

Healthy Weight at Menopause

NUTRITION AND DIETETICS



WNHS
Community
Advisory Council

*your
voice*

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Weight gain at menopause

During menopause your body will go through hormonal changes which make you more likely to gain weight. Typically this will occur around your abdomen rather than your hips and thighs. Hormonal changes alone don't necessarily trigger menopausal weight gain. This is usually related to ageing, lifestyle and genetic factors.

Muscle mass tends to reduce with age, while fat increases. Loss of muscle mass decreases the rate at which your body uses calories, which can make it more challenging to maintain a healthy weight. If you continue to eat as you always have and don't increase your physical activity, you are more likely to gain weight.

Menopausal weight gain can have serious implications for your health. Excess weight increases the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and various types of cancer, including colorectal and breast cancer.

Body Mass Index

Body Mass Index is calculated as follows:

BMI =
 $\text{Weight (kilograms)} \div \text{Height (metres)} \times \text{Height}$
 eg. $70\text{kg} \div (1.7\text{m} \times 1.7\text{m}) = 24.2 \text{ BMI}$

Ideal or desirable weight for people between ages of:

18-65 years is in the BMI range of 20-25

Over 65 years is in the BMI range of 22-27

Weigh yourself once a week, preferably in the morning without shoes and with minimal clothing.



Monthly weight loss progress chart

My goal weight: _____

	1 st month	2 nd month	3 rd month
End of week 1			
End of week 2			
End of week 3			
End of week 4			
Weight loss			

What should we eat?

Current dietary guidelines for weight management promote plant-based and low-fat foods, combined with regular exercise.

Healthy eating means reducing your intake of fat, sugar and alcohol and increasing your intake of high fibre foods such as fresh fruits, vegetables, legumes, wholegrain bread and cereals. Limit consumption of high fat meat and include more fish and skinless chicken (the Cancer Council suggests around 100g per day).

How to limit sugar consumption

- Limit refined sugars, which include white, brown, raw sugar, honey, glucose and syrups.
- Limit food and drinks that are high in sugar such as cakes, sweets, desserts, soft drinks and juice.
- Where possible select a sugar free alternative.
- Reduce the amount of sugar you add to foods and drinks.

Low calorie meal plan

There is a low calorie meal plan in this booklet for you to follow. You should aim to stick to the plan for at least three months to make a difference in your weight. This is a 1200 calorie or 5000 kilojoule meal plan.

If your Bone Mineral Density (BMD) is low, you should consider increasing your dairy serve by one and removing one fat serve from the meal plan. If the recommended 1000-1300 mg of calcium per day is not achieved through your diet, it is suggested that you take a calcium supplement.

While you are following this meal plan you must increase your exercise level from what you are currently doing. Recommended exercise to lose weight is 35-60 minutes of aerobic exercise seven days a week e.g. brisk walking, jogging, cycling or swimming.

Daily meal plan

Breakfast

- 2 serves carbohydrates
- 1 serve fat
- 1 serve dairy
- 1 serve fruit
- 1 serve vegetables (optional)

Lunch

- 1 serve protein
- 2 serves carbohydrates
- 1 serve fat
- 2 – 4 serves vegetables
- 1 serve fruit

Afternoon tea

- 1 serve fruit
- 1 serve dairy

Dinner

- 2 serves protein
- 1 serve carbohydrate
- 2 – 4 serves vegetables
- 1 serve fat
- 1 serve dairy
- 1 serve fruit

Examples of serving sizes*

CARBOHYDRATES	FRUITS	DAIRY
1 slice multigrain/sour dough/raisin bread	1 small apple/pear orange/nectarine	½ cup Hi Lo/low fat/soy milk
2/3 cup porridge/ All Bran/Guardian	½ small mango/grape fruit/½ medium banana	½ small tub or 100g diet or low fat natural yoghurt
2 Weet Bix/Vita Brits	1 cup rockmelon/ watermelon/berries	100 ml light flavoured milk
½ cup cooked rice/pasta/ noodles	½ cup fruit salad/ unsweetened fruit	¾ cup skim milk tone/light start
½ cup lentils/baked beans/ chickpeas	1 slice avocado/ pineapple	20g or 1 thin slice low fat hard cheese
4 Vita Wheat/ 2 Ryvita crackers	¾ cup grapes/fruit juice	
½ cup cooked sweet potato/corn/potato mash	2 mandarins or kiwi fruits	
1 small potato	1 glass vegetable juice	
PROTEIN	FAT	VEGETABLES
50g cooked lean beef/pork lamb/skinless chicken	1 teaspoon margarine/ butter/peanut butter	75g or ½ cup cooked vegetables
6-8 king prawns	2 teaspoons light margarine	1 cup salad vegetables
85-100g fresh or canned fish in brine (no oil)	2 teaspoons mayonnaise/ salad dressing	
½ cup low fat cottage or ricotta cheese	2 teaspoons light sour cream	
1 medium sized egg	1 teaspoon olive or canola oil	
120g tofu	2 teaspoons nuts of any type	
Lentils, beans, cheese and nuts are excellent sources of proteins for vegetarians		

* Serving sizes above do not always match with Australian Guidelines to Healthy Eating due to the calorie restriction.

Omega-3 fats (the good fats!)



According to the Heart Foundation Australia, Omega-3 fats found in fish and certain plant-based products have been found to be beneficial for:

- reducing the risk of heart conditions
- improving arthritis.

They are also being investigated in relation to lowering cancer risks and improving memory.

How much do we need?

Women need 500 mg of Omega-3 fats per day.

Sources of Omega-3 fatty acids

Fish sources:

Rich (>1000mg/100g fish)	Medium (300-1000mg/100g fish)	Low (<300mg/100g fish)
Canned Sardines	Red Gurnard	Bream
Atlantic Salmon	Australian Salmon	Flathead
Smoked Salmon	Mullet	Flounder
Canned Mackerel	Pilchard	Groper
Canned Salmon	Blue Mussel	Shark
Fresh or canned Tuna	Calamari	Sand whiting
	Arrow Squid	Snapper
	Sydney Rock Oysters	Trevally
	Australian Herring	Rainbow Trout
	Gemfish	Crab, Scallops, Abalone, Prawns
		Ocean Perch

Plant sources of Omega-3 fats:

Vegetables	Nuts	Seeds	Beans
Dark green leafy vegetables	Walnuts, pecans	Linseeds	Soybeans

Calcium, vitamin D and osteoporosis

Calcium is important for building strong bones and helping to protect us from developing osteoporosis. Later in life, when the body loses calcium, there is an increased need for calcium, especially for women around menopause.

Getting enough vitamin D is important too – it helps the body absorb calcium from the diet.

How much calcium and vitamin D do we need?

Calcium

After menopause women need at least three serves of calcium rich foods each day (1000 to 1300 mg daily from high calcium foods).

If you find it difficult to get enough calcium from food, ask your doctor or dietitian about taking a calcium supplement.

If you can't tolerate dairy products or don't enjoy them, there are some calcium-enriched products available such as orange juice, cereals and soy milk. However calcium added to soy drinks may not be as well absorbed as from dairy foods, so you may need larger servings.

People need different amounts of calcium at different ages – the food table on the next page shows you how to get the calcium you need.

Tip: You can add a calcium 'boost' to soups, smoothies, curries and sauces by adding skim milk powder.

Good sources of calcium

Foods	Serve size in grams	Calcium in mg
Tahini	20	65
Soy beans (boiled)	100	76
Custard	100	100
Almonds	50	110
Ice cream	100	133
Tofu (calcium set)	100	150
Salmon tinned	100	220
Sardines canned	100	380
Cheddar cheese reduced fat	40g (2 slices)	323
Parmesan cheese	40	460
Haloumi cheese	40	248
Feta cheese	40	130
Yoghurt (flavoured)	200	316
Yoghurt (plain)	200	390
Milk reduced fat	250 ml	352
Milk regular	250 ml	285
Milk skim	250 ml	320
Milk calcium fortified	250 ml	353

Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps the absorption of calcium from the gut. We need at least 600-800 IU (international units) of vitamin D daily.

Low vitamin D levels are mainly seen in women who do not get enough sun exposure. To prevent low vitamin D levels you need sun exposure to bare skin and, if necessary, to take a vitamin D supplement. The table on the next page gives an estimate of how long you need to expose your skin to sun per day to make enough vitamin D. Your age and skin colour determines the amount of sun exposure you need.

	Summer	Spring/Autumn	Winter
Fair Skin	10 minutes	20 minutes	30 minutes
Dark Skin or Elderly	20 minutes	60 minutes	90 minutes
Area exposed	Face, arms and hands	Face, arms and hands	Face, arms and hands

It is important to stay out of the sun between 10am and 2pm in the summer and wear a 30+ SPF sunscreen lotion.

There are small quantities of vitamin D in a few foods, such as fatty fish (salmon, herring and mackerel). It can also be found in liver, eggs and fortified foods such as margarine. There are very small amounts in some low-fat milks.

Physical Activity

It is thought that being overweight and associated inactivity are risk factors for heart diseases and cancers. Being active is a key element for weight control. Regular moderate exercise is more beneficial than the occasional burst of intense exercise.

Walking is one of the best, safest, cheapest and easiest activities.

Walking groups

Walking groups bring people together socially, improve health and create an environment in which exercise is more easily sustained.

To find out about walking groups close to you, visit the website below and click on your area on the map provided.

www.dpi.wa.gov.au/walking/1537.asp

You can also visit your local library or community centre for more information on activities in your area.

Shopping guide

To help you with the overwhelming task of choosing healthy foods when you shop we have put together this shopping guide. This includes registered companies ® and choices within the food groups.

Choices listed for cereals, breads, biscuits, noodles, rice, legumes, fruits and dairy are all low GI (glycemic index). The glycemic index is a way of ranking foods that contain carbohydrates according to the effect they have on blood sugar levels. Always remember to choose low fat and low sugar food sources. Foods which are low fat, low sugar and high fibre are the best choices for maintaining a healthy weight at menopause.

The lower the GI of the food the smaller the rise in the blood sugar levels. On food labels look for the following:

- Fats – under 10g per 100g
- Sugars – under 10g per 100g
- Dietary fibre over 5g per 100g

Shopping guide

CEREALS

Uncle Tobys®

Health Wise
Vita Wheats
Traditional oats
Sustain

Sanitarium®

Low fat muesli
Weet Bix
Light n' Tasty
Up & Go liquid breakfast

Kelloggs®

All Bran
Sustain
Guardian
Just Right

Weight watchers®

Fruit & Fibre
Tropicana

Lowan®

Natural oat bran
Natural muesli
(fruit and nut)

BREADS

Noble Rise®
Sour dough
Whole grain
Soy linseed
Helgas®
Golden sour dough
Soy linseed
Fruit and grain
Toasted soy and sesame

Burgen®

Fruit and muesli
Soy linseed
Oat bran and honey loaf

Tip top®

Raisin toast
Multigrain
Wholemeal

Spicy fruit muffin

Pocket Pita®

High fibre

BISCUITS

BISCUITS/SWEET

Arnotts®

Snack Right
Full o' Fruit
Fruit Pillow

Weight watchers®

Raspberry tartlets

Freedom Foods®

Fruit cookies 97% fat free

BISCUITS/ SAVOURY

Arnotts®

Vita Wheats original
Vita Wheats cracked
pepper

Paradise®

Wholemeal cracker 97%
fat free

Kavli®

Wholemeal fat free
Crisp bread

Westons®

Ryvita crackers

Premium Brand®

All fat free varieties

PASTA, NOODLES, RICE

PASTA

wholemeal
white
spinach

Continental®

Pasta and sauce with
Heart Foundation tick/
approved

RICE

Basmati
Doongara
Long grain (white or brown)

NOODLES

Buckwheat
Pearl barley
Mung bean
Semolina
Fresh rice noodles
Hokkien noodles
Two minute noodles
(limit seasoning)

Fantastic®

Noodle in a cup
Vegetable curry
Maggi®
Chicken and beef

MILK

Fresh milk less than
2% fat

Soylife or Sanitarium®

Low or no fat soy milk
Pura®

Tone fat free

Light Start

Devondale®

Skim milk
Smart plus

Dairy Farmers/

Woolworths/
Homebrand®

Low fat and fat free

Evaporated milks -choose
skim varieties

YOGHURT

Danone, Bulla, Ski, Yoplait, Nestle®
99% fat free/diet
Soylife®
99% fat free products
Fruche®
Light 99% fat free

CHEESE

Hard cheese < 15% fat
Kraft, Bega, Devondale,
Dairy Farmers, Weight Watchers®
Soft cheeses < 10% fat
Bulla, Dairy Farmers, Weight Watchers, King Island®

LEGUMES

Red kidney beans
Baked beans
Lentils
Three bean mix
Chickpeas
Old el Paso®
Refried beans (fat free)
Mexie beans (fat free)
Thick n' Chunky salsa (fat free)
Tofu
Tempeh

VEGETABLES

Vegetables can be raw, cooked, canned or frozen.
Vegetables with significant amount of carbohydrates include

yam, sweet potato, potato, parsnip, cassava and corn.

All other vegetables are good and they are low in carbohydrates eg: broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and spinach.

Vegetables are a good source of vitamins and minerals

FRUITS

All fresh fruits
Tinned fruits in natural juice

Goulburn Valley®
Ardmona®
SPC®

Weight Watchers®
Dried fruits in small amounts

SALAD DRESSING

Choose 99% fat free varieties

SAUCES

Choose < 3% fat (3g/100g)
eg. soy sauce, chilli sauce, teriyaki sauce, curry paste and mustard

CONDIMENTS

Choose low salt varieties and use in small amounts.
Avoid cream sauces and choose salt reduced varieties. Aim for < 450 mg/100g sodium.

ICE CREAM AND CONFECTIONERY

Choose products < 3% fat (light).
These are occasional extra foods and not a suitable source for dairy-based calcium.

MEAT AND POULTRY

Choose lean varieties and cook with minimal olive oil or canola oil.

EGGS

Limit to 6 per week.

FISH

Aim for 3 serves per week.

Canned fish-choose with spring water or olive oil.

DRINKS

Sports drinks, e.g. Gatorade, Powerade for vigorous exercise only.

Low kilojoule (calorie) drinks are OK in small amounts.

Drinks with caffeine and sugar are not good choices e.g. Red bull, Lift Plus.

Unsweetened fruit juice (in small amounts)
½ cup = 1 medium fruit

For further support and guidance please ring for an appointment with a dietitian

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For more information about menopause services at KEMH please call the Menopause Clinic

**Menopause Clinic
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This information is available in
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