

Lifestyle advice for menopause

Gynaecology

Nutrition

- Choose fresh and minimally processed foods whenever possible.
- Eat plenty of vegetables, fruit, wholegrain products and legumes.
- Choose products with healthy fats, for example olive oil, nuts and fish.
- Aim to eat 20 grams of protein with each meal. Protein is mainly found in legumes, nuts, eggs, fish, meat and dairy products.
- Make sure you get enough calcium and vitamin D, for example from dairy products, vegetables and nuts.
- Caffeine, alcohol and spicy foods can trigger hot flushes. Pay attention to how these affect you.
- Would you like to take vitamins or other supplements? Discuss this with your GP or treating doctor.

Exercise

- Try to exercise for at least 30 minutes every day, preferably outdoors or in nature.
- Avoid sitting for long periods. Try to move for at least 2 to 3 minutes every half hour, including at work.
- Do 30 minutes of strength exercises two to three times a week.
- Do you experience urinary leakage? Pelvic floor exercises may help.
- Choose exercise that suits you and that you can maintain.
- Listen carefully to your body. More exercise is not always better. Build up gradually.

Rest and relaxation

- Make time for rest and relaxation every day.
- Don't be too hard on yourself. You don't have to do everything perfectly.
- Choose activities that help you relax, such as walking, cycling, yoga, reading, painting or listening to music.
- Spend at least 20 minutes outdoors every day.
- Do you feel tension in your body, for example in your shoulders, jaw or back? Or do you notice that you are breathing quickly? Take a short break, try a breathing exercise, or practise mindfulness or meditation.
- Notice which activities give you energy and which ones use a lot of your energy.

Sleep

- Go to bed and get up at around the same time every day, including at weekends.
- Keep your bedroom cool, dark and quiet.
- Use your bedroom mainly for sleeping and relaxing.
- Plan regular times for both exercise and rest during your day.
- Are you unable to sleep and feeling restless? Get out of bed for a while and do something that helps you relax.
- Have you been experiencing sleep problems for a longer period? Discuss this with your GP or treating doctor.

Substance use

- Stop smoking, vaping and using drugs. If you find it difficult to stop, ask your GP or someone else you trust for help.
- Don't drink alcohol. Alcohol can disrupt your sleep and make hot flushes worse.
- Take medicines according to the instructions from your doctor or pharmacist.
- Do you think medicines or supplements are affecting your symptoms? Discuss this with your doctor.

Social connection

- Talk to someone you trust about the changes you are experiencing in your body and emotions, and how these changes make you feel.
- It may help to share your experiences with other women going through menopause.
- Make time for people and activities that give you energy and enjoyment.
- Do you have many caring responsibilities? Remember to make time for yourself too.
- Are menopausal symptoms causing problems at work? Discuss this with your employer or occupational health doctor.
- Ask for help when you need it. You don't have to deal with everything on your own.