

Eating Well Through Perimenopause & Menopause

Perimenopause is the transition leading up to menopause, when hormone levels begin to fluctuate. Menopause is defined as 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period. During this time, hormonal changes can affect muscle mass, bone health, heart health, sleep, and overall well-being.



A balanced eating pattern that emphasizes vegetables and fruit, whole grains, protein foods, and healthy fats, together with regular physical activity, can help support health during this stage of life.

Eat Enough Protein

As estrogen levels decline, it becomes easier to lose muscle and strength. Eating enough protein, combined with regular strength training, helps maintain muscle mass, support healthy aging, and preserve physical function.

Include a source of protein at each meal and snack, such as:

- Fish, poultry and lean meats
- Eggs
- Milk, yogurt and cheese
- Soy foods (e.g., tofu, edamame)
- Beans, lentils and chickpeas
- Nuts and seeds

Protect Your Bones

Bone loss increases during and after menopause, which can increase the risk of osteoporosis and fractures.

Support bone health by:

- Aiming for 1,200 mg of calcium per day through food sources such as milk, yogurt, cheese, fortified soy beverages, and calcium-set tofu.
- Taking a daily vitamin D supplement (800 IU/20 mcg), unless otherwise directed by your healthcare provider.
- Participating in regular weight-bearing and strength-training exercise.

Support Your Heart

Heart disease risk increases after menopause. The Mediterranean Diet is one of the most well-studied eating patterns for supporting heart health. The Portfolio Diet is another evidence-based eating pattern that can help lower LDL ("bad") cholesterol.

Choose more:

- Vegetables and fruit
- Whole grains
- Beans and lentils
- Nuts and seeds
- Fish
- Healthy fats, such as olive oil

Choose minimally processed foods more often and include sources of unsaturated fats, such as olive oil, nuts, seeds and fish.

Eat More Fibre

Fibre supports digestive health and may help improve cholesterol, blood sugar, and fullness after meals.

Good sources of fibre include:

- Vegetables and fruit
- Whole grains
- Beans and lentils
- Nuts and seeds

Increase fibre gradually and drink plenty of fluids.

Move Your Body

Regular physical activity supports muscle strength, bone health, heart health, mood, sleep, and overall well-being.

Aim to include:

- **Strength training** at least twice per week
- Weight-bearing activities such as walking, hiking, or dancing
- Regular aerobic activity
- Balance and flexibility exercises

Strength training becomes especially important during and after menopause to help preserve muscle and support healthy aging.

What About Supplements?

Many supplements are marketed for menopause symptoms, but research supporting their effectiveness is often limited or inconsistent.

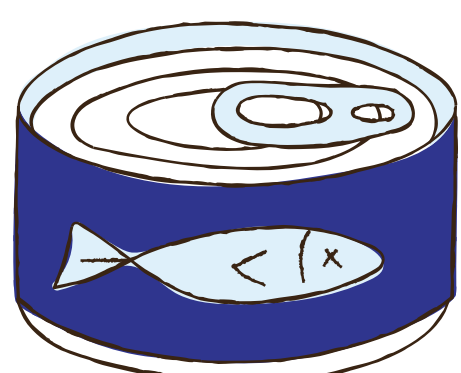
Before taking supplements, talk with your healthcare provider or registered dietitian to discuss whether they are appropriate for you

Alcohol, Sleep and Stress

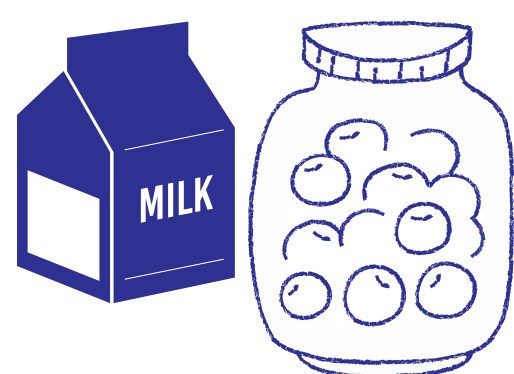
Healthy lifestyle habits work together to support overall well-being.

- If you drink alcohol, keep it to a minimum. Some people find that alcohol worsens hot flashes or interferes with sleep.
- Aim for a regular sleep schedule and limit caffeine later in the day if it affects your sleep.
- Find healthy ways to manage stress, such as physical activity, mindfulness, spending time outdoors, or connecting with others.

Key Takeaways



Protein: 20-30g at each meal



Calcium:
1200mg daily,
through food
Vitamin D
Supplement:
800-1000IU
daily



Dietary Fibre:
at least 25
grams daily



Heart Healthy
Diet



Strength
Training 2x per
week

Need personalized support? Everyone's nutrition needs are different.

This handout provides general nutrition information and is not a substitute for individualized medical or nutrition advice. Speak with a **Registered Dietitian** for recommendations tailored to your health needs.