

Nutrition tips for the menopause

Nutrition can play a key role in managing these symptoms and supporting overall health during menopause. Below we explore some of the ways that nutrition can help women navigate the menopause transition.



1. Eat a balanced diet.

Having a diet rich in plants, veg, fruit, pulses, nuts and grains. There is also evidence that we should reduce red meat intake to once or twice a week.

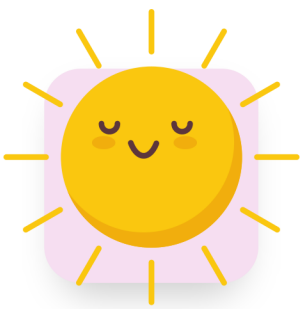
We should limit processed or cured meats such as bacon, salami and hams. In addition we should aim to reduce the amount of ultra-processed foods we eat. In the UK, 50% of calories comes from ultra-processed foods. Ultra-processed foods is where there are more than 5 ingredients and contain things that we would not have in our kitchen cupboards, additives and artificial sweeteners, flavourings and colours.

Cut down on saturated fat and replace with unsaturated fats – for example swap butter and coconut oil for rapeseed, olive and sunflower oils and spreads made from these.

Have fish twice a week – once should be an oily type (such as mackerel, salmon or sardines).

Watch your salt intake – aim for less than 6g a day. Check the nutrition label on foods and don't add salt in cooking or at the table.

Include high-fibre and wholegrain foods in your diet, such as wholegrain breakfast cereals, wholewheat pasta and pulses (e.g. lentils and beans). Fruit and vegetables are good fibre providers too.



2. Get enough calcium and vitamin D.

During menopause, women's bone density can decrease, increasing the risk of osteoporosis and fractures. Eating foods that are rich in calcium and vitamin D can help support bone health. Good sources of calcium include dairy products, leafy green vegetables, tofu, and nuts. Vitamin D can be found in fatty fish, egg yolks, and fortified foods such as milk and cereal. All adults are recommended to take Vitamins D supplements from October to March

3. Limit alcohol, caffeine, and spicy foods.

Some women find that limiting their intake of alcohol, caffeine, and spicy foods can help reduce menopause symptoms such as hot flushes and night sweats. However, this can vary from person to person. With regards to alcohol it is recommended that we consume less than 14 units per week, having at least 2-3 alcohol free days each week and knowing how many units are in the glass when you are pouring your drink at home

4. Stay hydrated.

Hormonal changes can cause the body to lose more fluids, so it's important to drink plenty of water throughout the day. This can help prevent symptoms such as dry skin, headaches, and fatigue. Aim for at least 8-10 glasses of water per day, and consider adding herbal teas or low-sugar drinks, without artificial sweeteners, to your routine for variety. Artificial sweeteners have been shown to increase insulin resistance and heart disease risks.

