

The Five Step Focus for Weightloss during Peri and Post the Menopause



Do you believe you have gained weight, and peri and post menopause are the culprits?

Do you feel like you are doomed to carry extra weight peri and post the menopause?

Do you think you are doomed to have a slower metabolism because of peri and post menopause?

Do you usually exercise first thing in the morning, but now believe you cannot train fasted because of peri and post the menopause?

The root causes of fat gain during peri and post menopause are not because of the menopause, but more to do with age (the exact reason why men also put on weight) and symptoms like a drop in oestrogen, which leads to an increase in visceral fat, which is the fat around the organs. Menopause is getting a bad reputation for allegedly harming people's metabolism. But guess what? The advice I give my menopausal women is based on the same principles as anyone else. Why? The same principles apply to lose fat at any stage of life: Reduce calories (sustainably), increase nutrients, hydration, improve sleep quality, reduce stress and increase exercise (resistance and cardio). Cardio, HIIT, and resistance training will help anyone lose fat. Eating more fibre, leaner proteins, and choosing healthier fats will benefit anyone, whether pre-, peri-, or post-menopausal. It will even help men. The most important thing is to make simple changes that work for you and build from there.



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Here is my FSF: My Five-Step Focus for Losing Weight During Menopause.

01 Focus on why you may be gaining weight, i.e. the symptoms. Stop blaming the menopause.

There are a few reasons why you may gain weight during perimenopause and post the menopause.

Hormonal Changes: As your oestrogen levels decline, this can lead to an increase in visceral fat¹. Visceral fat is the fat around your organs, which is why many women talk about “belly fat” or fat increasing like a tyre around the tummy. If visceral fat increases, it can increase your risk of insulin resistance. But it doesn’t have to be that way.

Metabolic Changes: There is a common misconception that your basal metabolic rate (BMR) or metabolism slows down due to menopause. It only slows down because of age, less movement or inactivity, not menopause². Even men lose muscle mass when they age or become less active.

Poor Sleep Quality is often overlooked: Lack of sleep affects our hunger hormones, including two important ones called ghrelin (signals to your brain that you are hungry) and leptin (tells your brain you are full)³. This can lead to poorer food and drink choices. The same is true for men and even people in their 20s.

Increased Stress Levels are also often overlooked: It leads to less favourable food choices and emotional and stress eating. Again, the same is true for men and even people in their 20s.



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02 Focus on Exercise

If ageing and decreased activity or inactivity leads to a decline in muscle mass, you want to build and retain muscle mass. Aim for at least two strength or resistance training sessions per week, if you prefer. You can mix it up with HIIT to aid in weight loss, cardio for cardiovascular health, yoga, Pilates or barre. It does not matter how old you are, you can improve your muscles at any stage. What's your sweet tooth? Can you add weights/resistance?

03 Focus on a sustainable calorie deficit

Food restriction leads to binge eating/emotional eating/yo-yo dieting. You do not need to do anything extreme to lose weight. You also do not need to count calories. Where can you easily start with one small change and build from that over three months? Instead of three snacks per day, can you reduce to two? Instead of two glasses of wine per night, can you reduce to one or allocate one alcohol-free day or night and build from there? If you are a corporate employee who tries hard to choose a healthy lunch at the work canteen, but you love the toasted cheese sandwiches, allocate a day in the week to eat that toastie. Enjoy that toastie. What vegetables can you add to that toastie? Once you are confident with the small change you made, move on to the next one.



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The Four Step Focus for weightloss during Peri and Post the Menopause



04

Focus on balanced meals: 30g fibre per day, lean protein, and unsaturated fat (most of the time).

Why? You want to feel full for more extended periods and reduce excessive snacking. The more balanced and varied your diet, the more nourished you will be.

Fibre Sources: Whole grains, e.g. oats, All-Bran flakes, Weetabix, wholemeal toast. Choose beans and pulses, e.g. lentils, red kidney beans, chickpeas. Add more fruit and vegetables. Why fibre? Fibre is bulk and will fill you up for longer. Mixed vegetables should make up ~ half your plate. Wholegrains/unrefined carbohydrates should make up ~ ¼ of your plate.

Lean Protein: It has less fat, therefore fewer calories than fatty protein. E.g. Chicken and turkey (no skin), fish, eggs, tofu, tempeh and lower-fat red meat. You can derive more nutrients from fewer calories with lean protein compared to higher-fat protein, and it will keep you fuller for longer. Guess what? Beans and pulses are sources of protein and fibre, so be sure to include them in your diet. Include calcium sources and ensure you are getting enough vitamin D from the sun or a supplement (especially between October and April if you live in the UK). Calcium and vitamin D are essential for muscle building, maintenance and repair. Lean protein should make up ~ ¼ of your plate.

Unsaturated fats include Omega-9s (avocado, olive oil), Omega-6s (walnuts/vegetable and seed oils), Omega-3s (oily fish like salmon, flaxseed). When choosing saturated fat found in dairy, opt for low-fat/semi-skim versions. Fats should make up a “sliver” of your plate, about the size of your thumb.

5

Focus on ways to improve sleep quality and reduce stress.

These are the two most brutal battles anyone can face. During peri and post menopause, sleep is disturbed due to hormonal fluctuations. Exercise, limiting caffeine to before 2:00pm, eating healthy and having a wind-down routine are some ways to help improve sleep quality. Stress management is personal to everyone. You can explore tasks, activities, and hobbies that bring you enjoyment and help take your mind off stress, even for just five minutes a day. Exercise, healthy eating, sudoku, puzzles, crosswords, meditation and many other techniques can help.



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With my 121 unique coaching I will:



- 01 Support you to implement the FSF and develop sustainable healthy behaviours, habits, and lifestyle changes.**
- 02 Help you to improve your relationship with food.**
- 03 Support you with weekly check-ins.**
- 04 Support you with monthly review calls**
- 05 Ensure you are getting essential nutrients into your diet.**
- 06 Equip you with the knowledge to improve your food choices.**
- 07 Food/meal ideas and inspiration.**
- 08 Refer you to a personal trainer or physiotherapist**



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