

## MENOPAUSE FACT SHEET:

### **Symptoms associated with the peri-menopausal time:**

Menstrual irregularity	Joint pains
Flushing and sweats	Osteoporosis
Chills	Atherosclerosis
Pins and needles	Hair and skin changes
Weight gain	Vaginal discharge
Bloating	Dry vagina (due to lack of oestrogen)
Sore breasts	Pain on intercourse (due to dry vagina)
Urinary problems	Reduced sex drive
Lethargy	Loss of confidence
Anxiety, depression, irritability	Loss of appetite
Palpitations	Allergic responses and food sensitivities
Dizziness	Poor memory
Insomnia	

**Diet:** In order for your body to produce sufficient hormones your diet must be OK. Hormones are made from nutrients, so unless you eat well you won't be able to make and transport the hormones you need. Ensure your diet is rich in fruits and vegetables, rice, protein, and wholegrains. Keep the fats, and sugars for a special occasion. Include some of the following oestrogen regulating foods into your daily diet.

### **Foods that are useful for regulating oestrogen:**

- Soy products – any form including soy flour (1 tablespoon/day), soy & linseed bread, soy cheese, tofu, soy beans, . (Make sure you have a source of iodine in your diet if you eat soy regularly. eg fish, seaweed, iodised salt)
- Linseed. 1 tablespoon crushed seeds per day.
- Alfalfa (sprouts or tea)
- Sage (particularly useful for hot flushes and sweating)
- Parsley
- Cucumber
- Red Clover tea
- Green beans
- Mung beans and sprouted seeds
- Split peas
- Olives
- Rye
- Buckwheat
- Sesame seeds
- Dried seaweed
- Corn

### **Supplements:**

Useful supplements to take during the peri-menopausal period include calcium & magnesium (insomnia, irritability, osteoporosis, headaches, depression), vitamin E, vitamin C, Evening Primrose

Oil, and a Vitamin B complex .

**Stress:**

It is vital that you find a way to deal with the stress in your life. The adrenal glands take over oestrogen production from the ovaries, but if they are constantly working to produce adrenaline in response to the stress in your life they won't have much time left over for making oestrogen. Stress also contributes to osteoporosis by taking calcium out of the bones. The important nutrients for dealing with stress are Vitamin C, Vitamin B-Complex with extra B5 & B6, potassium, calcium, and magnesium.

**Exercise:**

Weight-bearing exercise such as walking keeps calcium in the bones and therefore helps prevent osteoporosis. It is also an anti-depressant.

**Hot flushes:**

Vitamin E stabilises the hormone imbalance that causes hot flushes and night sweats. The need for Vitamin E is 10-50 times greater than before menopause.

**Insomnia:**

Foods such as rice, pasta, bread, linseeds, and oatmeal increase the conversion of tryptophan to serotonin - a neurotransmitter that makes you drowsy. Magnesium is a relaxing nutrient. Magnesium is found in dark leafy greens, almonds, walnuts, and pecans, but may be required as a supplement if you are deficient.

## Osteoporosis:

**Stomach acid:**

40% of menopausal women have low stomach acid which leads to lowered absorption of essential nutrients particularly calcium.

**High acid foods:**

Maintaining correct body tissue pH is vital to wellbeing. Research suggests that a less acidic diet, that is, a diet lower in protein may help to prevent osteoporosis. (New Eng J Med 330, 1776-81, 1994) Calcium is leached from bone to neutralise the acidic residue created by the metabolism of protein. In an 18 day trial of post-menopausal women, bone resorption was decreased and bone formation was increased by taking potassium bicarbonate (60-120mmole/day). The same effect can be gained by decreasing protein, or the juice of ½ a lemon in water or apple cider vinegar in water first thing every morning. **Ask me about testing your pH.**

**Sugar, coffee and smoking** all lead to increased excretion of calcium from the body.

**Poor liver or kidney function** impairs the metabolism of vitamin D, an essential vitamin for absorption of calcium and formation of bone.

**Weight bearing exercise** is necessary.

**Trace elements:** Not everyone who has osteoporosis has a calcium deficiency. Boron, manganese, zinc, silica, vitamin K, are all just as important as calcium for bone integrity.

**Bioflavonoids** to stabilise collagen structures.

**Cell Salts:** Calcium flouride, silica, calcium phosphite,

**Calcium:** Calcium rich foods include salmon and bones, sardines and bones, tahini, dairy products, broccoli, almonds, parsley, and sprouts.