

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN
YOU'RE NOT EXPECTING

Perimenopause



Workbook & Recipe Guide

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Hi there

Feeling unprepared for midlife? You're not alone. As a fellow midlife woman in the throes of perimenopause, I remember how scary it was to feel like I was living in a totally different body than the one I'd always known.

The hot flashes, 3 am wakings and moments of "meno-rage" left me feeling completely out of control.



If you're like most of the women I work with, you're looking for help as you navigate through this season of life. And maybe you've tried the latest diet, have a cupboard full of supplements, or search the internet at 3 am for the solutions to your symptoms.

I get it, and I hear you. But before you start the latest diet or trendy fitness plan, I want you to know that you can find the health and hormonal balance you're looking for *without* a side of diet culture. You deserve to find food freedom and body confidence!

You CAN make peace with food, your 40s and your hot flashes!

Jenn

**The information presented in this work book is not intended to diagnose or provide treatment for any symptom or condition

DIETITIAN INTUITIVE EATING COACH NATUROPATHIC DOCTOR



The Facts

51

Average age of menopause

1%

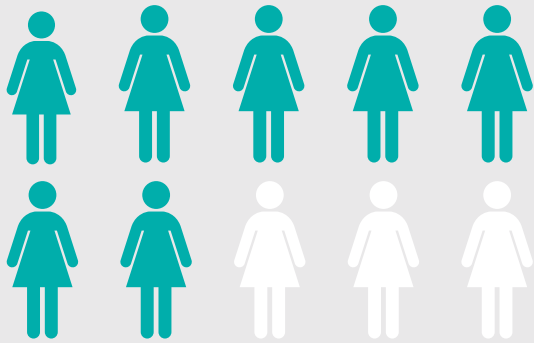
Go into early menopause before age 40

4-5

Average number of years in perimenopause

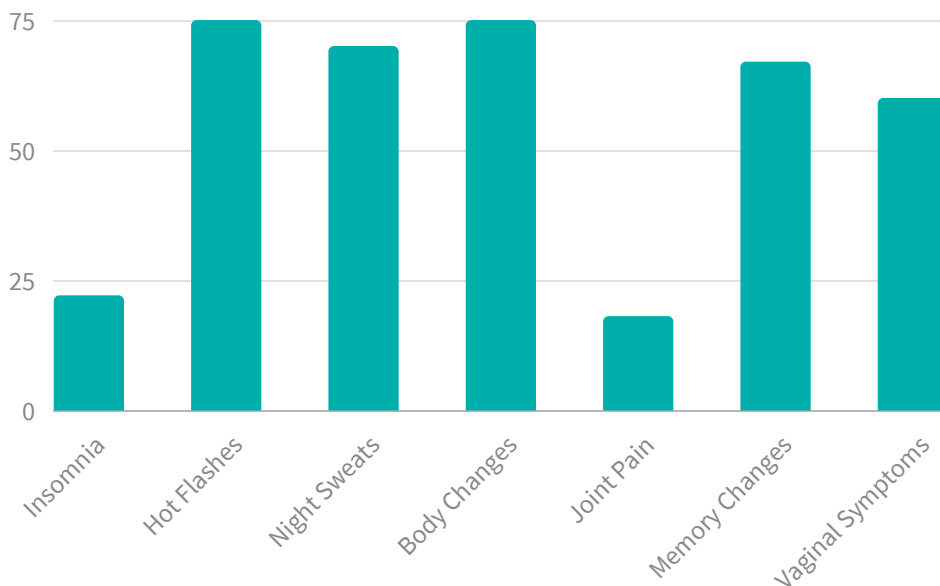
70%

Women who say their quality of life has been negatively impacted



33%

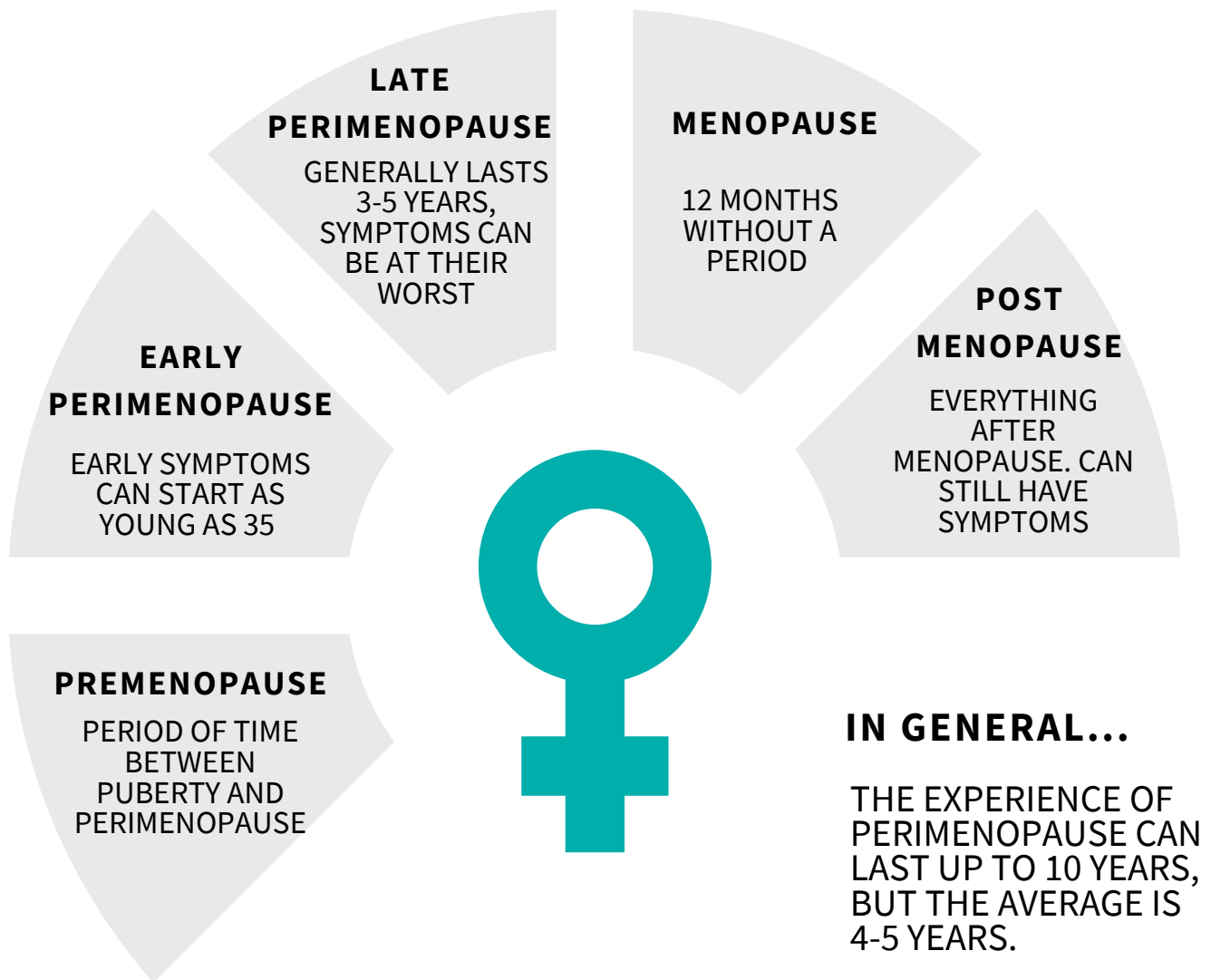
OF WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE ARE OVER 50



What symptoms do women experience most often?



Ages & Stages



What stage do you think you're in? How long have you been here?

Are you in Perimenopause?



If you're over the age of 35 and are experiencing at least 3 of these symptoms, you could be in perimenopause.



Shorter cycles



New, or worsening headaches or migraines



Irregular cycles



New, or worsening anxiety/depression



Heavier or more painful periods



Hot flashes or night sweats



Worsening PMS



Body changes



New, or worsening breast tenderness



New mid-sleep waking



Symptom Tracker

Start tracking your symptoms for a better understanding of your midlife experience. If you're still having a period, start tracking on day 1 of your next cycle.

Hot Flashes 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Night Sweats 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Sleep Changes 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Low Mood 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Anxiety 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Joint Pain 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



My Symptoms



Write down your top symptoms and use the space on the right to notice how they are influenced by things like sleep, stress, illness and exercise.

■ _____

■ _____

■ _____

■ _____

NOTES ABOUT MY SYMPTOMS

Large grey rectangular area for notes.



Writing Your Hormonal Roadmap

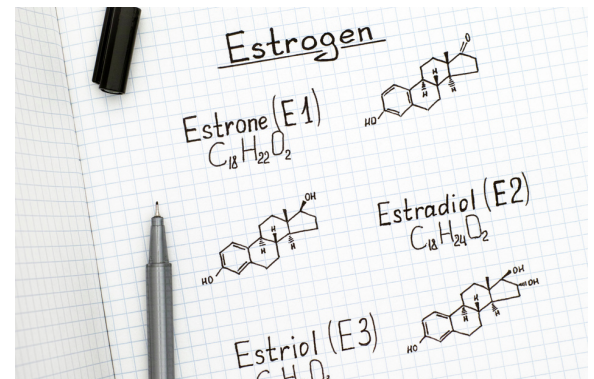


Tracking your symptoms is key to helping you and your clinician determine what phase you're in and selecting the best treatment, because there is no test for perimenopause.

STEP 1

STEP 2

Understand the hormonal changes that are happening so you're in the drivers seat and not taken by surprise when symptoms change, or new ones appear.



Have a plan that addresses the physical, mental, and emotional experiences of perimenopause and menopause.

STEP 3

STEP 4

Learn how to make food your friend, not your enemy. Nourish a relationship with food that's flexible and forgiving. Learn how a food-first approach can help women in all phases of perimenopause and menopause manage symptoms and ensure a healthy and active midlife.



The 4 Pillars of Intuitive Nutrition in Midlife

"Your relationship with food should never come at the expense of your mental health."

SELF-COMPASSION

- Bodies change - it's normal to have a different body at 20 and 50!
- Body diversity is healthy and normal. We're not all supposed to look the same way
- You're not alone - all women in midlife experience changes in how they feel on the inside and outside
- 80% of women experience weight gain and body dissatisfaction in perimenopause
- It's not your fault - you're not doing anything wrong

UNDERSTANDING

- Changes in estrogen and progesterone are at the root of our physical, mental, and emotional midlife changes
- Other hormones (such as cortisol) can also play a role in how we experience midlife
- Food can't fix everything! Symptoms aren't always influenced by nutrition - many require more than diet changes
- Restrictive diets rarely result in lasting change or hormone health

ATTUNEMENT

- Attunement is learning how to listen and respond to your body's needs
- Hunger, fullness, the need for rest, desire for pleasure and connection are all needs that require attunement
- Midlife comes with many attunement disruptors - hot flashes, sleep changes, and stress
- Addressing these will improve your health, your relationship with food, and your body confidence.

GENTLE NUTRITION

- Phytoestrogen-rich foods can help support estrogen balance
- Non-judgemental curiosity can help you notice foods that may worsen symptoms like hot flashes and night sweats
- Gentle nutrition's "try it on" approach can help you explore nutrition in midlife without judgment
- Gentle nutrition + body kindness can help you find food freedom and body confidence at any age!



Five Foods to Explore For Hormone Health



01

Beans and Lentils

Try adding these to salads, soups, or meals you already make. Swap chicken for chickpeas, or add red lentils to your favourite soup.

02

Ground Flax Seed

Rich in the phytoestrogen lignan, ground flax is a midlife woman's best friend. Sprinkle on oatmeal, yogurt, or salad. Or try the muffins at the end of this guide!

03

Soy

Soy's isoflavones are well known for their ability to help manage the symptoms of perimenopause and menopause. Toss edamame into a salad, or try soft tofu in a smoothie!

04

Less Caffeine

No need to go cold turkey with your favourite hot beverage. Try half-caf or a low caffeine tea such as green tea. And enjoy earlier in the day.

05

Less Alcohol

No need to eliminate it completely, but try noticing how it affects symptoms such as sleep, mood, and hot flashes.



Recipes

Banana Flax Muffins

- 1/2 cup of olive oil
- 1/2 cup of honey or maple syrup
- 2 eggs
- 2-3 ripe bananas, mashed
- 1/4 cup of soy milk
- 1 tsp of cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp of baking soda
- 1 tsp of vanilla
- 1 1/4 cups of whole wheat flour
- 1/3 cup of ground flaxseed
- 1/3 cup of oats
- optional: 1/3 nuts, chocolate chips, raisins



Preheat oven to 325 F/175C. Mix all ingredients in a large bowl and stir until combined. Spoon into a greased muffin tin and bake for 20-22 minutes.

Recipes

Cilantro Lime Black Bean Salad

- 1.5 cups of cooked black beans (about 1 small can)
- 1 large handful of fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 avocado, diced into cubes
- 1 cup of diced tomato
- 1/2 cup of corn niblets
- 1/2 cup of diced cucumber
- 1/2 cup of diced pepper
- 1 lime
- 1 clove of garlic
- 1 tsp of olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste



Mix all ingredients and let sit for 1 hour before serving.

P.S. This is a very versatile salad. Throw in any other veggies you may have leftover at the end of the week.

Recipes

Tofu Scramble

1 package of firm tofu
1 tomato, diced
1 red onion, diced
1/3 cup of packed spinach
100 ml soy milk
½ tbsp nutritional yeast
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp turmeric
pinch of chili powder
salt and pepper to taste



In a small bowl add soy milk, garlic powder, nutritional yeast flakes, turmeric and a pinch of chili powder. Season with salt and pepper and mix well. Saute the onion for a few minutes in a tsp of oil. Crumble the tofu and add to the pan. Stir fry for 2 minutes over medium heat. Then add the seasoned soy milk to the pan, reduce the heat to low and simmer the tofu for a few minutes. Add diced and spinach and simmer for a few minutes. Season and serve!

Recipes

Tofu Chocolate Pudding

100 grams roughly chopped dark chocolate

1 package (340 grams-12 ounces) organic silken tofu, drained

2 tablespoons maple syrup

Put chocolate in a microwave safe bowl and melt the chocolate in the microwave in 30-second intervals, stirring each time until melted. Set aside and let cool for 10-15 minutes.

Meanwhile, add tofu and maple syrup to a food processor/blender and blend until very smooth. Add the melted chocolate and blend until well combined. Top with berries or eat on its own!



Recipes

Red Lentil Coriander Squash Soup

- 1 tbsp of olive or coconut oil
- 1 medium onion
- 2 tbsp of grated ginger
- 1 tsp of ground coriander
- 1 medium butternut squash, cubed.
- 1 cup of red lentils
- 4-5 cups of broth
- salt and pepper to taste



Heat oil over medium heat and sauté onions and ginger for 5 mins until tender. Add coriander and stir for 1 minute. Add squash, broth, and lentils and cook for 20-30 mins, or until lentils are soft and tender. Puree, season and serve!

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I see menopause as the start of the next fabulous phase of life as a woman. Now is a time to “tune into” our bodies and embrace this new chapter.

Kim Catrall

