Menopause and Nutrition

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What is Menopause?

• Perimenopause (AKA Pre-Menopause):
  • When a woman transitions from having regular menstrual periods to ending menstruation.
  • Can last from 2-10 years, Average age of menopause 51

• Menopause:
  • cessation of menses for 12 months
  • when the ovaries stop making estrogen, progesterone and testosterone
  • Symptoms of Menopause: hot flashes, night sweats, bladder and reproductive changes, insomnia, fatigue, depression, anxiety/irritability and joint pain
Our veggies are misted with ice cold water every hour!!
Hormonal Imbalance

• Decreased estrogen $\rightarrow$ increased fat cell production $\rightarrow$ bodies substitute for estrogen deficiency $\rightarrow$ increased abdominal fat.

• Decrease progesterone $\rightarrow$ water retention and bloating
  • Not a chronic source of weight gain
  • Decreases over time

• Decrease in testosterone $\rightarrow$ create lean muscle mass $\rightarrow$ gradual loss of muscle $\rightarrow$ slows metabolism

• Increase in Cortisol
Hormone Imbalance

Top Reported Complaints

• Hot flashes/Night sweats
• Mood Dysfunction
• **Weight gain**
  • Weight resistance
  • Weight gain- abdomen and hips
  • Estrogen deficiency → Insulin resistance → Fat Production → “Spare Tire” → Image conflict
• Libido dysfunction (loss of sex drive)
Weight Gain

- Weight gain = bodies response to menopausal hormone transition - not just exercise or eating habits
- Diet + Exercise + Hormone Balance
- Abdominal weight gain → increased risk for:
  - Breast cancer
  - Heart attack, high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol
  - Type 2 diabetes
  - Alzheimer’s disease
  - Depression.
- Avoid the “yo-yo” diet
  - no appetite suppressants/diet pills
  - “fad” supplements
Belly Fat

- Caloric balance
- Decreased levels of estrogen increases belly fat even with or without weight gain
- Subcutaneous fat (pinch and inch) vs. Visceral fat (between the organs)
- Insulin resistance
How much is too much?

- Waist measurement: greater than or equal to 35 in” = unhealthy concentration of belly fat and increased risks.
- How to check:
  - Place a tape measure around your bare stomach, just above your hipbone.
  - Pull the tape measure until it fits snugly around you, but doesn’t push into your skin.
  - Make sure the tape measure is level all the way around.
  - Relax, exhale and measure your waist, resisting the urge to suck in your stomach.
Regaining Balance

1. Hormone Replacement Therapy

2. Complementary Lifestyle Changes
   • Balanced Meals
   • Exercise
   • Sleep
   • Vitamins
   • Hydration
   • Omega 3&6 rich foods
Bio-identical Hormone Therapy (BHRT)

- BHRT/"natural " chemically identical to those in the body

- BHRT includes:
  - Estrogen (2 forms): estradiol, estriol
  - Progesterone
  - Testosterone
  - DHEA

- Dosing forms
  - Pills, capsules
  - Transdermal (topical, skin; vaginal)
    - Creams, gels, patches
    - Suppositories
  - Sublingual (under the tongue)
    - Lozengers, drops
Nutrition

- Breakfast every day
- 3 meals with small snacks as needed (snacks only if hungry!)
- Water/hydration
- Calcium
- Increased Iron
- Fiber
- Increased fruits and vegetables
- Increase consumption of Omega 3
- Avoid the salt shaker
- Limit alcohol to one or fewer drinks per day
- Cruciferous vegetables
Carbohydrates

• Choose complex carbohydrates
  • Vegetables, fruits, nuts/seeds, brown rice, quinoa & yams

• Limit refined starches & sugars
  • Candy, sugary treats
Protein

- Protein at breakfast
  - essential for keeping metabolic rate elevated
- Protein at meals and snacks to assist with insulin resistance & cravings
- Research shows that eating protein synergistically with exercise is beneficial to building muscle mass.
Cruciferous Vegetables

- Broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, kale, bok choi, kohlrabi, Brussels sprouts and mustard, rutabaga and turnip greens.
- Rich in Zinc, Vitamins A, B, C, D and E
- Contains Indole-3-Carbinol (I3C) that is beneficial for estrogen metabolism.
- Choose at least 1 serving per meal
Healthy Fats

• Healthy fats at all meals
  • avocado, olive oil, nuts/seeds
• Avoid Trans-fats, fats solid at room temperature- use instead olive oil, canola.
• Help with satiety and avoidance of refined carbs triggering insulin resistance
• Omega 3 Fats
  • Assist in hormone stabilization
  • Lower inflammation in the body
  • “Feed” the brain
Omega 3 Fats

- Can not be produced in the body - must be obtained through the diet or supplements
- 1.1 g/day for Women, 1.6 g/day for Men
- Reduces inflammation (Arthritis) and lower risk of: Cancer (notably breast)
- Support brain function and protect the health of neurotransmitters in the brain.
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<th>Food</th>
<th>Cals</th>
<th>%Daily Value</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Walnuts</td>
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<td>Salmon</td>
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<td>Soybeans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Halibut</td>
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<td>Shrimp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tofu</td>
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<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuna</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
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Osteoporosis

• To Prevent Osteoporosis:
  - Dairy products, orange juice, soy milk & other calcium fortified foods
    - Kale, Spinach, Tofu, Salmon
  - Vitamin D: Synthesized by the sun, fish, sardines, Vit D fortified drinks such as milk, soy milk
  - Weight bearing exercise- helps maintain bone mass
  - Reduce intake of soda (diet too!) Research is linking soda intake to decreased bone density.
Hot Flashes

- Soy (Isoflavones) offer women a source of estrogen, which may help relieve hot flashes. Some research shows 40-80 mg (Soy beans, tempeh, tofu) will decrease symptoms.
Supplements

- Calcium: 1200mg plus Vit D: 1000IU Daily
- Iron: 8mg per day
- Magnesium: 420mg per day
- Multi B-Vitamins - 300mg of B6 and 6 mcg of B12

- Evening Primrose Oil (EPO) at bedtime can help with lowering incidence of hot flashes (1500-2000 mg.)
- Rhubarb (Rheum rhaponticum) 4 mg per evening can help with alleviating hot flashes (study with 112 women who after 28 days reported having 5.5 fewer hot flashes per day than placebo group)
Exercise

• Make sure to include cardio, strength, and stretching
  • For stress: Yoga, meditation
  • For bones: cardio and strength training
  • For your heart: cardio

• Benefits
  • Prevent osteoporosis
  • Reduces the risk of heart attack and other cardiovascular diseases by increasing heart and respiratory rates.
  • Keeps joints moving and keeps the muscles around your joints strong. This helps in the prevention of arthritis.
  • Maintain regular bowel function, a common problem as people become older.
Summary

• Eat more Omega-3 Fatty Acids.
• Increase Exercise- Cardio and Weight Bearing exercises or Yoga.
• Eat more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, sources of calcium
• Nutrient dense foods- healthy fat foods and complex carbohydrates.
• Eat protein prior to exercise to maintain/build muscle mass
• Increase water intake, decrease sugary drinks such as soda.
Questions?
References

• Menopause and Weight Gain: Hormone Imbalance and the Battle of the Bulge, Joanne Rinker, MS, RD, CDE, LDN
• The Skinny on Peri-menopausal Nutrition, Kristie L. Finnan, RD, LDN
• Women, Weight and Menopause, Susan B. Dopart, M.S., R.D., C.D.E.