

Your Guide to.

Eating well during
the Menopause for
different ethnicities
& nationalities

This book is a resource that
not only provides delicious
recipes but also fosters
understanding and appreciation
for diverse culinary traditions
and how to eat well during
the Menopause.





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Eating for Wellbeing during the Menopause



Millions of people all over the world experience Perimenopause and the Menopause every day. Each person will have a unique experience and our culture, where we come from and the type of foods we eat can affect our experience.

Most of us understand there are key benefits from eating a balanced diet. A balanced diet helps our physical health, impacts our energy and can support our immune system. Few of us however automatically think about using food in supporting us with major life transitions such as the Menopause. Eating well during the Menopause can help us manage symptoms, boost energy and support our health.

Food can heal us and provide a source of comfort. During stages such as the Menopause, we experience such shifts and fluctuating emotions that providing ourselves with good nutrition can be the last thing on our minds, or within our capacity due to decreasing energy and motivational levels. We understand that making healthy choices and planning what we eat isn't always so easy.

Aside from being important for nutrition, food means many other things to us. When we look at the cultures of different countries, food is extremely important. Food can be nostalgic, create links to our families, heritage and our nation. Food brings people together. The preparation and enjoying of food connecting us, when we gather together in celebration to eat. In the UK we are extremely lucky to live in a very diverse society, experiencing cuisines from all over the world. Please enjoy this simple book. It aims to help you manage your Menopause journey by sharing some easy and practical ways to achieve good nutrition, explore different ethnicities, with a snapshot of delicious recipes from around the world!

Managing Menopause symptoms through nutrition



There are many advantages to eating well during the Menopause. Those experiencing this stage of life can benefit from following a healthy, nutritious Menopause way of eating. For example:

Symptom relieving options – a diet low in sugar and processed foods may help regulate mood and energy levels. A diet high in Phytoestrogens may help to lessen hot flashes and night sweats.

Bone health – a diet high in Calcium and Vitamin D promotes healthy bones and lowers the risk of osteoporosis.

Weight management – during the Menopause, many people gain weight or experience changes to their body composition. Eating well and managing blood sugar levels can support weight management.

Gut Health – digestive problems are common in Menopause. Focusing on our gut health can have an impact on some symptoms such as constipation.

Cardiovascular Health – post Menopausal people can be more likely to develop heart disease. Keeping cholesterol levels low, eating the right amount of protein and a diet rich in fruit, vegetables and wholegrains can help to prevent this.

Hormonal Balance – some foods, such as those high in omega -3 fatty acids may help regulate hormones and can support both cognitive function and emotional wellbeing.

Key things to think about during Menopause:

You should try to include a range of nutrient rich foods to ensure that your diet is Menopause friendly! Here are some key things to think about including:

Calcium Rich Foods – full fat greek yoghurt, kale, broccoli

Vitamin D Sources – (vitamin D is necessary for the absorption of calcium) egg yolks, salmon, mackerel

Phytoestrogen rich food - soy products, lentils, chickpeas

Protein sources - start your day with a protein-rich breakfast. Include foods like tofu, beans, lentils, fish, poultry and legumes

Healthy fats – avocados, olive oil, almonds, seeds and nuts

Fibre – wholegrains, fruits, vegetables and legumes

Fruits and vegetables

Omega - 3 fatty acids – salmon, sardines, trout

Herbs and spices – sage, turmeric and ginger

Keep hydrated – aim to drink lots of water during the day and limit your intake of caffeine and alcohol



Now we welcome you to a culinary journey around the world. Enjoy the recipes and tips for managing your own Menopause Journey.

Middle East: Lebanese/Palestinian

In a region spanning many countries and ethnic groups, there is no doubt that there are a wide variety of Menopause experiences in the Middle East. A Middle Eastern diet has many benefits and can impact positively on brain health, blood sugar regulation, anxiety & depression, gut health, heart health and healthy weight management. It can also support bone health in post-Menopausal women. These recipes are ideal for batch cooking, allowing for speedy mid-week meals using any leftovers!

Breakfast: Shakshuka

A dish of poached eggs in a simmering tomato sauce with spices. It is easy, healthy and takes less than 30 minutes to make. A side of fresh fruit such as sliced kiwi or orange is a good addition for an extra hit of Vitamin C and fibre, adding a refreshing element to start your day. For 6 servings:



Ingredients:

- 2tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 red pepper, seeded and diced
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp cumin
- ¼ tsp chilli powder
- 1 400g tin of tomatoes
- 6 large eggs
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 small bunch coriander, chopped
- 1 small bunch parsley, chopped
- Small handful of crumbled feta cheese (optional but adds an extra boost of protein!)

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a large pan on a medium heat. Add the pepper and onion and cook for 5 minutes or until softened.
2. Add the garlic and spices and cook for an additional minute.
3. Pour the tomatoes into the pan. Season with salt and pepper and bring to a simmer.
4. Make small wells in the sauce and crack in the eggs. Cook for 5 to 8 minutes, or until the eggs are cooked to your liking. You can also cover the pan with a lid to help the eggs steam.
5. Garnish with coriander, parsley and feta cheese before serving.

Middle East: Lebanese/Palestinian

Snack (or as part of a Mezze): Baba Ghanoush

A great alternative to Humous and it only takes a few ingredients to make! It is a delicious, smoky dish. This will keep in the fridge and will make at least 4 servings.



Ingredients:

- 3 aubergines
- 1-3 garlic cloves, crushed (to taste)
- 1 lemon, juice only
- 2-4 tbsp tahini
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- Black pepper, to taste
- 1 tbsp chopped flat leaf parsley

Method:

1. Prick the aubergines with a fork and grill until the skin is charred and blackened and the flesh feels soft when you press it (this will take approximately 15-20 minutes, turning repeatedly through cooking until the whole skin is charred). Another option is 10 minutes in an air fryer.
2. In a pestle and mortar, crush the garlic with the lemon juice, tahini, olive oil and pepper.
3. When cool enough to handle, cut the aubergines in half and scoop out the flesh. Mix the soft flesh with the remaining ingredients.
4. Place in a serving dish and finish with a drizzle of olive oil and sprinkle the parsley over the top.

Try serving with Middle-Eastern Flatbread/Pitta Bread.

Middle East: Lebanese/Palestinian

Lunch: Shorbet Adas

A traditional Lebanese Lentil Soup, this is full of flavour and nutrients. Satisfying and comforting, yet low in calories, this is packed with iron, folate and high in protein. We have swapped traditional white potato for sweet potato for an extra boost of vitamins and minerals. This recipe uses some cup measurements – a regular sized kitchen mug is ideal for easy measuring!



Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups red lentils
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 large carrot, peeled and diced
- 1 small sweet potato, peeled and diced
- 2 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp fine black pepper
- 1 tbsp salt
- ½ tsp 7 spice (Baharat)
- 12 cups water
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- 3 whole lemons juiced (about ¾-1 cup)

Method:

1. Place the lentils in a large pot adding the sweet potato, onions and carrots. Add enough water to fill the pot about ¾ full, approximately 12 cups of water.
2. Boil for 45 minutes to an hour, until the lentils have softened completely.
3. Turn off the heat and let the soup rest for about 10 minutes. Remove some excess water (if any).
4. Use a stick blender to blend until creamy, leaving no chunks behind.
5. Add in the spice mixture (mix with 2tbsp water first to prevent any lumps), salt and parsley.
6. Bring to the boil and then simmer on low for 10-15 minutes stirring occasionally.
7. Remove from the heat and add in the lemon juice.

Serve with a slice of sourdough bread.

Middle East: Lebanese/Palestinian

Evening Meal: Musakhan: Sumac Chicken and Caramelized Onion Flatbreads

A delicious and traditional Palestinian chicken dish, perfectly flavoured and roasted providing an ultimate comforting meal. You can season the chicken and refrigerate uncooked for 1 night and prepare and cook the onions one night in advance to get ahead.



Ingredients for the Spice Mixture: For the Chicken:

- 3 tbsp allspice
 - 2 tbsp ground cinnamon
 - 1 tbsp coriander
 - 1 tsp black pepper
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp ground cardamom
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground nutmeg
- 6 chicken legs, bone-in, skin on (if you like, divide the legs to thighs and drumsticks. You can also use chicken breast pieces, if you prefer.)
 - Extra virgin olive oil
 - Kosher salt
 - 1 tsp sumac
 - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of spice mixture opposite

Ingredients for the Flatbread:

- Extra virgin olive oil
- 6 yellow onions, chopped
- Kosher salt
- 1 tbsp sumac, more for later
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp of spice mixture above
- Toasted pine nuts, about $\frac{1}{3}$ cup or more to your liking
- 6 flatbread such as Taboon bread, Greek pitta bread, or Naan bread

Middle East: Lebanese/Palestinian

Evening Meal: Musakhan: Sumac Chicken and Caramelized Onion Flatbreads

Method (Preheat your oven to 190 degrees C):

1. Make the spice mixture. In a small bowl, combine allspice, cinnamon, coriander, black pepper, cardamom and nutmeg. Mix well. Prepare and cook the chicken. Pat the chicken pieces dry and place them on a lightly oiled roasting pan. Drizzle generously with extra virgin olive oil, season with kosher salt on both sides. Add 1 teaspoon sumac and 1 ½ teaspoon of the spice mixture. Give the chicken a good rub with your hands, making sure to get the spices underneath the skin. Arrange the chicken pieces skin side up and place on the middle rack of your heated oven. Roast for about 1 hour or until fully cooked (internal temperature should register 165 degrees F.)
2. Prepare the caramelized onion mixture for flatbread. While the chicken is roasting, work on the caramelized onions. In a large pan, put just over ½ cup extra virgin olive oil, chopped onions, kosher salt, 1 tablespoon sumac, 1 tablespoon cumin, and 2 teaspoon of the spice mixture. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, adding a little bit of water (2tbsp or so at a time) as needed, until the onions have softened and cooked completely (about 30 to 40 minutes). Remove from the heat.
3. Check on the chicken and if ready, remove from the oven. Pour any roasting pan juices into the caramelized onions. Cover the chicken loosely with tin foil for about 15 minutes, while you assemble the flatbreads.
4. Assemble the Musakhan flatbreads. Turn on your grill. To assemble the flatbreads, dip the edges of each bread in the oil on the surface of the onion mixture. Arrange the flatbreads on a large baking sheet (you may do a couple of flatbreads at a time). Spread enough of the caramelized onion mixture on the surface of each flatbread, leaving a small border around the edge (like pizza). Add a generous sprinkle of sumac. Add toasted pine nuts. Place under the grill briefly (2 to 4 mins), watching carefully, until edges and onion mixture are nicely browned.
5. To Serve Musakhan: When the flatbreads are ready, top each with a chicken portion and serve along with a side of olives and simple Mediterranean salad.

Indian

In India, Menopause is usually approached as a natural stage of life that comes with many benefits. People from our South Asian Communities often eat a diet rich in Phytoestrogens, meaning we typically see less symptoms such as hot flushes. They can however experience heavy bleeding, joint pain and fatigue.

South Indian cuisine is renowned for its vibrant flavours, aromatic spices, and diverse range of dishes that reflect the region's rich cultural heritage. While many traditional South Indian dishes are flavourful and nutritious, there's also a misconception that the cuisine is heavy on oil and carbohydrates. However, with a mindful selection of ingredients and cooking techniques, South Indian cuisine can offer a variety of healthy options that are both delicious and nourishing.

Breakfast: Masala scrambled eggs

Masala scrambled eggs are a variation of the classic scrambled eggs, flavoured with Indian spices. The addition of spices gives these Indian scrambled eggs a unique flavour that is both aromatic and delicious. Spices are one of the most highly concentrated sources of antioxidants as well as have anti-inflammatory properties and are therefore a valuable addition to a healthy diet.



This can be eaten on its own or can be served on granary or sourdough toast. As a lighter option, serve your masala scrambled eggs with a side of Greek yoghurt and fresh fruit for a high protein breakfast.

Ingredients:

- 2 tsp coconut oil/ sunflower oil
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp garam masala
- ½ tsp chopped/grated ginger
- 1 onion finely chopped
- 1 tomato diced (optional)
- 1 green chilli finely chopped (you can use red chilli flakes instead of green chilli too)
- 3 large Free-Range Eggs
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Chopped spring onion and coriander leaves for garnish (optional)

Indian

Breakfast: Masala scrambled eggs

Method:

1. Heat the oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat.
2. Once the oil is hot, add the chopped onions and sauté until they are slightly browned then add chopped ginger and sauté.
3. Then add the turmeric and garam masala and cook out until the masala smells good. This should take 1-2 minutes.
4. Add chopped tomatoes and green chilli to the pan and cook until the tomatoes are soft and mushy.
5. Meanwhile, crack the eggs into a mixing bowl and beat them until the yolks and whites are well combined. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
6. Lower the heat of the frying pan and pour in the beaten egg mixture.
7. Using a spatula, scramble the eggs until they are just cooked through and fluffy. If you prefer firmer scrambled eggs, feel free to cook them longer.
8. Garnish the masala eggs with chopped spring onion or fresh coriander leaves and serve.
9. Whilst eggs are a key component of this recipe, you can indeed make it vegan friendly by using tofu in place of the eggs.



Indian

Snack: Spicy Roasted Chickpeas

A moreish and healthy, protein packed snack. Great for on the go snacking, these are high in fibre and are nutrient rich. Chickpeas are known to be beneficial to heart health and can help lower cholesterol, especially important during Menopause when the risk of heart disease increases.



Ingredients (makes 1 large batch):

- 3 cups tinned chickpeas drained and rinsed
- 2 tbs olive oil
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1 tsp garam masala
- ¼ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp white pepper
- ½ tsp sea salt

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 200 °C and line a baking tray with foil.
2. Rinse the chickpeas and dry thoroughly with a paper towel, removing any loose skins.
3. Put the dried chickpeas onto the baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil. Shake the pan to coat the chickpeas in oil.
4. Sprinkle the curry powder, garam masala, garlic powder, white pepper and salt over the chickpeas and then shake the pan again to evenly distribute the spices.
5. Bake for 15 minutes, then gently toss the chickpeas and return to the oven for another 15 minutes or until crisp. If you want your chickpeas to be extra crunchy, turn the oven off and leave the chickpeas in the oven for another 15-20 minutes.
6. Remove and cool before eating.

Indian

Evening Meal: Sherly's Authentic Curry Base

We are so grateful to Sherly Gibson, Clinical Education & Placement Lead South Yorkshire ICB, for being kind enough to share with us her personal experience with the Menopause. Here is Sherly's authentic recipe for a simple and healthy curry base packed with aromatic spices and wholesome ingredients that can be used as a foundation for a variety of curry dishes. Sherly has also provided suggestions for simple ingredient swaps, to effortlessly increase the nutritional content without compromising on flavour or comfort.



At the end of this section we share some more of Sherly's tips and wonderful insight into simple, nutritious swaps that can be made in South Indian Cuisine.

Ingredients (this base should make 4-6 servings):

- 2 tbsp olive oil or coconut oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger, minced
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp chilli powder (adjust to taste)
- ½ tsp garam masala
- Salt, to taste
- 1 cup vegetable/chicken broth
(or water for healthier option)
- ½ cup coconut milk or Greek yogurt
(optional, for a creamier curry)

Indian

Drink: Golden Milk/Haldi Doodh

Golden milk is a traditional Ayurvedic drink with anti-inflammatory and healing properties. The key ingredient is Turmeric, a yellow spice, popular in Asian cuisine. Turmeric can help with joint pain in the Menopause, support your immune system and can improve gut health and digestion. It can also support healthy blood sugar levels too – so a good all-rounder to think about drinking!



There are many variations of this drink – but here is a really simple recipe that you can make in advance in the form of a paste that you keep in the fridge. This makes it easier to make the drink!

Ingredients (for a 2 weeks supply to make up the milk):

- 100g cinnamon
- 100g turmeric powder
(or 2 inches of sliced, fresh turmeric root)
- 1tsp black pepper
- 2bsp of coconut oil
- Honey or maple syrup, to taste

Method:

1. In a pan, add the turmeric, cinnamon, black pepper and half a pint of water. Simmer over a low heat, stirring occasionally for about 15 minutes until it forms a sloppy paste (you may need a bit more water to get the right consistency).
2. Let the paste start to cook and then stir in the coconut oil.
3. Once cooled, place into a jar, in the fridge, and let it set. Add 1 large teaspoon to warm milk (plant variants work well). Delicious on its own, or sweeten with a drizzle of honey or maple syrup if needed.

You can also mix a teaspoon into porridge for breakfast.

Indian

Sharing Sherly's tips and simple swaps

Healthy eating is all about balance and moderation. It is clear South Indian cuisine offers a surplus of nutritious options that offer to different tastes and dietary preferences. By incorporating wholesome ingredients, reducing oil and processed foods and choosing traditional cooking methods, you can enjoy the delicious flavours of South Indian cuisine while nourishing your body and promoting overall well-being.

Here are some simple tips to bear in mind:

Coconut

While coconut is a significant ingredient in South Indian cuisine, it's essential to use it in moderation. Coconut adds richness and flavour to dishes, but it's high in saturated fats. Opt for fresh coconut or coconut products like coconut milk or oil in limited quantities.

Grains

South Indian cuisine incorporates a variety of grains such as rice, millet, and lentils. Opting for whole grains like brown rice, millets (such as ragi or pearl millet), and unpolished rice varieties adds fibre and essential nutrients to your diet.

Lentils & Legumes

Lentils and legumes like chickpeas, black-eyed peas, and kidney beans are staple ingredients in South Indian cooking. They're excellent sources of plant-based protein, fibre, and complex carbohydrates, making them perfect for a balanced diet.



Indian



Spices

South Indian cuisine relies on numerous spices like turmeric, cumin, coriander, mustard seeds, and curry leaves. These spices not only enhance the flavour of dishes but also offer numerous health benefits, including anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. More insight from Sherly into the benefit of adding spices to your diet can be found at the end of the recipe section of this book.

Vegetables

South Indian recipes often feature an array of vegetables like drumsticks, eggplant, okra, and various greens. These veggies are packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, promoting overall health and well-being.



Pakistani

Pakistani cuisine is rich and diverse reflecting the country's history, geography, and cultural influences. It is known for its aromatic spices, flavourful dishes and hearty meals.

In Pakistan, Menopause is experienced similarly to other parts of the world, common symptoms being hot flushes, night sweats, mood changes, vaginal dryness, and changes in libido. Cultural factors may however influence how Menopause is perceived and managed. These recipes are simple, great for batch cooking and packed with nutrients to help manage symptoms of the Menopause.

Breakfast: Chai Smoothie

With a creamy banana base high in potassium and a combination of comforting spices, this is simple yet bursting with flavour.



Ingredients for 2 servings:

- 2 ripe bananas
- 400ml almond milk
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp ground cloves
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tbsp maple syrup

Method:

1. Simply place all the ingredients into a blender and pulse until smooth.
2. Try serving with a bowl of berries topped with a spoon of Greek yoghurt.

Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries all provide an extra intake of fibre, vitamins and antioxidants, helping to reduce inflammation and support both bone and heart health.

Pakistani

Lunch: Sweet Potato, Red Lentil & Chickpea Fritters with a Simple Green Salad

Great for batch cooking, these are versatile and high in easy to digest plant protein. Sweet potatoes and chickpeas are both high in nutrients such as Vitamin A, Vitamin C and Manganese. Their low glycaemic index will help to keep blood sugars stable throughout the afternoon. A simple green salad adds extra iron and calcium, helping to support cardiovascular health and bone density.



Serve with a glass of mango juice for a refreshing mid-day tonic or a glass of chilled Kefir for a comforting boost of gut friendly probiotics.

Ingredients for 4 Servings:

Fritters:

- Olive oil
- 300g sweet potato, peeled and chopped into bite size chunks
- 1 red onion, finely chopped
- ½ tsp chilli powder
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 200ml boiling water
- 100g split red lentils
- 2 garlic cloves, roasted
- 1 400g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Simple Green Salad:

- Large handful of mixed green leaves such as spinach, kale, rocket or lettuce
- 1 Large Avocado, de-stoned, flesh scooped out and sliced

Pakistani

Lunch: Sweet Potato, Red Lentil & Chickpea Fritters with a Simple Green Salad

Method:

Preheat the oven to 200 °C.

1. Place the sweet potato chunks on a large baking tray and drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper.
2. Roast for 25 minutes until soft. Once cooked, remove from the oven and leave to one side.

Lower the oven temperature to 180 °C.

1. Place a frying pan on a medium heat, add a drizzle of olive oil and a pinch of salt.
2. Add the onion and cook for 5 minutes. Add the spices, stir and cook for 2 more minutes. Once cooked, leave to one side.
3. While the onion is cooking, prepare the lentils by placing them in a medium saucepan, pouring in 200ml boiling water. Place over a medium heat and cook for 10-15 minutes until soft and the water has been absorbed. Once cooked, remove from the heat and leave to one side to cool.
4. Place half of the cooked onion and garlic into a food processor with the lentils and a pinch of salt and pulse until the mixture comes together (it should be a coarse mixture rather than completely smooth).
5. Spoon the mixture into a bowl and add the sweet potato. Using a fork, mash the mixture lightly so it comes together, but you can still see chunks of sweet potato.
6. Add the chickpeas and the rest of the onion and stir everything together.
7. Take a large spoonful of the mixture and shape into a patty shape using your hands. Place on a baking tray lined with parchment. Repeat this process with the remaining mixture.
8. Cook in the oven for 30-35 minutes until golden and cooked through.
9. Prepare the simple green salad by simply combining the ingredients together and serve with the fritters.

Pakistani

Evening Meal: Easy Dahl

A lentil based dish aromatic and packed with protein, B vitamins and fibre. Garlic supports the immune system, making this a comforting dish to enjoy all year round! Add roasted cherry tomatoes on top for a boost of anti-inflammatory Lycopene and a hard boiled egg for an extra boost of Vitamin D and good fats!



Ingredients for 6-8 servings:

- 400g red lentils, rinsed in a sieve under cold running water
- 2 tsp ground turmeric
- 25g butter
- 2tsp cumin seeds
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1-2 green chillies, finely chopped, to taste
- Salt and pepper

Method:

1. Place the lentils into a saucepan and cover with enough water to come about 3cm above the lentils. Bring to a boil, skimming off any froth that appears. Once simmering, add the turmeric along with half of the butter.
2. Simmer gently for 20 minutes, or until the lentils are completely softened and the water is absorbed, but the mixture is not dry.
3. Meanwhile, heat a small frying pan over a medium heat. Add the cumin seeds and dry fry until toasted and aromatic (about 1-2 minutes). Remove the cumin seeds from the pan and set to one side.
4. Add the remaining butter to the pan and once melted, fry the garlic and chopped green chilli for 1-2 minutes, or until the garlic turns light golden-brown and the chilli is softened. Add the toasted cumin seeds back to the pan and remove from the heat.
5. Once the lentils are soft, give them a stir to break them up a little. Stir the chilli and garlic mixture (including any butter) into the pan with the lentils and mix well.

Serve with brown rice and a handful of raw spinach.

Pakistani

Drink: Kahwa Tea

Hot Flushes and Night Sweats can lead to increased sweating and fluid loss. Staying hydrated can help replace lost fluids and prevent dehydration. This recipe is a fragrant, warming, mild green tea packed with antioxidants and made with whole spices, saffron, and nuts. It is refreshing, rejuvenating, calming and makes you feel good.



Ingredients (for 3 small cups):

- 480ml water
- 2 inches cinnamon stick
- 2 cardamom pods
- 2 cloves
- 5 to 6 dried rose petals – optional
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp green tea leaves or add as required
- 4 to 5 almonds (sliced or crushed or chopped) – optional, can also add walnuts instead
- 10 to 12 saffron strands – optional

Method:

1. Prepare the spices before you start making the kahwa by taking the cinnamon, cloves and cardamoms, placing them in pestle-mortar and crush lightly.
2. You can slice the almonds thinly or crush these also in the pestle-mortar. (You could use 2 to 3 walnuts in place of almonds, high in Omega-3 Fatty Acids being beneficial to brain health).
3. Place the water in a saucepan on a medium heat.
4. Add the lightly crushed spices and dried rose petals in the water.
5. Add honey.
6. Let the water come to a gentle boil on a medium heat. Turn off the heat and add the green tea. You can add less or more green tea leaves as you prefer.
7. Cover the pan with its lid and steep the green leaves in the hot water for 3 minutes.
8. After 3 minutes, strain and pour into cups, adding 3 to 4 saffron strands and sliced almonds in each cup.

Persian

Also known as Iranian cuisine, Persian food is known for its rich flavours, aromatic spices and a diverse array of dishes influenced by various regions, climates, and cultures. This results in a rich tapestry of flavours and dishes. Some typical Persian dishes include Kebabs, Rice dishes, Stews, Yoghurts and Flatbreads. Introducing a few simple and subtle swaps to traditional dishes can really help in accessing an abundance of nutrients, supporting a healthy journey through the Menopause.

Breakfast: Spiced Granola

This spiced granola is comforting and nourishing. Packed with protein, good fats and bursting with cranberries to support urinary tract health, reducing the risk of infection, particularly common during the Menopause. Serve with a splash of chilled Kefir for a probiotic boost and a sliced banana containing the amino acid tryptophan, a building block of the 'feel good' chemical, serotonin.



Ingredients (makes 1 large jar):

- 400g jumbo oats
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp of ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 40g pecans, roughly chopped
- 40g cashews, roughly chopped
- 50g pumpkin seeds
- 6 tablespoons of coconut oil
- 160ml maple syrup
- 100g sultanas
- 100g currants
- 1 large handful of dried cranberries

Persian

Breakfast: Spiced Granola

Method:

Preheat the oven to 140°C.

1. Heat the coconut oil and maple syrup over a low heat until melted.
2. Remove the pan from heat and stir through the spices.
3. In a large bowl mix together the oats, pecans, cashews and pumpkin seeds and pour over the melted coconut oil and maple syrup.
4. Spread the mixture evenly onto a lined baking tray and bake in the oven for 45-50 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes, until golden brown.
5. Remove the tray from oven and leave to cool.
6. When the granola reaches room temperature, mix in the sultanas, currents and cranberries.

Snack: Fresh Figs and Cottage Cheese

Fresh and indulgent, yet healthy and full of goodness. Fresh figs are packed with calcium, magnesium and fibre. The natural sweetness of the fig is offset with plain cottage cheese, a great source of protein and brazil nuts, adding to your selenium intake for the day supporting thyroid function, immune function and mood regulation.



Ingredients for 2 servings:

- 4 fresh figs
- 4 brazil nuts, roughly chopped
- 4tbsp cottage cheese
- ½ tsp honey or maple syrup

Method:

1. Split the figs through the middle, then arrange on two plates.
2. Put the cottage cheese in a bowl and fold in half the brazil nuts. Then spoon the mixture over the figs.
3. Scatter over the remaining nuts and drizzle with honey or maple syrup.

Persian

Lunch: Easy Jewelled Salad

Vibrant, nutritious and full of textures. Fennel, radicchio and quinoa are mixed with crunchy toasted pistachios, seeds and juicy pomegranate seeds. This salad is soothing on the digestive system while being packed with Vitamins A, C, E, K and B6.



Ingredients for 4 servings:

- 100g quinoa
- 2 handfuls of sunflower seeds
- Large handful of shelled pistachios
- 1 fennel bulb, thinly sliced, fronds set aside
- ½ lemon, juiced
- 1 head radicchio
- 2 large handfuls of soft herbs such as basil, parsley & coriander
- 1 pomegranate, deseeded
- Pinch of salt

For the dressing:

- 4 tbsp olive oil
- ½ lemon, zested & juiced
- 2 tbsp pomegranate molasses
- 1 tsp maple syrup
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp allspice
- Pinch of sea salt & black pepper

Method:

1. Place the quinoa in a medium saucepan with 250ml water. Bring to a gentle simmer and cook uncovered for 10-12 minutes, until the water is almost all absorbed. Then turn off the heat, cover and leave to steam in the residual heat for a further 5-7 minutes.
2. While the quinoa is cooking, preheat the oven to 140°C. Put the sunflower seeds and pistachios on a small baking tray and spread out evenly. Place in the oven for 8-10 minutes until golden. Remove the tray from the oven and, once cool enough to handle, roughly chop and set aside.
3. In a large bowl, toss the fennel in the lemon juice. To the same bowl, add the radicchio, herbs, ¾ of the pomegranate seeds, the cooked quinoa and a pinch of salt.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together the dressing ingredients. Pour over the salad and toss everything together.
5. To serve, tip the salad into a large bowl or serving dish and scatter over the remaining pomegranate seeds and fennel fronds.

Persian

Dinner: Chicken Kebab with Raw Slaw

Simple to make, healthy and a nutritious source of protein. Chicken thighs provide a healthy intake of Vitamins A, B, D and E and broccoli is high in Vitamin K and Calcium supporting bone health. You could serve this with a side of cauliflower rice as a healthy swap from regular rice. Cauliflower is a source of Choline, an essential nutrient important for brain health, metabolism, and liver function.



Ingredients for 4 servings:

- 2 tbsp cornflower
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp dried coriander
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- ½ tsp ground cloves
- 1 tbsp cayenne
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 750g boneless chicken thighs, halved

Ingredients for the slaw:

- 1 large broccoli floret, thinly sliced
- 300ml Greek yoghurt
- 4tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp mustard powder
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- Handful fresh parsley, finely chopped

Method (preheat the oven to 180 °C and lightly grease a 900g loaf tin):

1. Mix the cornflower, salt, cumin, coriander, paprika, turmeric, cloves, cayenne and cinnamon.
2. Put the oil into a bowl, add the chicken and stir to coat in oil. Add the spices and mix to coat evenly. Layer the chicken in the oven, press down and bake for 40 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, make the slaw. Put the broccoli in a large bowl.
4. Put the yoghurt into a second bowl and heat the oil in a small pan. Once heated, add the mustard powder and seeds – when the seeds begin to pop, pour the oil and seeds over the yoghurt and stir. Then, pour over the broccoli and mix in the parsley.
5. Once the chicken is ready, leave it in the tin so the chicken absorbs the juices before tipping out of the tin. Slice the chicken and serve with the slaw.

Somali

Somali cuisine is highly diverse, influenced by the country's geography, climate, and cultural heritage. Somali cuisine is typically characterized by its use of aromatic spices, flavourful meats and tropical fruits. In Somalia there is a range of physical and emotional symptoms during Menopause and those experiencing this stage use various coping strategies to manage symptoms, including traditional herbal remedies, dietary changes, and lifestyle modifications.

Breakfast: Ginger, Mango & Lemon Smoothie

Ingredients (makes 1 serving):

- Half a frozen mango
- 1 thumb-sized piece ginger, peeled & roughly chopped
- ½ lemon, juiced
- Dash of ice cold water, optional



Method:

1. Simply place all the ingredients into a blender and blitz until smooth. Add a splash of water to the mixture if needed to reach desired consistency.

Snack: Spiced Cashew Energy Balls

Containing dates which are high in fibre, potassium, magnesium and copper, an essential mineral contributing in energy production, these are a simple, portable, on the go snack.



Ingredients for 12 servings:

- 200g cashews
- 2 tsp of ground ginger
- 200g pitted Medjool dates
- 50g oats

Method:

1. Pulse the oats and cashews in a food processor until they form a fine flour.
2. Add the dates and ginger and blend until everything has mixed together and formed a sticky dough.
3. Roll the mixture into 12 equal sized balls and place in the fridge for an hour to set.

Somali

Lunch: Spicy Peanut Soup with Sweet Potato & Kale

Simple and nutritious this aromatic, comforting soup is packed with protein and anti-inflammatory properties. Serve on its own or with a slice of sourdough bread for a boost of probiotics, gentle and supportive to our digestive health.



Ingredients for 2 servings:

- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 jalapeño, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 2 x 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 2 x 400g tin light coconut milk
- 950 ml water
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp curry powder and/or turmeric
- 1 cupful of chopped peanuts
- 130g peanut butter
- 32–64 grams kale, stems removed, chopped
- Small bunch of coriander

Method:

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over a medium heat and add the onion, garlic, and jalapeño. Cook until soft and fragrant.
2. Add sweet potatoes and brown lightly with the aromatics.
3. Add tomatoes, coconut milk, water, spices, and peanuts. Simmer until the sweet potatoes are tender.
4. Add the peanut butter and kale. Simmer until everything is thick, creamy, and delicious. Top with more peanuts and a little coriander.

Somali

Evening Meal: Spiced Lamb with Cauli Rice Pilaf

Lamb is a good source of protein, iron and zinc. Swapping traditional rice for a low-carb accompaniment using blitzed cauliflower increases our intake of fibre and vitamin C while being much kinder on our blood sugar levels. Turmeric provides a powerful anti-inflammatory, helping to support joint pain during the Menopause.



Ingredients for 2 servings 4-6 lamb cutlets:

Marinade:

- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp mild curry powder
- 2-3 pinches of chilli powder
- 1tsp olive oil
- ¼ large lemon, juiced
- Salt and black pepper, to taste



Pilaf:

- ½ cauliflower (250g approx.) roughly chopped
- 1 shallot, roughly chopped
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 3 cardamon pods, cracked slightly
- 1 clove garlic, sliced
- 100g frozen peas

Sauce:

- 50g Greek yoghurt
- Sprig of mint leaves, chopped

Somali

Evening Meal: Spiced Lamb with Cauli Rice Pilaf

Method:

1. Mix all the ingredients for the marinade together in a shallow dish. Lay the lamb cutlets on top so that one side gets coated in the spice mix and then turn, coating the other side. Set aside to marinate.
2. Put the cauliflower into a food processor with the shallot. Whizz until the cauliflower pieces have broken down into little grains that look like rice (or you can also use frozen cauliflower rice).
3. Heat the oil in a pan adding the garlic and spices. Cook for 1 minute before adding the cauliflower mixture and mix, ensuring everything is coated in the spiced oil. Add the peas and 2-3 tbsp water and stir again. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 5-7 minutes until the 'rice' is tender.
4. Meanwhile, heat a frying pan until hot and fry the lamb cutlets for 2-3 minutes each side until golden. Set aside to rest.
5. Stir the yoghurt, mint and add 2-3 tsp water together in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Once the pilaf has finished cooking, divide between two plates. Top with the lamb cutlets and drizzle over the yoghurt sauce.

Slovak / Czech / Polish

Slovak, Czech, and Polish cuisine share some similarities due to their geographic proximity and historical connections, however, each has its own distinct culinary traditions and dishes. Typical dishes include ingredients such as mushrooms, fish, meats and cheeses.

Also common are pancakes, pastries and sweet syrups which can negatively impact menopausal symptoms such as night sweats and hot flashes. Introducing simple ingredient swaps, can provide a nutrient dense alternative to some comforting traditional favourites.

Breakfast: Scrambled Egg and Mushrooms on Toasted Sourdough

Comforting and full of flavour, you can use any type of mushroom however we have opted for Chestnut, recognised for their high Vitamin D content. You may also like to serve this with a spoonful of sour cream on top for an extra boost of calcium and protein.



Ingredients for 2 servings:

- 200-250g chestnut mushrooms, sliced
- 4 large eggs
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ small onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter
- 3 tbsp fresh chives, chopped
- Black pepper, to taste
- Sourdough bread, sliced and lightly toasted

Slovak / Czech / Polish

Breakfast: Scrambled Egg and Mushrooms on Toasted Sourdough

Method:

1. Crack the eggs into a bowl, season them with salt and whisk until they turn pale yellow. Set aside.
2. Peel the onion and chop half of it finely. Set aside.
3. Melt a tablespoon of butter in a frying pan. Add the onions and let them fry on medium-low for 1-2 minutes until they are softened and translucent.
4. Add in the mushrooms and fry for 8-10 minutes, stirring frequently. The mushrooms will release some water, but it will evaporate in the process.
5. Add in the eggs and let them cook undisturbed to begin with. As a thin layer of cooked egg forms on the edges, push it around and across the frying pan with a spatula. Continue for 2-3 minutes until nearly set. If the eggs still look slightly undone, take them off the heat and divide between plates.
6. Sprinkle generously with chopped chives and freshly ground black pepper. Serve immediately on top of the lightly toasted sourdough.

Slovak / Czech / Polish

Breakfast: Apple and Cinnamon Muffins

Our healthier take on the traditional Szarlotka, these are simple to make, nutritious and portable for a healthy on the go snack.

Soy milk provides a healthy dose of protein and phytoestrogens.

Oats support our cholesterol and apples provide a source of nutrients and fibre, helping to keep our digestive system healthy. Maple syrup provides a natural, unrefined sweetness, making these high in nutrients and a comforting snack.



Ingredients for 12 servings:

- 150g porridge oats, plus extra for sprinkling on top
- 150g white spelt flour
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 200ml soya milk
- 200ml maple syrup
- 50g coconut oil, melted
- 2 eating apples, peeled & chopped into ½cm pieces

Method preheat oven to 180°C:

1. Grease a 12-hole muffin tray with coconut oil, or line with muffin cases.
2. Place the oats into a blender and blitz until they resemble a fine powder.
3. Place the blitzed oats into a large bowl along with the flour, cinnamon and bicarbonate of soda. Whisk until no lumps remain.
4. In a jug stir together the soya milk, maple syrup and coconut oil.
5. Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients and stir through the wet ingredients. Mix gently, just until everything is incorporated. Add the apple pieces and stir to combine.
6. Scoop equal amounts of muffin batter into your prepared tray, sprinkling the top of each muffin with oats.
7. Bake for 25-30 minutes until risen and golden brown. Remove from the tray and cool before eating.

Slovak / Czech / Polish

Evening Meal: Warm beetroot rice and lentil salad with mackerel

High in flavour with a low Glycaemic Index helping to keep blood sugars stable throughout the evening. This meal is full of Omega-3s from the mackerel, particularly beneficial for eye health, heart health, joint health and much more. Walnuts provide a dose of calcium and beetroot helps support our liver function. Serving with watercress increases our intake of vitamins A, C, and K, as well as several B vitamins.



Ingredients for 2 servings:

- 2-4 mackerel fillets (around 300g)
- 125g beetroot, peeled and roughly chopped
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1tbsp olive oil
- 75g puy lentils
- 1 tbsp chives, finely chopped
- ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- 20g walnuts, toasted
- ½ lemon, juice only
- Salt and pepper
- Small handful watercress, to serve

Method:

1. Place the beetroot into a food processor and pulse until it resembles rice. Spoon into a bowl and stir in the vinegar and oil. Season with salt and pepper and set aside.
2. Put the lentils into a pan and cover with cold water. Cover with a lid and bring to the boil. Turn the heat down and simmer for 20-25 minutes until tender before draining well.
3. Spoon the beetroot mixture, along with any marinade into the lentils and keep warm.
4. Preheat the grill. Lightly brush the mackerel with oil and lay flat, skin side down, on a baking sheet. Grill for 5-6 minutes until cooked through.
5. Stir the chives, mustard, walnuts and lemon juice into the lentil mixture and divide between two plates. Top with the mackerel and serve with the watercress.

Slovak / Czech / Polish

Drink: Sparkling Orange Cooler

A healthy take on the traditional Oranzada, a carbonated orange soft drink made with water, sugar and orange syrup. This recipe uses fresh oranges and is free from added sugar, being a simple and delicious way to stay hydrated.



Makes 1 large drink:

- 1 handful of mint leaves, finely chopped
- 600ml sparkling water
- 120ml orange juice
- 1 orange, cut into slices

Method:

1. Mix all the ingredients and leave to infuse for at least 30 minutes.
2. After 30 minutes, pour into glasses and enjoy.

Spices

A Note on Spices from Sherly



Spices are not only used to enhance the flavour of food but also offer numerous health benefits due to their rich phytochemical content. When incorporating spices into your diet, it's essential to do so in moderation and as part of a balanced diet to reap their health benefits. Individual responses to spices may vary, so it is a good idea to consult with a healthcare professional, especially if you have any existing health conditions or concerns.

Here are some of the health benefits associated with commonly used spices:

Black Pepper: Contains piperine, which has been shown to enhance the absorption of certain nutrients like curcumin from turmeric. Black pepper also has antioxidant properties and may improve digestive health.

Cayenne Pepper: Contains capsaicin, which has been associated with pain relief, improved metabolism, and appetite suppression. It may also help reduce inflammation and promote heart health.

Cardamom: Contains compounds that may help lower blood pressure, improve breathing, and aid digestion. It also has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

Cinnamon: Has been linked to improved blood sugar control and insulin sensitivity, making it beneficial for managing diabetes. It also has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.

Spices

A Note on Spices from Sherly



Cloves: Rich in antioxidants, cloves may help protect against oxidative stress and inflammation. They also have antibacterial properties and may promote oral health.

Coriander: Contains compounds that may help lower blood sugar levels, reduce inflammation, and improve digestion. It also has antioxidant properties and may promote heart health.

Cumin: Rich in antioxidants, cumin may help reduce inflammation, improve digestion, and promote weight loss. It has also been linked to lower blood sugar levels and improved cholesterol profiles.

Garlic: Contains allicin, a compound with potent medicinal properties. Garlic has been shown to lower cholesterol levels, reduce blood pressure, and boost the immune system.

Ginger: Known for its anti-nausea effects, ginger is often used to alleviate motion sickness, nausea, and morning sickness during pregnancy. It also has anti-inflammatory properties and may help relieve muscle pain and soreness.

Turmeric: Contains curcumin, which has powerful anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. It may help reduce the risk of chronic diseases like heart disease, cancer and Alzheimer's disease.

Healthy Habits!

A Note on Healthy Swaps and Daily Habits – Sherly’s Healthy Habits!



Making simple habit swaps can contribute to a healthier lifestyle and promote overall well-being when incorporated into your daily routine. Consistency is the key. Here are some easy and beneficial habit swaps you can incorporate into your routine:

Water instead of Sugary Drinks: Replace sugary drinks, energy drinks or diet drinks with water. Staying hydrated with water supports proper bodily functions, aids digestion, and helps maintain energy levels without the added sugar and calories.

Whole Fruits instead of Fruit Juice: Choose whole fruits instead of fruit juice. Whole fruits provide fibre, vitamins, and minerals, while fruit juice often contains added sugars and lacks the fibre found in whole fruits.

Walking instead of Driving: Whenever possible, choose to walk or bike instead of driving short distances. Walking/cycling are an excellent form of exercise that promotes cardiovascular health, burns calories, and reduces carbon footprint.

Homemade Snacks instead of Processed Snacks: Prepare homemade snacks like fresh fruit, vegetable sticks with hummus, or homemade trail mix instead of relying on processed snacks like chips or cookies. Homemade snacks are usually lower in unhealthy fats, sodium, and additives.

Healthy Habits!

A Note on Healthy Swaps and Daily Habits – Sherly’s Healthy Habits!

Herbal Tea instead of Sugary Coffee Drinks: Replace sugary coffee drinks with herbal tea or black coffee. Herbal teas are naturally caffeine-free and offer various health benefits, such as antioxidants and calming effects, without the added sugar and calories found in many coffee beverages.

Stair Climbing instead of Lifts/escalators: Choose for taking the stairs instead of using lifts/escalators whenever possible. Stair climbing helps improve cardiovascular health, strengthens leg muscles, and burns calories, contributing to overall fitness.

Home Cooking instead of Eating Out: Cook meals at home more often instead of dining out or ordering takeout. Home-cooked meals allow you to control the ingredients and portion sizes, leading to healthier eating habits and potentially saving money.

Mindful Eating instead of Mindless Snacking: Practice mindful eating by paying attention to your hunger and fullness cues rather than mindlessly snacking in front of the TV or computer. This habit can help prevent overeating and promote a healthier relationship with food.

Reading instead of Screen Time before Bed: Swap screen time with reading a book or practicing relaxation techniques before bedtime. Limiting exposure to screens before bed can improve sleep quality by reducing the disruption caused by blue light emitted from electronic devices.

Gratitude Journaling instead of Ruminating: Start a gratitude journal and write down three things you're thankful for each day instead of dwelling on negative thoughts. Cultivating a habit of gratitude can improve mental well-being and shift focus on positivity.

Recommended Reading



Carbs & Cals, World Foods by Salma Mehar, Dr Joan St John, Chris Cheyette & Yello Balolia

Classic Palestinian Cookery by Christiane Dabdoub Nasser (Palestinian cookery)

Comptoir Libanais by Tony Kitous and Dan Lepard (Lebanese cookery)

Navigating Menopause, Eating Well to Manage Symptoms, Boost Energy and Support Your Health During Menopause by Vanessa S Castaneda

Palestine on a Plate by Joudie Kalla (Palestinian cookery)

Quick & Easy by Deliciously Ella

Syrian Kitchen by Imad Alarnab

The Good Menopause Guide by Liz Earle

The Saffron Tales by Yasmin Khan (Persian cookery)

Time to Eat by Nadia Hussain

World Cuisine Cookbook, Master 150 Traditional Dishes from Around the World by Amazon

World Cuisine, 100 Best Recipes From Around the World Cookbook by Amazon

Zaitoun by Yasmin Khan (Palestinian cookery)

Swasthi's Recipes: (www.indianhealthyrecipes.com)

Thank You

We hope that you have enjoyed our useful book and recipes.

Often things can feel very out of control during Menopause journeys so eating well and adopting healthy habits around key areas of wellbeing can make a real difference and enable you to have control over your own symptom management.

We hope that this book helps you to follow our simple ethos of how to:

Eat Well: Feel Well: Sleep Well: Think Well

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Eat Well | Feel Well | Sleep Well | Think Well