabetes."

Estrogen In menopausal women:

Estrogen levels drop significantly, typically falling to or below 20--30 pg/mL for estradiol (E2) and under 40 pg/mL

for estrone (E1). Normal menopause involves very low, stable levels, often under 10 pg/mL

High levels are generally considered over 30--50 pg/mL, and low levels are considered below 10 pg/mL

.

Menopausal Estrogen Levels (Blood Test - pg/mL)

Normal (Postmenopause): <10--30 pg/mL

Low: Often near zero, leading to symptoms like hot flashes and vaginal dryness.

High: >30 pg/mL

(usually indicating HRT usage, as natural levels should not be high).

Perimenopause: Levels fluctuate widely, often 20--300 pg/mL

.



My Plan

Outline what you want your day to look like: Include Exercise & Supplements

Morning Wakeup:

Morning Movement:

Breakfast:

Lunch:

Dinner:

Evening Wind down:



Symptoms Tracker

Your Menopause Snapshot: Today's Date _____

A self-reflection to help you pause, check in, and gain clarity before diving deeper.

1. Circle how much each symptom is affecting you right now.
(1 = mild / barely noticeable, 5 = severe / significantly impacts your day)

Symptoms	Very Mild	Mild	Moderate	affects my well being	Difficult to Function
Hot flashes	1	2	3	4	5
Night sweats	1	2	3	4	5
Mood swings	1	2	3	4	5
Fatigue	1	2	3	4	5
Brain fog	1	2	3	4	5
Sleep disturbances	1	2	3	4	5
Anxiety/irritability	1	2	3	4	5
Libido changes	1	2	3	4	5
Gut Health	1	2	3	4	5

Top Symptom Check-In

What's bothering you the most right now? This helps you notice patterns and set priorities.

MENOPAUSE SUPPORT



In Closing....Here's some great resources for your menopause journey

Im so glad you've got my toolkit for Menopause. This just scratches the surface on all the information and support I can offer you. If you're interested in learning more, visit both the Facebook groups here:



Scan the QR CODE. It takes you to our group!



Skincare Over 50
(Public)

Menopause Mentor
(Private)

Dr Mary Claire Haver- Board Certified OBGYN- she has a podcast called "unpaused" website: thepauselife.com

If you have questions, email me at:
robbin@julepdayspa.com

Visit my website: Skincareoverfifty.com
Where you can look for products, schedule a skin consultation or browse the downloads!



21 Day Kickstart

THE 21-DAY KICKSTART

Because knowing the facts is one thing... living them is another.

You've got the toolkit. You've read the truths. Now, it's time to put it all into practice without overcomplicating your life. This 21-day reset isn't about being perfect; it's about being consistent. We've broken this down into three simple phases to help you cool the fire, find your strength, and protect your peace.

The Ground Rules:

1. **Be Honest:** Use the daily "Hard Truth" prompts to vent. Better on the page than on your family.
2. **Use the Prompts,** check your habits, and move on with your day.
3. **Give Yourself Grace:** If you miss a day, don't quit. Just turn the page and start at "Today."

Ready to stop surviving and start owning the change?
Flip the page. Day 1 is waiting.



21 Day Kickstart

Week 1: The Foundation (Awareness & Inventory)

The goal this week is to identify your unique symptoms and "noise" before making big changes.

- Day 1: Start the "symptom tracker" to track hot flashes, energy, and mood.
-Mark each days symptom a 1-5 depending on severity.
- Focus on hydration today. Consistent water intake, combats brain fog.
- Audit your sleep environment- cool the room and dim the lights.

What is your ideal morning routine? What can you shift to make that happen?

Am I actually "fine," or have I just lowered my standards for how good I deserve to feel?



21 Day Kickstart Symptom Tracker

Symptom	Day of the month													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Hot Flash														
Night Sweats														
Irritable														
joint pain														
Insomnia														
Brain Fog														
Low libido														
vaginal dryness														
Digestive Issues														



21 Day Kickstart Symptom Tracker

Symptom	Day of the month													
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Hot Flash														
Night Sweats														
Irritable														
joint pain														
Insomnia														
Brain Fog														
Low libido														
vaginal dryness														
Digestive Issues														



21 Day Kickstart

Week 1: The Foundation (Awareness & Inventory)

The goal this week is to identify your unique symptoms and "noise" before making big changes.

- Day 2: Protein Check-each meal needs protein for muscle health
- Focus on hydration today. Consistent water intake, combats brain fog.
- Prioritize time for yourself today.

How did my energy hold up today after my biggest meal?

Why am I treating basic hydration like a chore instead of a biological necessity?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 1: The Foundation (Awareness & Inventory)

The goal this week is to identify your unique symptoms and "noise" before making big changes.

- Day 3: Do some form of movement in the morning (stretch, jump rope)
- Focus on hydration today. Consistent water intake, combats brain fog.
- Prioritize time for yourself today.

When did I feel the most rushed today? Was it a real deadline or internal pressure? _____

Am I eating to fuel the woman I want to be, or the version of me that's stuck in survival mode?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 1: The Foundation (Awareness & Inventory)

The goal this week is to identify your unique symptoms and "noise" before making big changes.

- Day 4: Listen to your body today. What is it asking for? Protein? Fiber?
- Focus on hydration today. Consistent water intake, combats brain fog.
- Prioritize time for yourself today.

What are some high protein, high fiber foods I could work into my daily diet?

What am I avoiding by staying "too busy" to take a 10-minute walk? _____



21 Day Kickstart

Week 1: The Foundation (Awareness & Inventory)

The goal this week is to identify your unique symptoms and "noise" before making big changes.

- Day 5: Listen to your body today. What is it asking for? Protein? Fiber?
- Focus on hydration today. Consistent water intake, combats brain fog.
- Do a breathing exercise today, at least 3 times throughout the day.

Identify "stress triggers" in your daily schedule:

Is my "stress" coming from my schedule, or from my inability to say "no" to things that drain me?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 1: The Foundation (Awareness & Inventory)

The goal this week is to identify your unique symptoms and "noise" before making big changes.

- Day 6: How did my body feel when I woke up today?
- Focus on hydration today. Consistent water intake, combats brain fog.
- Set an achievable Intention for the day today Energy flows where intention goes.

What are some protein and fiber rich breakfast alternatives can I use to fuel my body & brain?

If I keep living exactly like I did this week for the next five years, what outcome is more likely for me?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 1: The Foundation (Awareness & Inventory)

The goal this week is to identify your unique symptoms and "noise" before making big changes.

- Day 7: Congratulate yourself for making it through week 1!
- Nourish your body with whole foods today.
- Set an achievable Intention for the day today Energy flows where intention goes.
- Remember to rest today. Rest your mind, rest your body.

Looking at my first week, what is one thing my body is clearly trying to tell me?

Can I sit in silence for five minutes without reaching for a distraction, or am I afraid of my own thoughts?

Review the week's diary and celebrate one small win.



21 Day Kickstart

Week 2: The Momentum (Integration & Habits)

Now that you have your data, you can start layering in the active changes.

- Day 8: Do one 15 minute bodyweight exercise today in 3 minute intervals.
- Practice "4-7-8" breathing during a mid-afternoon energy slump
- Make the effort to take care of your skin today. Even if that just means you washed your face.

Am I afraid to be strong? Is it easier to stay "fragile" so I don't have to push myself?

Is my phone actually relaxing me, or is it a digital hit of dopamine that's stealing my sleep?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 2: The Momentum (Integration & Habits)

Now that you have your data, you can start layering in the active changes.

- Day 9: Take a 15 minute walk today.
- Practice "4-7-8" breathing during a mid-afternoon energy slump
- Make a list of the whole foods that sound good to you, focus on protein & fiber and go get 5 things.

During my breathing exercise, where in my body was I holding the most tension?

Am I eating processed "convenience" foods because I lack time, or because I'm prioritizing comfort over health? What can I do to change this?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 2: The Momentum (Integration & Habits)

Now that you have your data, you can start layering in the active changes.

- Day 10: Follow a beginners yoga routine for 15 minutes today (or chair yoga)
- Practice "4-7-8" breathing during a mid-afternoon energy slump
- Increase fiber intake with more plants and whole grains.

How does my digestion feel today compared to a week ago?

Which "vice" am I clinging to because I'm afraid I won't be fun (or functional) without it?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 2: The Momentum (Integration & Habits)

Now that you have your data, you can start layering in the active changes.

- Day 11: Follow a beginners stretching video for 15 minutes.
- Practice "4-7-8" breathing during a mid-afternoon energy slump
- Audit your caffeine and alcohol; notice if they trigger evening hot flashes.

Mid-point check-in: What habit feels easiest? Which is the hardest?.

How can I make supporting my bone and heart health feel like an act of self-love?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 2: The Momentum (Integration & Habits)

Now that you have your data, you can start layering in the active changes.

- Day 12: Take a 15 minute walk today
- Practice "4-7-8" breathing during a mid-afternoon energy slump
- Focus on being mindful today, slow down and take notice of things you normally would fly by.

Make a list of ways you can add "movement snacks"—short stretches or stairs throughout the day.

How does it feel to prioritize my physical strength today? Do I feel capable or hesitant?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 2: The Momentum (Integration & Habits)

Now that you have your data, you can start layering in the active changes.

- Day 13: Do 1- 15 minute bodyweight exercise in 3 minute intervals today.
- Practice "4-7-8" breathing during a mid-afternoon energy slump
- Focus on being mindful today, slow down and take notice of things you normally would fly by.

What is one habit I've started that I actually look forward to now?

How do "movement snacks" change my mood compared to a long, grueling workout?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 2: The Momentum (Integration & Habits)

Now that you have your data, you can start layering in the active changes.

- Day 14: Follow a stretching video today & play music that makes you feel happy or energized.
- Swap a trigger (like caffeine) for something else, notice how your body responds?
- Test a "Hard Stop" for screens 1 hour before bed to improve sleep quality.

What can you delegate in your life to reduce stress?

Am I actually struggling with the plan, or am I just mad that I have to be the one to do the work?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 3: The Refinement (Sustainability & Flow)

Focus on making these habits feel like a natural part of your life rather than a "plan".

- Day 15: Focus on "Mindful Eating"—eat until satisfied, not stuffed.
- Prioritize a "nervous system downshift"—try a 10-minute restorative yoga or meditation.
- Remember to take care of your skin, when you look good, you automatically feel better

What did I do with that extra hour of "no-screen" time? How did it affect my mood & sleep?

When I swapped a trigger (like caffeine) for something else, how did my body respond?

Did I eat until I was full, or until the plate was empty? How does my stomach feel right now?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 3: The Refinement (Sustainability & Flow)

Focus on making these habits feel like a natural part of your life rather than a "plan".

- Day 16: Re-evaluate your movement; make sure it feels "regulating," not exhausting.
- Connect with a friend or community member; social connection is vital for mood.
- Fuel your spirit in whatever form feels good to you: (music, dance, reading)

What does "rest" look like to me when I'm not just sleeping?

Which movement or activities make me feel the most powerful?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 3: The Refinement (Sustainability & Flow)

Focus on making these habits feel like a natural part of your life rather than a "plan".

- Day 17: Move to Music today. Whatever makes you feel good.
- Speak kindly to your body today, ask it to heal and be strong.
- Make time to make a healthy meal today and prep one for tomorrow

Am I eating because I'm hungry, or am I trying to "swallow" an emotion I don't want to deal with?

Am I punishing my body with "exercise" or rewarding it with "movement"? There's a difference.



21 Day Kickstart

Week 3: The Refinement (Sustainability & Flow)

Focus on making these habits feel like a natural part of your life rather than a "plan".

- Day 18: Reward your body with your favorite exercise today
- Detox your fridge or cabinets today of processed foods.
- Try a short term fast tonight from dinner time tonight to breakfast tomorrow (8-12 hours)

Who in my life makes me feel seen and supported during this transition?

What is the one "old me" habit I'm still dragging along because I'm too scared to let go of the past?

Can I replace this habit with something healthier? Make a list:



21 Day Kickstart

Week 3: The Refinement (Sustainability & Flow)

Focus on making these habits feel like a natural part of your life rather than a "plan".

- Day 19: Reward your body with your favorite exercise today
- Commit to trying 2 whole foods in the next week you've never eaten before
- Try a short term fast tonight from dinner time tonight to breakfast tomorrow (8-12 hours)

Do some research and make a list of high fiber foods that sound good to you, or that you already like: (work them into your regular diet)

What am I most looking forward to in my life right now?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 3: The Refinement (Sustainability & Flow)

Focus on making these habits feel like a natural part of your life rather than a "plan".

- Day 20: Do 15 minutes of Bodyweight strength training today in 3-5 minute intervals.
- Commit to trying 2 high fiber foods in the next week you've never eaten before
- Try a short term fast tonight from dinner time tonight to breakfast tomorrow (8-12 hours)

Name 3 things you've learned about yourself over the last 3 weeks:

What boundaries can I set to help me put my well being as a priority?



21 Day Kickstart

Week 3: The Refinement Own Your Evolution

- Day 21: Do 15 minutes of your favorite movements, include some resistance or weight bearing options
- Speak kindly to yourself and your body
- Try a short term fast tonight from dinner time tonight to breakfast tomorrow (8-12 hours)

What's your biggest "non-scale" victory over the last 3 weeks?

Now that the "kickstart" is ending, how can I keep from going back to hiding, and am I finally ready to show up and participate in my own life?



