

Nutrition and menopause

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THE menopause is a natural time in a woman's life usually occurring between the ages of 45-55 and can last a few months to several years.



During this time changes in hormone levels result in the stopping of menstruation. Women may also experience a variety of other symptoms such as weight gain, hot flushes, night sweats and poor concentration. Here we outline some nutrition and lifestyle ideas to support you during this phase of life.

Prioritise calcium-rich foods

Loss of calcium from the bones is accelerated during menopause, due to the reduction in the hormone oestrogen.

Calcium is a mineral associated with healthy bones and teeth.

Aim to eat two to three portions of calcium-rich foods daily to support your bones and protect against osteoporosis. Examples include low-fat milk and yoghurt, fortified plantbased milks, cheese, kale and small fish (including the bones).

Spend time outdoors

Vitamin D is also important for bone health. Getting outside in sunlight for 20 minutes daily between the months of April and October will provide you with lots of vitamin D. If you don't spend very much time outdoors and are rarely exposed to the sun, speak to your GP about a supplement.

Consume hearthealthy fats

Your risk of cardiovascular disease increases as a result of the menopause, again due to lower levels of oestrogen. Support your cardiovascular system by consuming heart-healthy fats from unsalted nuts and seeds, olive oil, avocado and oily fish such as salmon, sardines, mackerel and trout.

The menopause can be an emotional time for some women, as changes in hormones can result in mood changes.

Remember to be kind to yourself and get plenty of rest.

Doing relaxing activities like walking in nature can be helpful to ease stress. Try to maintain the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity per week by doing something you enjoy such as swimming, cycling or dancing.

For more tips on how to stay healthy, sign up for our weekly healthy tips at www.heartresearch.org.uk/healthy-tips

To help keep your heart healthy, why not try out some of our Healthy Heart recipes from our website: <https://heartresearch.org.uk/heart-researchuk-recipes-2/>

Or have a look through our Healthy Heart cookbook filled with recipes from top chefs, celebrities and food bloggers: <https://heartresearch.org.uk/heart-research-ukcookbook>