



World menopause day 18th oct 2025

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FROM PLATFORM OF SMLM WE ENDORSE international Menopause
society Theme of LIFE STYLE MEDICINE IN THE MANAGEMEN OT
MENOPAUSE





About World Menopause Day

- World Menopause Day is held every year on **18 October**.
- The **International Menopause Society (IMS)**, a global non-profit founded in 1978, created World Menopause Day in 2009 to raise awareness of menopause and improve the experience of women everywhere.
- As the founder, IMS sets the annual theme, commissions and publishes the White Paper, and develops accessible resources to support women, healthcare professionals, and communities worldwide.
- We celebrate the many medical advances and the increase in public awareness in recent years, **but there's still much more to be done**.
- Each year, World Menopause Day shines a spotlight on the challenges facing women during the menopause transition and highlights improvements in **research, education, and support**.



LIFE STYLE MEDICINE

- ***The Role of Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health***
- Menopause marks a significant physiological transition with far-reaching implications for women's long-term health and wellbeing. While not a disease, the menopausal transition can be accompanied by symptoms and health risks that warrant **personalised, holistic approaches to care**.
- The 2025 IMS White Paper highlights a growing body of evidence supporting **lifestyle medicine as a foundational, non-pharmacological strategy** to improve menopausal symptoms, reduce chronic disease risk, and enhance quality of life.



LIFESTYLE MEDICINE IN MENOPAUSE CARE





The Role of Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health

Healthy Eating in Midlife & Menopause





WHY IT MATTERS

Healthy eating plays a key role in how women experience menopause and in protecting long-term health. During midlife, hormonal changes can affect weight, body composition, heart health, and bone strength. The right dietary choices can help manage symptoms, reduce disease risk, and support overall wellbeing.



Global picture

Around the world, malnutrition, including both undernutrition and obesity, is a major health challenge. Poor diets contribute billions each year to the burden of heart disease, diabetes, and other conditions.

A healthy diet should be nutritionally adequate, culturally acceptable, and environmentally sustainable. This means focusing on plant-based foods, limiting red and processed meat, and reducing added sugars.





Diet & health



Healthier diets are linked with lower risks of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers.



Ultra-processed foods (such as packaged snacks, sugary drinks, and fast food) are associated with higher risks of heart disease, mental health issues, and early death.



In midlife women, diet interacts with other factors like blood pressure, sleep, and smoking to shape overall health.



Dietary patterns to consider

Mediterranean diet:

The best-studied approach, rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, olive oil, nuts, and fish. Linked with better mood, weight control, heart health, and lower cholesterol.

DASH diet:

Similar to the Mediterranean diet but with a stronger focus on reducing salt, making it especially effective for lowering blood pressure.



Dietary patterns to consider

Vegetarian or vegan diets:

Plant-based diets overlap with the benefits of the Mediterranean and DASH diets and may help protect against some cancers and neurodegenerative diseases.

Intermittent fasting:

Can improve metabolism, blood pressure, and cholesterol in the short term, but its long-term benefits and sustainability remain uncertain.



Other important impacts



Weight and body composition: Diets like the Mediterranean diet can reduce abdominal (central) obesity. Benefits are greater when combined with physical activity and healthy fats such as olive oil.



Bone health: Calcium (700–1200 mg/day) and vitamin D (400–1000 IU/day) are essential after menopause to support bone strength and reduce fracture risk.



Menopausal symptoms: Diets rich in fruits and vegetables may help ease hot flushes and night sweats for some women. Evidence on soy is mixed - some find it helpful, others notice little effect.



What you can do: lifestyle strategies that work



Choose a Mediterranean-style diet with vegetables, fruit, whole grains, olive oil, nuts, and fish.



Include calcium-rich foods daily and monitor your vitamin D intake after menopause.



Cut back on ultra-processed foods like sugary drinks and packaged snacks.



Add more plant-based meals for heart, bone, and weight benefits.



Try soy foods if you wish - some women find they help with hot flushes.



KEY TAKEAWAY

Healthy eating is one of the most powerful ways to support your body during and after menopause. Focusing on whole, plant-rich foods, getting enough calcium and vitamin D, and reducing processed foods can make a real difference in improving symptoms, energy levels, and long-term health.

Small, consistent, sustainable changes are more effective than quick fixes - every positive step counts.



Additional Resources

Combine healthy eating with regular physical activity to help manage weight and protect your heart.

Read the Physical Activity factsheet for more guidance.



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VASOMOTOR SYMPTOMS AND ROLE OF DIET

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NEPAL DR SWARAJBHANDARI



The Role of Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health

Restorative Sleep in Menopausal Health





WHY IT MATTERS

Sleep is essential for health and wellbeing, but during menopause many women experience sleep problems. Hormonal changes, night sweats, and stress can all make it harder to get good-quality rest.



Restorative sleep means more than just hours in bed, it's the kind of deep, refreshing sleep that improves alertness, mood, and energy. Poor sleep in midlife is linked to a wide range of health risks, from low mood and fatigue to long-term conditions such as heart disease and dementia.





Cognitive health



Sleep disruption affects memory, attention, and concentration.



Poor sleep during menopause has been linked with subjective cognitive decline.



Ongoing sleep problems in midlife increase the risk of dementia later in life.



Mental health

There is a strong two-way link between poor sleep and depression or anxiety.

Non-restorative sleep increases the risk of developing new depression.

Improving sleep quality over time is associated with better mood and emotional wellbeing.



Metabolic health

Poor sleep disrupts glucose control, increases insulin resistance, and alters appetite hormones.

Non-restorative sleep is linked to higher risks of obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and metabolic syndrome.

Short sleep duration (less than six hours per night) is particularly risky for midlife women.



Other important impacts



Sleep is recognised as one of the American Heart Association’s “Life’s Essential 8” for cardiovascular wellbeing.



Poor sleep quality, and either very short or very long sleep, are linked to higher risks of coronary heart disease, stroke, and cardiovascular mortality.



Sleep-disordered breathing (such as sleep apnoea) raises the risk of hypertension, heart failure, and atherosclerosis.



What you can do: lifestyle strategies that work

- ✓ *Keep a consistent sleep schedule.*
- ✓ *Create a cool, dark, and quiet sleep environment.*
- ✓ *Limit screen time, blue light, caffeine, and alcohol before bed.*
- ✓ *Be active during the day to support better sleep at night.*
- ✓ *Eat and drink mindfully in the evening - avoid large meals and cut down on fluids before bedtime.*
- ✓ *Skip late afternoon naps.*
- ✓ *If you struggle with ongoing insomnia, ask about cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia (CBT-I), the recommended first-line treatment in menopause.*



KEY TAKEAWAY

Restorative sleep is vital for brain, heart, bone, and emotional health during and after menopause. Poor sleep can worsen symptoms and raise the risk of chronic disease, but small daily habits, from keeping a regular bedtime to limiting caffeine, can significantly improve sleep quality.

Investing in better sleep is one of the most powerful ways to support long-term health and wellbeing.



Additional Resources

Regular exercise and healthy eating both support better sleep.

Read the Physical Activity and Healthy Eating factsheets for useful tips.



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The Role of Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health

Physical Activity and Menopause





WHY IT MATTERS

During menopause, falling estrogen levels can lead to changes such as increased abdominal fat, inflammation, reduced muscle mass, and a slower metabolism. At the same time, many women become less active during midlife, which can make these effects worse.



Staying physically active is one of the most effective ways to protect health, manage symptoms, and maintain quality of life during and after menopause.





Benefits of physical activity

Regular movement supports both physical and mental wellbeing. It can:



Improve cardiovascular health, body composition, and bone strength.



Reduce inflammation by boosting natural antioxidants in the body.



Ease vasomotor symptoms such as hot flashes and night sweats by improving the body's ability to regulate temperature.



Support better sleep, mood, and mental health, helping women feel stronger and more resilient.



Types of exercise

Different types of exercise play different roles, and the best results often come from combining them:

Aerobic (endurance) exercise:

Activities like walking, running, or cycling improve heart health, circulation, body composition, and help lower blood pressure and fat mass.

Resistance (strength) training:

Using weights, resistance bands, or doing yoga, or tai chi builds lean muscle, increases bone density, lowers blood pressure, and improves insulin sensitivity.



Types of exercise

Different types of exercise play different roles, and the best results often come from combining them:

Multi-component training:

Combining aerobic and resistance exercise; for example high-intensity interval training (HIIT) or mixed routines, provides the greatest benefits for vasomotor symptoms, inflammation, strength, flexibility, and fat reduction.

Exercise and Menopause Hormone Therapy (MHT)

There is some evidence that MHT can enhance the benefits of exercise on metabolism and vascular health. Over the long term, combining MHT with aerobic exercise may help maintain arterial flexibility, but findings are mixed.



Recommendations

Health organisations recommend:



American Heart Association: 150–300 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75–150 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity each week, plus at least two days of resistance training.



International Menopause Society: At least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity plus two or more days of resistance or strength training each week.



What you can do: lifestyle strategies that work



Aim for 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise (e.g. brisk walking, cycling) each week.



Include at least 2 days of strength training to protect bones and maintain muscle.



Mix aerobic, resistance, and stretching exercises for the greatest benefits.



Break up long periods of sitting with short walks or stretches.



Choose activities you enjoy to make exercise easier to keep up.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Exercise is one of the most powerful tools to counteract the effects of estrogen loss during menopause.

A consistent, multi-component approach, combining aerobic and strength training, supports heart, bone, metabolic, and mental health.

The best exercise is the one you enjoy and can keep up regularly, even small amounts make a meaningful difference.



Additional Resources

Exercise also improves sleep and mood.

Read the Restorative Sleep and Mental Wellbeing & Stress factsheets to learn more.



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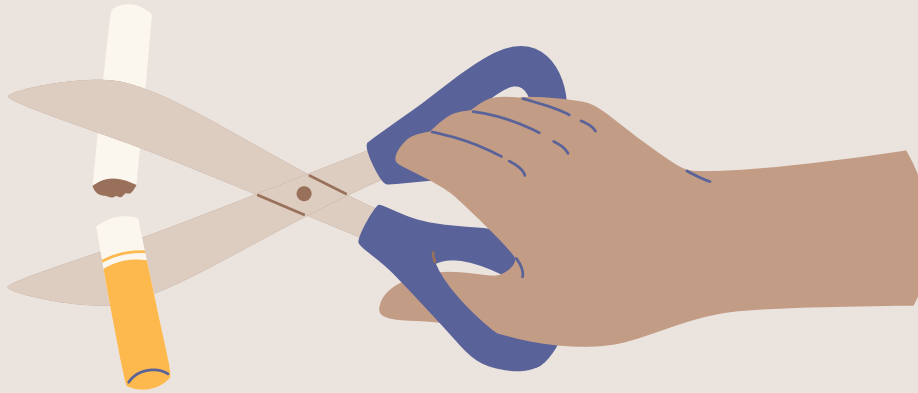
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The Role of Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health

Avoidance of Risky Substances and Menopause





WHY IT MATTERS

Substance use has often been studied through a male lens, but women's bodies respond differently. Ovarian hormones affect how substances like alcohol, nicotine, and drugs are processed, and women are often more vulnerable to their harmful effects.



During perimenopause and menopause, substance use is rising among women. This can worsen menopausal symptoms, including hot flashes, fatigue, sleep problems, and changes in mood or libido, and increase the risk of chronic health problems.





Substance use and menopause



Women tend to develop alcohol-related diseases earlier than men, even at lower levels of intake.



Risks linked to substance use include HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, psychological distress, and relapse.



Withdrawal symptoms (for example from opioids) can overlap with menopause symptoms, making them harder to manage.



Mood changes in menopause may also contribute to alcohol misuse or risk-taking behaviours.



Hormone fluctuations across the menstrual cycle can change how stimulants (like cocaine or amphetamines) act in the body, though effects on other substances (e.g. nicotine, marijuana, caffeine) are less clear.



Smoking and menopause

Smoking accelerates the onset of menopause and worsens vasomotor symptoms (VMS).

Stopping smoking reduces cardiovascular risks during menopause. While quitting may cause some weight gain, this is not linked to worse cholesterol levels and it also lowers blood pressure and improves overall health.

The length of time a woman smokes has more impact on health than the number of cigarettes smoked per day.



Alcohol and menopause



Alcohol disrupts hormonal balance and may increase estrogen levels, influencing reproductive health and breast cancer risk.



The link between alcohol and menopause onset is mixed:

- *Light-to-moderate drinking (1-3 drinks per week) may slightly delay menopause, but evidence is weak.*
- *Heavy drinking is linked to earlier menopause, bone loss, and higher fracture risk.*



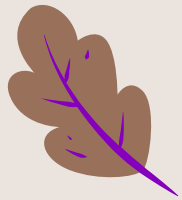
Some studies suggest that moderate alcohol (e.g. wine, up to 30 g/day) may protect against cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. However, the risks, particularly breast cancer, generally outweigh any potential benefits.



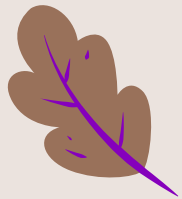
National guidelines recommend no more than 10–20 g of alcohol per day, with alcohol-free days each week.



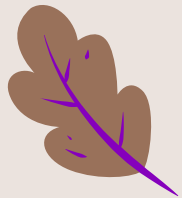
Alcohol use disorder (AUD)



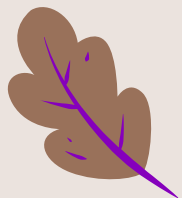
AUD causes around 85,000 deaths each year and is rising among women.



It is associated with liver disease, reproductive dysfunction, loss of bone density, and increased fracture risk.



Menopause-related stress and depression may trigger or worsen alcohol misuse.



Moderate alcohol may lower markers of bone turnover, but definitions of “moderate” intake vary widely across studies.



What you can do: lifestyle strategies that work



Quit smoking if you can and get support to help you succeed, stopping at midlife improves symptoms, strengthens bones, and lowers your risk of heart disease.



Limit alcohol to no more than 1–2 small drinks on drinking days and include alcohol-free days.



Avoid recreational drugs, which can worsen menopause symptoms and increase health risks.



Notice how alcohol affects you, cutting back can improve your sleep, mood, and energy.



Remind yourself that quitting smoking brings benefits even if you gain a little weight.



KEY TAKEAWAY

Avoiding or reducing risky substances like nicotine, alcohol, and illicit drugs is especially important during menopause. These substances can worsen symptoms, accelerate health risks, and reduce quality of life.

Quitting smoking, limiting alcohol, and seeking support for substance misuse are powerful steps women can take to protect their health, strengthen bones and heart, and improve wellbeing during and after menopause.



Additional Resources

Stress management and good sleep habits can make it easier to cut down or quit.

See the Mental Wellbeing & Stress and Restorative Sleep factsheets for support.



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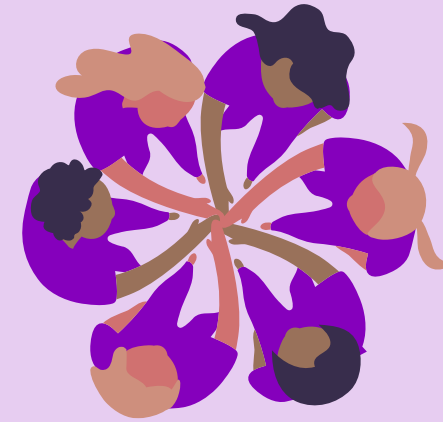
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The Role of Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health

Healthy Relationships in Menopausal Health





WHY IT MATTERS

Strong social connections are critical for healthy ageing. They are linked with longer life, better management of chronic diseases, and improved quality of life.

In contrast, loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of chronic illness, disability, and early mortality.

During the menopause transition, supportive relationships can ease symptoms, protect mental health, and help women feel more resilient.



Health benefits of social connection

Positive and supportive relationships can:



Improve control of chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and osteoporosis.



Lower the risk of stroke, cardiovascular disease, and metabolic syndrome.



Increase longevity in women with higher levels of social integration.



Support better bone health, particularly when close and intimate support networks are present.



Ease vasomotor symptoms (hot flushes and night sweats).



Risks of loneliness and isolation

Loneliness can have serious health consequences:



Higher risks of stroke, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome, disability, and fractures.



Linked with reduced physical activity and poorer diet quality.



A strong predictor of depression, anxiety, and other mental health challenges.



How relationships support health

Supportive relationships protect health in many ways:

Protecting against depression and anxiety.

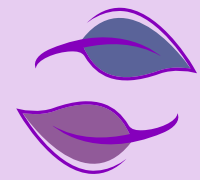
Encouraging positive behaviours such as more exercise and healthier eating.

Improving overall resilience and coping during menopause.



The role of intimate partnerships

Close partnerships can play a significant role in menopausal wellbeing:



Marital harmony and strong partnerships are linked with fewer menopausal symptoms.



Partner support improves quality of life and helps women cope with changes during menopause.



Educating partners about menopause can strengthen relationships and enhance wellbeing for both partners.



What you can do: lifestyle strategies that work

- ✓ *Spend time with friends and family who make you feel supported.*
- ✓ *Talk openly with your partner about menopause and share reliable information.*
- ✓ *Join a group or community activity to reduce feelings of isolation.*
- ✓ *Reach out to peers or support networks when you need to talk.*
- ✓ *Stay socially active. Connection is linked to better heart, bone, and mental health.*



KEY TAKEAWAY

Healthy relationships are a vital pillar of menopausal health, improving physical, emotional, and social wellbeing. Fostering strong, supportive connections, whether with partners, friends, family, or communities, can lower disease risk, ease symptoms, and promote a longer, healthier life.



Additional Resources

Strong relationships improve mood and help with healthy habits.

Read the Mental Wellbeing & Stress and Healthy Eating factsheets to find out how they connect.



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The Role of Lifestyle Medicine in Menopausal Health

Mental Wellbeing, Stress and Menopause





WHY IT MATTERS

Midlife can be a stressful time. Many women are balancing family responsibilities, careers, and health changes - all while experiencing the physical, psychological, and metabolic shifts of menopause. This transition can increase perceived stress, which is linked to worse menopausal symptoms, including more frequent hot flashes and night sweats.



Work-related stress, low job control, and low fitness levels may also make symptoms harder to manage.

Taking care of mental wellbeing during menopause is essential for easing symptoms, protecting long-term health, and improving quality of life.





Stress and menopause symptoms



Stress can intensify vasomotor symptoms (such as hot flushes and night sweats) and worsen overall wellbeing.



Women who experience high stress often report poorer sleep, lower mood, and greater difficulty coping with daily challenges.



Mindfulness, relaxation, and stress reduction strategies have been shown to lessen symptom severity and improve resilience.



Stress management strategies

Mindfulness programs:

Effective in reducing perceived stress and improving symptom management.

Cognitive-based therapies and relaxation techniques:

Improve coping skills, lower stress levels, and can reduce vasomotor symptoms.

Art and music:

Evidence shows they can reduce stress at all life stages, including midlife.



Digital and mobile health (mHealth)

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the development and use of digital health tools, which can be highly effective for stress management. Systematic reviews show that mHealth approaches improve both psychological and physical outcomes.



Effective tools include breathing and muscle relaxation apps, meditation programs, and personalised digital guidance.



mHealth offers promising, accessible, and cost-effective ways to support stress self-management while reducing the burden on healthcare systems.



AI and conversational agents (CA)

Emerging technologies such as generative AI chatbots (e.g., ChatGPT, DeepSeek) show potential in reducing depression and supporting mental health.

Best outcomes are seen with multimodal, voice-based, or instant messaging approaches.

Success depends on engagement, communication quality, and building a sense of relationship between the user and the AI tool.





Technology in chronic disease and weight management

Digital tools can also support weight management and chronic disease prevention:



Smartphone self-monitoring improves adherence and weight loss compared to usual care.



Wearables and fitness trackers increase motivation and accountability, helping women build sustainable activity habits.



Self-set goals lead to better results than fixed targets, while motivational interviewing combined with wearables is particularly promising.



Sleep trackers provide insights into sleep patterns and can support lifestyle counselling.



What you can do: lifestyle strategies that work



Practice mindfulness, relaxation, or breathing exercises to reduce stress and hot flushes.



Use CBT techniques like reframing negative thoughts or journaling to support your mood.



Explore digital health apps for guided meditation, stress tracking, or personalised support.



Wear a fitness or sleep tracker and set realistic goals to stay motivated.



Take part in creative activities, such as art or music, to help manage stress.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Stress can make menopausal symptoms worse, but the right strategies, from mindfulness and relaxation to digital tools and wearable devices, can improve mental health, reduce symptoms, and support long-term wellbeing.

*Technology is opening new doors to more accessible, personalised, and equitable care.
Every woman can find a combination of approaches that works best for her.*



Additional Resources

Good sleep and social support make stress easier to manage.

Explore the Restorative Sleep and Healthy Relationships factsheets for practical ideas.



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