

Reverse Menopause

Knock Out Menopausal Symptoms with These Proven Tips and Strategies

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Menopause – Fight Back!

We are the stronger sex; I'm convinced of it. We take on more and more responsibility and wear so many hats in our busy lives. As we approach menopause, this is a time where we need to take a stand for ourselves. It's time to take care of 'me', so that we can serve others best. Quite often this can be viewed as selfish, but in reality, it's irresponsible to do anything but just this.

So, with this in mind, I want to help you discover a little more about things that will inevitably occur in all women's lives. It's a matter of education and preparation so that when things happen or are happening to you, you'll have the best defense to sail through what some consider the most difficult time of their life.

I also want to point out that I'm a woman in my late forties and I'm 'in the trenches' with you. I know what you're going through as I face similar challenges.

Menopause – Tell me more...

The period of a woman's life called menopause usually begins around 45 years of age, although, of course this can vary due to a number of different factors. Health issues and hysterectomies for instance can result in menopause beginning earlier, even as early as her thirties.

Because everyone is different, menopausal symptoms can vary in their degree of severity with some women 'sailing through' the period, while others suffer greatly. Very few women will experience no symptoms at all and while menopause is a completely natural process, it can be quite distressing time for some. The reduction in estrogen, testosterone and progesterone hormones that occurs is responsible for the unpleasant symptoms commonly associated with menopause and although the process can last anywhere from 7-10 years on average, there are ways to ensure that they can be controlled and not result in total misery.

It's all about hormones...

Like it our lump it, our bodies are governed by our hormones. Here's a crash course in hormones and what happens to them as we age:

Growth hormone – This is a hormone that regulates growth and metabolism. It's highest in our youth and decreases with age. It's produced in the pituitary gland.

Estrogen – This is what all the hoopla is about. Estrogen is produced in the ovaries and over time our body stops producing it. It regulates menstruation, ovulation, and it helps support pregnancy.

Progesterone – This hormone is also produced by the ovaries and decreases over time. This hormone is essential for a successful pregnancy and lactation.

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Testosterone – Yes, women have this hormone too. It's produced in the ovaries and is responsible for sex drive among other things and as it's levels drop so does sexual desire around menopause.

As we age, our hormones naturally decrease. This is a normal process and not a 'disease' that needs to be fixed; it only needs to be managed so that we can function well during the changes that are inevitable.

You may be feeling the following:

- depression or anxiety
- sleep disorders
- change in sex drive
- weight gain
- water retention and bloating
- headaches
- lumpy breasts
- fibroids
- changes to the skin (acne or wrinkles)

So what actually happens at menopause?

The average onset of menopause is 51 years old but it's a different time for everyone. One indicator of when this will happen for you is to check with your mother as to when it happened for her. When you have not had a period for an entire year, that is, 12 consecutive months, it's believed that you have 'officially' gone into menopause.

Peri-menopause occurs in the years leading up to this time. While menopause is when your period stops completely, the years leading up to this can be very much like what many women experience during PMS. About 50% of women experience slight 'symptoms' and others, about 25%, experience extreme distress and imbalances.

These can be described as:

- Hot flashes
- Difficulty sleeping
- Memory problems
- Headaches
- Sexual issues, especially vaginal dryness
- Irritability and mood swings
- Joint pain
- Infections such as bladder and urinary tract infections

So far, things aren't looking great for those of us in or approaching menopause.

The good news...

Studies show that most of these 'symptoms' can be countered with three things:

1. Positive mental attitude
2. Exercise
3. Supportive nutrition

These are things that you can CONTROL. So the best news of all is that you can be pro-active in your journey through this time of life.

Positive Mental Attitude - You are what you think...

Your attitude is a key player during this time of your life as it is during any time. You may be experiencing more physical challenges, but by taking action of self care, you will be able to handle things more easily and with grace. Here are a few more positive thinking tips to help make this transition, and any difficult time, more manageable:

- Surround your self with positive people.
- Avoid those energy vampires that bring you down to their negative level.
- If you feel discouraged, stay the course, get some rest and don't take those difficult moments too seriously. 'This too shall pass' is an axiom that can help.
- Positive self-talk is key. Change the negative thoughts in your head about yourself. For example, regarding your body, instead of seeing yourself as 'fat and out of shape' focus on what's beautiful about yourself. You may say 'I have beautiful hair' or 'I'm a giving person and people love me'.
- Always ask yourself how things could be worse. By seeing that things could be worse, the current situation is often more bearable.
- Gratitude is key. Appreciate all that you have going for you and life is more abundant instantly.

For some people it takes some practice to be a positive thinker, I think some are just born with or conditioned to more negativity. But with a conscious effort, this can all be turned around.

When you are experiencing any kind of change in your life, particularly related to your health, these healthy positive thinking habits can make all the difference.

Exercise - Turn up the heat...raise your metabolism and keep it stoked...

Your body is changing, and likely not in the way you desire, so in my experience, most of you want to transform your body. In order for this to happen, you need to create a challenge or stimulus for your body to overcome. That's right, this is where exercise comes into play.

To create a physical change in your body, you must constantly vary the stimulus. You cannot simply do the same workout, day after day, week after week, and expect your body to transform. The same workout will produce a certain level of fitness, and then you will stall out. Your progress will reach a steady state fitness level. Change is imperative to get to the next level.

To look better than you ever have before, you need to do something that you've never done before.

Now is the time to make a change in traditional training methods. You need to say goodbye to long, slow cardio sessions, and say hello to resistance training and high intensity interval training. If you need some help, [my program](#) will provide direction for you to transform your body because each workout in the program is so different. The goal of the program is to increase your metabolism, which means that your body will become more efficient, and burn more calories, even at rest. This is done by increasing lean muscle tone.

One of the biggest fears that women have about resistance training is that they don't want to get 'big'. Don't worry, this just doesn't happen, and is erroneous thinking. If it were only so easy to add muscle to your body, we'd all have huge muscles and racing metabolisms.

Maintaining your muscle tone as you age is the KEY to keeping your metabolism moving.

Many of you have found that you can gain weight easily and weight loss is near impossible. Part of this is due to the fact that your lifestyle is becoming more sedentary and you have lost some of that muscle from your younger days. If your weight has changed, you've become heavier, even though you've lost this muscle tissue. The sad truth is that muscle has been replaced with fat, and then some. You have changed your muscle to fat ratio.

More fat + less muscle (same weight) = slower metabolism

Your solution is:

More muscle + less fat (possibly the same weight) = faster metabolism

What's Different about My Body at My Age?

Aging and Body Fat

As you age, you may be increasingly exasperated with the ever-increasing upward creep of body fat levels. Understanding the reasons behind these changes is the first step in battling an ever-expanding waistline.

To begin, let's examine dietary habits. The most obvious reason for higher body fat levels is overeating, but food choices can also make a big difference. No one ever overeats on fibrous vegetables; it's usually the carbohydrate choices that are the culprits to packing on the pounds. Excess carbs, coupled with a high fat intake will accelerate those gains in fat. Throw in other factors that gain momentum as we age, and body fat accumulates, faster as the years go by. More on this later...

Hormones, such as cortisol, testosterone and estrogen fluctuate as our life styles push daily stress levels higher. Excess alcohol intake and use of corticosteroids can create chemical imbalances that encourage fat storage. As you can see, some factors are more easily addressed than others, but maintaining a healthy diet is an easy and effective way to slow down or even reverse the process that increases unwanted body fat from accumulating.

Secondly, maintaining lean muscle tone is absolutely essential to maintaining healthy body fat levels. As I alluded to earlier, if you retain or add to your lean muscle tone, you must consume additional calories to preserve that muscle. Muscle is metabolically active and takes food energy (calories) to sustain, thus creating an increased metabolism. Body fat is simply stored energy, and requires zero calories to maintain. The downward spiral begins as muscle tone is lost due to inactivity. This trend tends to accelerate as we age. Some find that while their body weight stays nearly the same as in their youth, their shape changes drastically. What's occurring is muscle tone is declining, while body fat levels climb. The end product is a slower metabolism, which in the long run, makes you gradually get fatter, even if you're eating the same number of calories as you did in the past. It's a downward spiral that eventually makes losing or even maintaining body weight levels impossible.

By age 75, the percentage of body fat typically doubles compared with what it was during young adulthood. The distribution of fat also changes, changing the shape of the torso. A healthy diet and regular exercise can help keep excessive body fat accumulation to a minimum. Studies prove that regular weight bearing and weight resistance exercise significantly slows or even halts the loss of muscle tone with aging.

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The following body fat charts show the “typical” or “normal” degeneration of body composition as we age.

Age	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84
Body Fat %	22.5	23.9	25.8	29.1	34.3	35.8

According to these charts, and this line of traditional wisdom, it is ‘acceptable’ for you to gain body fat as you age. This does NOT have to be the case. With regular exercise and a healthy diet, you should be able to maintain your lean muscle tone well into your middle years and beyond. This, in turn, will help to keep your body fat levels and body composition in check.

An active and fit 70-year-old woman with a body fat level of 23% has a much lower risk of disease and aging than her counterpart with a ‘normal’ body fat level of 34%, not to mention the higher quality of life. Regardless if you are 20 or 70 years of age, lower body fat levels reduce a person’s general health risks.

Too much body fat at any age is a liability. And finally, maintaining muscle tissue into our later years will keep us healthy and happy as we age. The accepted image of a little old lady, bent over, and barely walking with the aid of a cane, or worse, a walker does not have to be the norm. By keeping as much muscle on our bodies as we get older, we can be vibrant well into our senior years. Muscle is what moves our bodies, from birth to death. If we work to keep our bodies functioning properly, as designed, there will be no canes or walkers in our futures. We can start working on that insurance policy, which is this program, today.

Nutrition – Vaporize Your Fat: 10 Tips to a Leaner You

Fat loss = rocket science
NOT!

You’d be surprised at how a little knowledge and common sense can go a long way to reducing your waistline. It’s NOT rocket science or brain surgery. It’s consistently applying these simple tips that will help you meet your fat loss goals. Remember that you likely didn’t gain those extra pounds over night, so they won’t magically disappear over night either.

Anyone who tries to sell you anything that will vaporize your fat will only be vaporizing your pocket book. Sadly, in an effort to fit into your skinny jeans, many are willing to explore desperate measures that will do nothing but disappoint. Don’t make that mistake.

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Take a look at these simple tips. Print them off, put them on your fridge or somewhere that you'll be continually reminded of them. You may not be able apply all ten tips right away, but even if over the next ten weeks you apply one tip a week, by the end of ten weeks you'll have transformed your eating.

Here we go:

1. **Where are you now?** Take your measurements! Weigh yourself, but more importantly, take measurements at your chest, arms, waist, abdomen, hips and thighs. If you're exercising at the same time as changing your nutrition plan, you may be losing inches but this will not necessarily show up on the scale. You may be replacing a little fat loss with a little muscle gain and break even on the scale. This is SO discouraging. By quantifying with tangible evidence in the form of measurements, you can compare and not just 'eye ball' your physique.
2. **Train train train!** Dieting alone will only give you a smaller version of your current self. This is probably not what you had in mind. Build shapely muscle with resistance training while boosting your metabolism. Include HIIT (high intensity interval training) to burn calories while you're training and up to 38 hours after to torch fat.
3. **Eat six meals a day.** Your body goes into famine mode to conserve calories when food isn't supplied on a regular basis. So do your body a favor, let it know to keep the fire of metabolism going with meals and snacks spaced 2-3 hours apart.
4. **Pack a lunch (or snack).** Never go anywhere empty handed. Always have a healthy snack at hand: almonds, protein bar, a green apple. It's easier NOT to succumb to junk food when a healthy choice is close at hand.
5. **Reduce simple sugars.** Read labels and keep sugar consumption, especially high fructose corn syrup type sugars, to a minimum. Naturally occurring sugars in fruits are not the culprit here. Where ever 'sugar' or any of it's derivatives are tops on the label, put it down! Try to keep sugar consumption to below 30 g/day.
6. **Eat protein at every meal.** Protein not only helps to repair and rebuild tissue, it also stabilizes blood sugar. If you have a little protein with every meal, you won't experience the highs and lows associated with an insulin rush when you eat carbohydrates alone. Protein helps to moderate insulin so that you won't feel starved and run down. It helps keep energy levels more stable.
7. **Pass the fat!** The good fat that is! Don't skimp on good fats such as olive oil, nuts, avocado, salmon and fish oils. AVOID at all costs trans fats, vegetable

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shortening and hard stick margarines. Too much fat will result in weight gain, however good fats help with nutrient absorption, nerve and cell membrane integrity. And eating good fats will help keep you satiated so that you don't feel like you need to eat the kitchen sink.

8. **Drink up!** Replace sugary drinks, diet drinks, fruit juices and even caffeinated beverages with water and more water. Surprisingly, water has a thermogenic effect so that it helps to keep metabolism boosted while it hydrates you.
9. **Cut it out!** The junk that is. It seems like a no brainer, but just don't bring tempting unhealthy junky food into your house. If its not there, you won't eat it. Period. NO excuses. Just walk by that aisle in the grocery store and don't allow that crap into your cart.
10. **Treat yourself!** If you've done #9, then you deserve to do this. Once a week, give yourself a treat meal where you can enjoy any of your favorite foods, within moderation. Life isn't worth living without some of your favorite treats at some point. Remind yourself of your goals and set a date with Miss Vicki's chips or a glass of wine for a special occasion when you'll really enjoy it.

A few other tips...

You may have read about various natural remedies for help you handle menopausal symptoms. While I'm not a doctor and you should really consult your own health practitioner first, there are a few supplements that you may find helpful.

Native Americans first introduced black cohosh to medicine. It is believed that it possesses some degree of estrogenic power.

There are studies that have indicated that black cohosh can be helpful to relax muscle spasms, including those associated with menstrual cycles and stages. There is some indication that it can provide relief from hot flashes, sweating, dizziness, rapid heartbeat and improve depressive moods. It's been shown to help with inflammatory arthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. It's known to be used to treat high blood pressure, whooping cough, asthma and ringing in the ears (tinnitus).

More study is warranted, but this is a valuable herbal treatment that shouldn't be ignored. See your physician or health practitioner to see if its right for you.

You may have heard about Evening Primrose Oil. This is a supplement that's made from the plant's seeds that contain special oil comprised of gamma linolenic acid. Many women say that their menopausal symptoms are decreased once they begin taking this supplement. The fats and oils found in the plant are essential to overall health due to

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the fact that our bodies require healthy doses of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. Many women are deficient in essential fatty acids.

Omega 3 is also an excellent supplement for women and can ease menopausal symptoms as well.

Fluctuating estrogen levels causes night sweats, or 'nocturnal hyperhydrosis'. When hormone levels fluctuate, there is a malfunction of the heat regulatory part of the brain that detects increased body temperatures and releases chemicals that cause the skin's blood vessels to dilate. This causes heavy sweating and then cold shivering. In any case, this can result in disruptive sleep patterns as well.

To provide some relief, you can avoid hot showers, caffeine, hot weather, spicy food, alcohol, smoking, hot rooms, diet pills, hot drinks and stress before bed.

Ways to possibly ease night sweats can be to take a cold shower, wear cotton clothing, use cotton bedding, and avoid the above triggers.