

# Taking control of menopause.

The menopause is inevitable but that doesn't mean you just need to accept the symptoms that come with it. Read on to find out how to take control and manage your symptoms proactively.



## Maintain a balanced diet

Did you know that keeping to a healthy diet is one of the easiest ways to manage both your weight and some of the other symptoms associated with the menopause?

Avoiding processed foods and refined sugars as well as eating lots of portions of fruit and vegetables are definitely going to help your body at this time. It will also decrease your risk of heart disease and **help with hot flushes**.

Ensuring you are getting the right amounts of vitamins C and D can also help lower the risk of osteoporosis.

## Get regular exercise

Exercise is also another great tool for tackling troublesome menopausal symptoms. Running, walking and other similar weight-bearing activities can help build your muscles, strengthen your bones and keep your weight steady.

Yoga and pilates are great for muscle toning and stretching and can also be useful for your emotional wellbeing, encouraging you to relax and promoting a sense of calm.

The social aspects of exercise can also raise endorphin levels and **promote a general feeling of happiness**.

## Sleeping with menopause

Insomnia affects up to **60%** of menopausal or perimenopausal women. This can be due to night sweats that can disturb sleep but often it's linked to the hormonal changes that are happening.

It is important to **get as much restful sleep as you can** as disturbed sleep can increase anxiety and irritability.

Tips for managing sleep problems:

- **Limit alcohol and caffeine** and avoid eating within a couple of hours of bedtime.
- **Try to exercise regularly**, meditation and yoga can help the mind relax too.

- **Have a sleep routine** where you go to bed and wake at the same time, this will help your body settle into a schedule.
- **A warm bath** before bed can be comforting and lavender bath salts may also help.
- **Limit blue light exposure** before bed – try reading rather than using your phone.
- **Light cotton bed sheets** and **wearing loose cotton layers** can help with night sweats.
- **Keep your bedroom cool at night** by leaving a window open.

## Reduce stress

One in three women experience stress and anxiety during menopause. This is down to the hormonal changes as well as psychological reactions to the physical changes.

To reduce stress, keep talking it out. It's so important to get things off your chest and be with others at this time.

Surround yourself with loved ones, join a club or consider talking therapies available through your GP.

This combined with a healthy lifestyle and good sleep habits can limit the impact of menopausal symptoms and **let you get on with life the way you want!**

**Rock My Menopause** is an online campaign to get more people talking about menopause and is packed with helpful resources:

[www.rockmymenopause.com](http://www.rockmymenopause.com)