

A Woman's Guide to

**MENOPAUSAL
HOT FLASHES**



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A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO MENOPAUSAL HOT FLASHES

HOT FLASHES

Hot flashes are one of the most common symptoms that women experience during menopause. They can be extremely uncomfortable, frustrating, and can impact your mood, ability to get quality sleep, and might even be embarrassing experiences for some women. Hot flashes can often start showing up in perimenopause, around the age of 40-50, when our female reproductive hormones start to decline in the transition to menopause. Some women experience intense and frequent hot flashes that significantly impair their quality of life, while other women have it much less severe.

WHAT CAUSES HOT FLASHES?

The exact causes of hot flashes are not fully understood, nor do we know why some women experience them much earlier and more severe than others. The hormonal changes that occur during menopause are part of the answer but cannot fully explain their cause. The decline in estrogen might confuse the part of the brain known as the hypothalamus, which is in charge of many things, including your body temperature. Some women start experiencing hot flashes early on in perimenopause; this is often due to low progesterone. Studies show that these women tend to experience hot flashes for a more extended time.

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Anxiety, feeling stressed and overwhelmed, and depressive symptoms can also make hot flashes last longer. There are other common triggers of hot flashes, such as alcohol, too much sugar or caffeine, and stress, that can worsen their severity and even trigger their onset, so they should be avoided. We will cover this list below.

THE EFFECTS ON BODY AND MIND!

Hot flashes can significantly impact your quality of sleep, your ability to focus on your work, and your sanity! However, many people who haven't experienced them have trouble understanding how distressful they can be. Often, they can write them off as something trivial and mildly inconvenient, or they might even find it somewhat amusing. It can be extremely frustrating when the rest of your family, your co-workers, and even some of your friends have no idea what you're going through and aren't taking it seriously. Being able to explain how hot flashes affect you can make you feel a lot better, simply by having the people around you understand what you're going through.

WHAT DO HOT FLASHES FEEL LIKE?

Unfortunately, hot flashes usually give no warning.

- **Hot flashes come on suddenly** as a wave of intense heat flushes over you as your face turns bright red and your body feels like it's boiling!
- **Hot flashes cause you to sweat** excessively, which can instill feelings of panic and anxiety in many women. Not only can it feel embarrassing if you're in public, but it can definitely feel uncomfortable as well, leaving you with only one mission in mind — find a quick way to cool off.

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- **Hot flashes cause increased heart rate** as your body tries to cool down by dilating the blood vessels near the surface of your skin, which also causes your **heart rate to increase** in order to deliver blood to these faraway vessels. The sweating is another way that the body tries to bring your temperature down.
- **Hot flashes can make you feel nauseous** and even lightheaded. When they occur while you're sleeping, they are called night sweats and can make getting a good night's sleep quite the challenge.

COMMON HOT FLASH TRIGGERS

The most common triggers of hot flashes are:

- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Dairy
- Hot and/or spicy foods
- Processed and fast foods
- Refined sugars
- Simple carbohydrates
- Smoking
- Stress
- Warm temperatures in your environment (especially while you're trying to sleep)

You might not have all of these triggers as every woman is different, so it helps to keep track of your specific triggers in a journal. Once you begin to notice a reoccurring trigger, try to eliminate it and see if you feel better.

HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

Menopause symptoms arise because of the decline in your reproductive hormones during menopause. Thus, one way to alleviate symptoms of severe hot flashes is hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Bio-identical HRT may be a good option should your symptoms become severe. It is similar to estrogen therapy, but it uses bio-identical hormones that are manufactured to look and behave exactly like the natural estrogen found in our bodies. **However, whether it is an exact duplicate or not, adding extra estrogen into the bloodstream can create health problems, especially for women who have breast cancer or other estrogen-dependent cancers.** It can also cause problems for individuals who have or are at risk of developing blood clots and cardiovascular diseases. There are many other options out there for the relief of hot flashes, so it is recommended that you try some of those before trying HRT.

MANAGE STRESS & LIVE IN BALANCE

Stress is definitely a huge trigger, and regardless of whether or not it affects your hot flashes, you should try to eliminate it! When we are under chronic stress, our stress hormone cortisol is constantly elevated, which isn't normal. Chronically elevated cortisol levels affect glucose metabolism and, therefore, increase inflammation. **Hot flashes, anxiety, insomnia, mood swings, and weight gain are all inflammatory menopausal symptoms,** so if we lower our stress and decrease inflammation, we can also reduce the duration and intensity of hot flashes. Stress impacts glucose metabolism, but so do other factors—a major one being your intake of glucose.

Try to avoid sugary sweets and simple carbohydrates as much as possible because they **cause a sudden spike in your insulin levels, which leads to inflammation** and other health problems. Stick to a produce dominated diet, which includes lots of veggies and healthy fats. **A nutrient-dense diet will shift your body into an anti-inflammatory environment** and will promote a healthier lifestyle in general. Find ways to destress throughout the week, even if it's a short few minutes of meditation in the mornings or some me-time in the evenings, whatever works for you and your schedule. Lastly, although exercise is good for you, **intense exercise can also be a trigger for hot flashes in some women**. If you find out that this is one of your triggers, try to limit or avoid intense physical activity and stick to other exercises that don't raise your heart rate too much, such as yoga, walking or moderate-intensity resistance training.

ADD PHYTOESTROGENS TO YOUR DIET

Phytoestrogens are wholly misunderstood. Phytoestrogens are NOT human estrogens – they are not steroids! They are plant molecules that have enough structures in common with estrogens that they can affect estrogen receptors and hormone metabolism. Contrary to what you've heard – they are not harmful in their whole-food form. Four main plant constituent groups have demonstrated weak estrogenic activity; however, only lignans and isoflavones have shown specific human estrogenic activity. You get lignans from seeds, whole grains, legumes, vegetables, and some fruits. Because lignans are abundant in grains and legumes – I do not recommend a strict Paleo diet for menopausal women. However, I would suggest you soak, sprout, or ferment your grains and legumes to make them more digestible.

Soy is also well-known for its estrogenic effects. Some studies have found that women who were in menopause and who ate a diet rich in soy had improvements to their joints and bone health, something that deteriorates following the decrease in estrogen. Soy might also reduce the common symptoms of menopause, including hot flushes, excessive sweating, and heart palpitations, which can sometimes occur. It is the Isoflavones in soy that provide the estrogenic effects. Safe sources of soy are sprouted organic tofu, organic soybeans, organic miso, and organic soymilk. It's essential to purchase non-GMO and organic soy only.

Top Phytoestrogen food list

- **Legumes:** Soybeans are the highest legume source of phytoestrogens, followed by tofu, soy yoghurt, soymilk, tempeh and miso soup.
- **Sprouted seeds and legumes:** Mung bean, clover, alfalfa and soybeans when sprouted offer a considerable amount of phytoestrogens. Seeds especially Linseed, are rich sources of lignans. Sesame seeds also have particularly high amounts. Tahini is a good source of sesame seeds.
- **Vegetables:** Garlic is fairly high in isoflavones. Squash also contains a reasonable amount of phytoestrogens.
- **Fruits:** Fruit highest in phytoestrogens are dried apricots, dried dates, dried prunes, peaches and strawberries.
- **Culinary Herbs:** Parsley, dill, fennel seeds, aniseed, sage and red clover are good choices both for cooking and for herbal teas.
- **Green Tea:** Green tea has Phyto estrogenic properties.

CONSIDER NATURAL SUPPLEMENTS

- **Broad-Spectrum High-Potency Multivitamin:**
- **Maca:** Maca works by simply balancing your estrogen and progesterone levels. It does not contain any hormones by itself. Instead, it simply nourishes the endocrine system. This is the reason why many experts consider maca a major menopause hormone superfood!
- **Natural Progesterone Cream:** Some women become estrogen dominant in menopause. Natural progesterone cream helps oppose this. Many women find relief by using progesterone cream and it is far safer than using estrogen or progestin! Progesterone cream is applied topically and available over the counter. If you want to learn how to use progesterone cream, reach out to me.
- **Vital Nutrients Menopause Support Formula:** Menopause Support is a combination of herbs formulated specifically to support women during menopause. The combination of herbal extracts may help to alleviate hot flashes and common symptoms associated with menopause. The formula contains ingredients that support hormonal balance in menopausal women and promote bone health.
- **Pure Encapsulations Ashwagandha:** The Ashwagandha Pure Encapsulations supplement is best known to help counteract the effects of occasional physical and mental stress, as well as support cognition and memory function. Ashwagandha is an herb that belongs to the pepper family and has and has been used extensively over 4,000 years for use in promoting overall health and longevity.
- **Innate Adrenal Response:** Supports a healthy stress response. Adaptogenic botanical blend supports the reduction of feelings of stress. Glandular-free formula suitable for vegetarians.

CONCLUSION

What you experience during menopause is mostly a result of mindset. If you see menopause as dreadful - it will be. I challenge you to view menopause as a fabulous time in your life. There are countless new possibilities and many freedoms, such as freedom from periods - hallelujah! Many of my clients find they can finally focus on things that feed their soul rather than taking care of everyone else. It's your time - enjoy it. Do something new! Start going to yoga, make smoothies, juice, get a massage, or take a trip. Don't let your symptoms get you down. If you do the work, I promise you will see the results.

I have a Perimenopause and Menopause MEGA program which I run. This is all you need to get you through this time and all explained so well.

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