



A GUIDE FOR PERIMENOPAUSE

nutrition



BY PERINAVIGATHER

INTRODUCTION

Why Nutrition Matters During PeriMenopause

The role of nutrition during perimenopause cannot be overstated – it serves as a fundamental tool for managing symptoms and supporting long-term health. During this transition, your body's relationship with food and nutrients undergoes significant changes, making mindful nutrition more important than ever.

For example, hormonal fluctuations can result in the following:

1. **Slowing Metabolism:** Estrogen plays a role in maintaining metabolic rate. As estrogen levels decrease, there is a tendency for metabolism to slow down. This can lead to an increased likelihood of weight gain, especially around the abdominal area.
2. **Changes in Fat Distribution:** The decline in estrogen levels is associated with a shift in fat distribution. Women may notice an increase in visceral fat, which is fat stored around the organs in the abdominal cavity. This change in fat distribution is not only linked to weight gain but also poses increased risks for cardiovascular and metabolic diseases.
3. **Loss of Lean Muscle Mass:** Hormonal changes can contribute to a gradual loss of lean muscle mass. Since muscle tissue is more metabolically active than fat, this loss can further contribute to a slower metabolism.

Why Nutrition Matters During PeriMenopause

4. **Insulin Sensitivity:** Hormonal fluctuations can also impact insulin sensitivity. Reduced estrogen levels may lead to decreased insulin sensitivity, potentially contributing to an increased risk of insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes.

5. **Change in Bone Health:** With the decline in estrogen levels, women become more susceptible to bone loss and osteoporosis.

6. **Change in Heart Health:** Perimenopause is associated with changes in cholesterol levels which can increase the risk of cardiovascular issues.

7. **Changes in Mood:** Hormonal fluctuations can impact mood and mental well-being. Certain nutrients, such as omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants, have been linked to improved mood and cognitive function.

Understanding the connection between diet and perimenopausal changes empowers you to make decisions about your nutrition that can help you navigate this transition more smoothly and set the stage for healthy aging.

The guidance in this handbook provides a foundation for making informed choices about nutrition during perimenopause, but should be adapted to your personal circumstances and discussed with your healthcare provider or nutritionist.



PART ONE

THE BENEFITS OF GOOD NUTRITION DURING PERIMENOPAUSE

As you transition through perimenopause, nutrition becomes increasingly important in maintaining overall health and well-being. A well-balanced and nutrient-rich diet can positively impact various aspects of health, offering support for both physical and emotional well-being during this transformative life stage.

BALANCES
HORMONES
NATURALLY

WEIGHT
MANAGEMENT

ENHANCES
BONE
HEALTH

ANTI-
INFLAMMATORY
BENEFITS

BOOSTS
MOOD

RELIEVES
PERIMENOPAUSE
SYMPTOMS

ENHANCES
HEART
HEALTH

PROVIDES
IMMUNE
SUPPORT

IMPROVES
BRAIN
FUNCTION

FUELS
VITALITY
AND
ENERGY

IMPROVES
DIGESTIVE
HEALTH

CONTROLS
BLOOD SUGAR
LEVELS

<p>Energy Levels and Vitality</p>	<p>Proper nutrition provides the necessary fuel to sustain energy levels and vitality. As metabolism may slow down during perimenopause, choosing nutrient-dense foods ensures a sustained release of energy throughout the day.</p>
<p>Cardiovascular Health</p>	<p>A heart-healthy diet that includes foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids, soluble fiber, and antioxidants can positively impact cholesterol levels, blood pressure, and overall cardiovascular health.</p>
<p>Bone Health</p>	<p>Optimal nutrition is essential for maintaining bone density and reducing the risk of osteoporosis.</p>
<p>Mood Stability & Mental Health</p>	<p>Nutrition plays a significant role in mood stability and mental well-being. Proper nutrition supports brain health and can improve mood and cognitive function.</p>
<p>Hormonal Balance</p>	<p>Certain nutrients can contribute to hormonal balance during perimenopause. Additionally, maintaining stable blood sugar levels through a balanced diet can positively influence hormonal balance.</p>



PART TWO

ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS FOR PERIMENOPAUSAL HEALTH

Nutrient	Heart	Brain/ Cognition	Hot Flash	Sleep	Mood	Bones	Hormo ne Balanc e	Weight
Omega-3 Fatty Acids	✓	✓	✓		✓			
Calcium						✓		
Vitamin D					✓	✓		
Magnesium			✓	✓	✓	✓		
B Vitamins		✓			✓			
Fiber								✓
Vitamin C						✓		
Protein						✓		✓
Phyto- estrogens							✓	
Hydration	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



PART THREE

BENEFICIAL FOODS DURING PERIMENOPAUSE

Chocolate (dark)



Water!!!



Ginger



Almonds



Dairy



Lentils



Spinach



Whole Grains



Sauerkraut



Salmon



Turmeric



Chickpeas



Broccoli



Fish



Seeds





PART THREE

POTENTIALLY HARMFUL FOODS FOR HORMONE BALANCE

ENJOY IN MODERATION

Caffeine and Hormonal Health

Too much caffeine can impact hormone balance and perimenopausal symptoms by stimulating the release of cortisol (the stress hormone), influencing estrogen levels and causing sleep disruption.



Processed Foods and Hormonal Health

Processed foods often contain trans fats, artificial additives and added sugars which can impact insulin levels, promote inflammation, and disrupt endocrine function, potentially impacting hormonal regulation and perimenopausal symptoms.



Alcohol and Hormonal Health

Too much alcohol can impact hormone balance and perimenopausal symptoms by affecting liver function (a vital organ for hormone metabolism), increasing estrogen levels, and interfering with calcium absorption, impacting bone health.



Excessive Salt and Hormonal Health

Excessive salt intake can strain the kidney, disrupt the balance of sodium and potassium, and cause fluid retention leading to increased blood pressure and impacting normal bodily functions and hormonal balance.





A NOTE ON THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

The Mediterranean diet has been shown to offer numerous benefits for women during perimenopause:

Symptom reduction: The Mediterranean diet can help minimize common menopausal symptoms, including hot flashes, night sweats, and sleep problems.

Weight management: The diet aids in maintaining a healthy weight and reducing belly fat, which is particularly beneficial as weight gain is common during perimenopause.

Hormonal balance: The high intake of legumes and extra virgin olive oil may help balance hormones and reduce inflammation in the body.

Heart health: As estrogen levels decline, the Mediterranean diet can help protect cardiovascular health by improving cholesterol profiles, blood pressure, and glycemic control.

Cognitive function: The diet has been associated with better cognition and mental health, potentially helping with issues like brain fog.

Bone health: It may offer protection for bone health, which is crucial during perimenopause when bone density can start to decrease.

Anti-inflammatory effects: The diet's emphasis on whole foods, plant-based ingredients, and healthy fats provides anti-inflammatory benefits for the whole body and mind.

NUTRIENTS, DOSES & SOURCES

Nutrient	Why It's Important.	Recommended Daily Intake	Best Sources
Calcium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Critical for maintaining bone density during accelerated bone loss -Supports muscle function and nerve signaling -Helps reduce the risk of osteoporosis (which increases during peri/menopause) 	<p>Women 51-70 years: 1,200 mg/day</p> <p>Women 31-50 years: 1,000 mg/day</p>	<p>Dairy products (yogurt: 415mg/cup, milk: 300mg/cup)</p> <p>Fortified plant milks (300mg/cup)</p> <p>Sardines with bones (325mg/3oz)</p> <p>Leafy greens (collard greens: 268mg/cup)</p> <p>Tofu made with calcium sulfate (200mg/½ cup)</p>
Vitamin D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Essential for calcium absorption -Supports immune function -Helps maintain muscle strength -May help with mood regulation 	<p>600-800 IU daily (some women need more during perimenopause)</p>	<p>Fatty fish (salmon: 570 IU/3oz)</p> <p>Egg yolks (40 IU/yolk)</p> <p>Fortified foods (milk: 120 IU/cup)</p> <p>Mushrooms exposed to UV light (400 IU/3oz)</p> <p>Sunlight exposure (15-20 minutes daily)</p>
Protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Maintains muscle mass during hormonal changes -Supports bone health -Helps with satiety and weight management -Essential for skin elasticity 	<p>0.8-1.2g/kg of body weight</p> <p>Athletes may need more: 1.2-1.6g/kg</p>	<p>Lean meats (chicken: 26g/3oz)</p> <p>Fish (salmon: 22g/3oz)</p> <p>Eggs (6g/egg)</p> <p>Legumes (lentils: 18g/cup)</p> <p>Greek yogurt (15g/cup)</p> <p>Quinoa (8g/cup)</p>

Always seek the advice of your physician, registered dietitian, or other qualified healthcare provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition or dietary changes.

NUTRIENTS, DOSES & SOURCES

Nutrient	Why It's Important.	Recommended Daily Intake	Best Sources
Magnesium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Supports bone health -Helps with sleep quality -May reduce hot flashes -Supports mood and stress response 	320mg/day for women over 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pumpkin seeds (156mg/oz) Spinach (78mg/cup) Black beans (60mg/½ cup) Almonds (80mg/oz) Dark chocolate (50mg/oz)
Omega-3 Fatty Acids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Supports brain health and cognitive function -May help reduce hot flashes -Supports heart health -Can help with mood regulation 	There is no “gram goal” per se but sources generally recommend 1-4 grams/day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, sardines) Chia seeds (2.5g ALA/tbsp) Flaxseeds (2.3g ALA/tbsp) Walnuts (2.5g ALA/oz) Algae oil (for vegetarians)
B Vitamins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Support bone health -Support energy production -Help with mood regulation -Important for cognitive function -May help with stress management and nervous system support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B12: 2.4mcg/day B6: 1.3-1.5mg/day Folate: 400mcg B1 (Thiamin): 1.1mg B2 (Riboflavin): 1.1mg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole grains Eggs Leafy greens Legumes Nutritional yeast Fish and lean meats
Fiber	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Regulate bowel movements and help with digestion -Assist with weight management -Regulate blood sugar -Improve heart health 	25-35g/day.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black beans: 1 cup Edamame: 1 cup Raspberries: 1 cup Avocado: ½ avocado Broccoli: 1 cup Almonds: 1 ounce

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THANK YOU!

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