

Lifestyle Medicine in the Menopause/Perimenopause

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Overview

- Menopause: 1 year since last period.
- Perimenopause: The time around your menopause.
 - Can last for many years
 - Typically 45-55 but can be earlier
- Symptoms due to drop in Oestrogen
- Associated with higher risk of cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis

Symptoms

- Almost anything!
- Hot flushes/night sweats.
- Period changes
- Brain fog
- Mood changes/irritability
- Loss libido
- Joint/muscle pains
- Headaches
- Dry eyes
- Dry/itchy skin
- Genitourinary syndrome menopause:
 - Dryness
 - Pain
 - Recurrent infections

Treatment/Management

- Nothing
- Diet/Lifestyle factors.
- Supplements – a busy market!
- Medications
 - Topical oestrogen
 - HRT
 - Antidepressants

Stress/Relaxation

- **Stress makes menopausal symptoms worse**
- Modern life is stressful.
- Perimenopause often coincides with other difficult stages in life
- Be kind to yourself
- Schedule in time for self care
- Yoga, meditation, mindfulness
- Hobbies

Sleep

- For Flushes/sweats:
 - Cool room/fan
 - Natural fabrics, light layers
- Sleep hygiene:
 - Minimise stress
 - Avoid/remove blue light –phone, TV, main lights
 - Wind down routine
 - Morning sunlight exposure
 - Reduce caffeine/alcohol
 - Don't stay in bed if not sleeping

Diet

More:

- Whole foods –minimally processed
- Fibre fibre fibre!
 - Aim for 30 plants a week.
- Fats
 - Extra virgin olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds, oily fish (salmon, mackerel etc)
- Plant oestrogens (phytoestrogens)
 - Soy, beans, lentils, fennel, flaxseed, dried fruits
- Calcium
 - Dairy, fortified alternatives, nuts and seeds, greens and beans, tinned fish.

Reduce:

- Alcohol –reduce as much as possible
- Ultra processed food

UNPROCESSED

FRUIT



VEGETABLES



NUTS



EGGS



MILK



MEAT



PROCESSED INGREDIENTS

OILS



BUTTER



VINEGAR



SUGAR



SALT



HONEY



PROCESSED

HAM



CHEESE



FRESH BREAD



BACON



SALTED NUTS



TINNED FRUIT IN SYRUP



ULTRA-PROCESSED

SUPERMARKET BREAD



READY MEALS



BREAKFAST CEREAL



BISCUITS



CAKES



CRISPS



Supplements

- Take care!
- Vitamin D –for bone health
 - 1000 units daily. With meal
- Omega 3/Vitamin B12 if plant based

- Phytoestrogens
 - Red clover
 - Black Cohosh
 - Fennel

Exercise

- Find something you enjoy!
- All movement is good movement
- 150 minute moderate exercise each week (or 75 minutes intense exercise)
- You can do too much.
- **Strength/resistance training key for bone health**
- Yoga/pilates/walking for relaxing/mindfulness

Resources

- Calcium calculator:
<https://webapps.igc.ed.ac.uk/world/research/rheumatological/calcium-calculator/index.php>
- Phytoestrogens:
<https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/phytoestrogens.php#:~:text=Phytoestrogens%20can%20be%20taken%20either,in%20the%20quantities%20of%20phytoestrogens.>
- Workouts: Youtube.
Joe Wicks: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSxBqqYRTNY>
- Podcasts:
 - Feel better live more
 - Doctors Kitchen
 - Dr Louise Newson