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 hygeine:
 - 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:

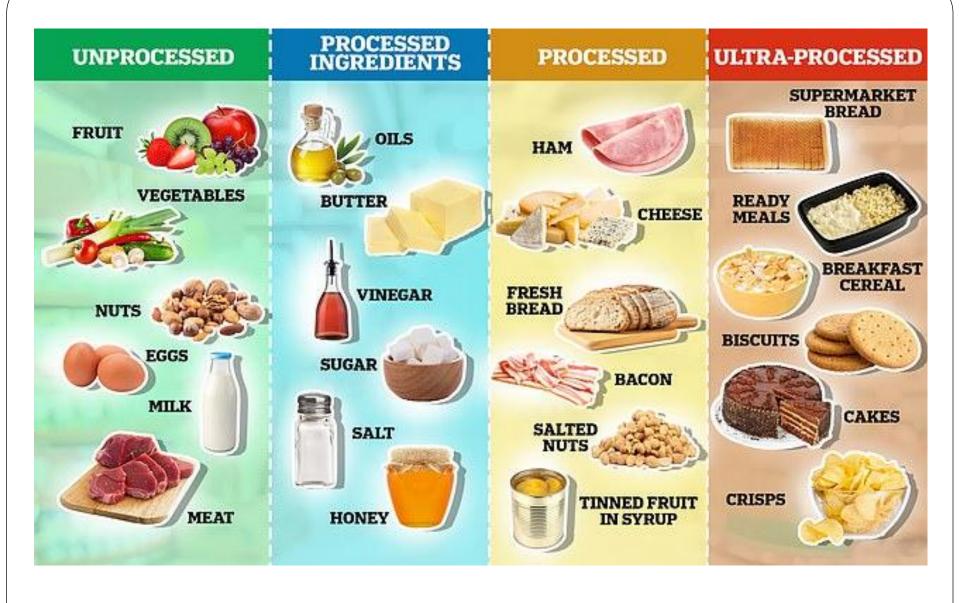
- Whole foods —minimally processed
- Fibre fibre fibre!
 - Aim for 30 plants a week.
- Fats
 - Extra virgin olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds, oily fish (salmon, mackerel etc)
- Plant oestrogens (phytoestrogens)
 - Soy, beans, lentils, fennel, flaxseed, dried fruits

Reduce:

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

• Calcium

Dairy, fortified alternatives, nuts and seeds, greens and beans, tinned fish.



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%20their%20quantities%20of%20phytoestrogens.
- Workouts: Youtube.
 Joe Wicks: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSxBqqYRTNY
- Podcasts:
 - Feel better live more
 - Doctors Kitchen
 - Dr Louise Newson