

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO

Reduce Perimenopause Symptoms

When you have fluctuating hormones, your world can turn upside down. Some of the symptoms of perimenopause, the years before menopause when your hormones start fluctuating, can really wreak havoc on your body, your mood, and your relationships. Here are some actions you can take to reduce those symptoms and improve your resiliency.

#1. EAT MORE PROTEIN & FIBER

Protein is needed to support our stress hormones, sex hormones, and our muscles. Getting protein at every meal and snack will go a long way toward improving your body's response to perimenopause. Animal-based proteins — poultry, eggs, fish, and lean cuts of red meat — are more easily absorbed and digested by the body, but plant-based sources like beans and tofu can be excellent options, too. Fiber is essential for a healthy gastrointestinal tract, aids in elimination and detoxification, and helps you feel full. Great sources of fiber include beans, vegetables, fruit and whole grains.

Some tasty ways to increase fiber and protein intake are:

- Swap your salad's croutons for a ½ cup serving of roasted chickpeas
- Add a scoop of protein powder to your morning smoothie
- Mix 1 tbsp of chia and flax seeds into oatmeal
- Blend silken tofu or cottage cheese to use in sauces instead of heavy cream
- Cook and shred chicken for an easy, high-protein lunch with little prep



RECIPES

SIMPLE TOFU SCRAMBLE



4 servings



20 minutes

This tofu scramble makes a great savory high-protein breakfast option for those that avoid eating eggs. Turmeric is added for color (and extra nutrition), however you can skip it if needed.

Ingredients

- 1 to 2 teaspoons avocado oil or olive oil
- 1 yellow onion, finely chopped
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- Pinch of turmeric, for color
- 1 16 oz package firm or extra-firm tofu
- Shoyu or soy sauce, to taste

Directions:

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions and celery and cook until softened, 4 to 5 minutes.
2. Stir in turmeric, then crumble in tofu. Reduce heat to medium and cook, covered, for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with shoyu and serve.



OTHER RECIPES



[Cilantro Lime Chicken Salad](#)



[Ginger Lime Salmon and Baby Bok Choy](#)



[Quinoa Porridge](#)



[Tempeh Mushroom Bowl](#)



[Roasted Salmon with Coconut Kale and Sweet Potatoes](#)



[Slow Cooker Lentil Cauliflower Stew](#)

#2. LIMIT ALCOHOL

Not only can alcohol cause hot flashes by promoting hormone fluctuations, it can also increase the severity of those hot flashes, and disrupt quality of sleep with profuse sweating and restlessness. The good news is that the availability of non-alcoholic spirits, beers, and wines have increased in recent years, and we've listed some brands below. Most non-alcoholic spirits can be swapped into your favorite cocktail recipes without any additional modifications, making it much easier to find a substitute for your favorite refreshment — but without the hormonal side effects.

- Ritual Zero Proof carries rum, gin, and tequila alternatives, among others.
- Seedlip has four unique, non-alcoholic blends of distilled herbs and spices.



RECIPES

NON-ALCOHOLIC POMEGRANATE MARGARITA

Ingredients

- 1 ½ ounces 100% pomegranate juice (purchased or fresh squeezed)*
- 1 ½ ounces Tequila Alternative (Ritual, Spiritless, Free Spirits, or another non-alcoholic brand)
- ½ ounce lime juice
- ½ ounce simple syrup or maple syrup

Optional: Kosher salt or Himalayan pink salt, for the rim

- Ice, for serving
- For the garnish: pomegranate seeds, orange wedge or lime wedge



Directions:

1. Cut a notch in a lime wedge, then run the lime around the rim of a glass. Dip the edge of the rim into a plate of salt.
2. Place all ingredients in a cocktail shaker and fill it with ice. Shake until cold. Strain the margarita into the glass with the salted rim. Fill the glass with ice, garnish with pomegranate seeds and an orange wedge or lime wedge.

Recipe adapted from A Couple Cooks <https://www.acouplecooks.com/pomegranate-margarita/>

NON-ALCOHOLIC WHISKEY SOUR

Ingredients

- 2 oz. whiskey alternative
- ¾ oz. fresh lemon juice
- ½ oz. simple syrup
- Garnish: cherry or orange slice

Optional: 1 egg white

Directions:

1. Combine the whiskey alternative, lemon juice, simple syrup, and egg white (if using) in a shaker with ice. Shake vigorously for 15-20 seconds. Strain into a cocktail glass filled with ice. Garnish with a cherry or an orange slice.



Recipe adapted from Ritual Zero Proof

#3. STRENGTH TRAINING & EXERCISE

Many women who start to feel their bodies change will amp up their cardio workouts. That may exhaust you even more! Strength training, with heavy weights, done slowly and repeated 3-4 times, will help you build more muscle in less time. The more muscle you have, the more calories you burn at rest and the more energy you will have. Strength training can also boost our neural pathways — leading to better cognition — improve fat-burning metabolism, increase and maintain bone density, and help maintain our cardiovascular health. Aim for adding strength training to your workout routine three times per week for the best results. Including exercises such as squats, deadlifts, lunges, chest presses, and rows will ensure you hit all of the major muscle groups. Many of these can be done without equipment.



NEED SOME INSPIRATION?

Check out the 2-day strength training routine below:

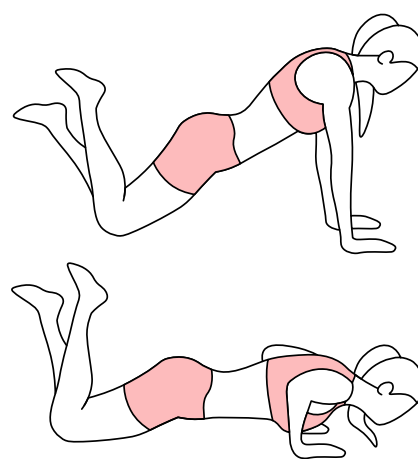
DAY 1

Bodyweight squats



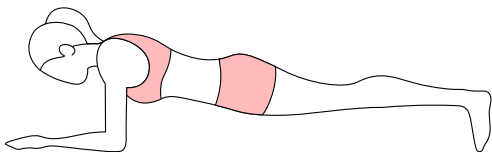
8 reps

Kneeling push-ups



8 reps

Plank

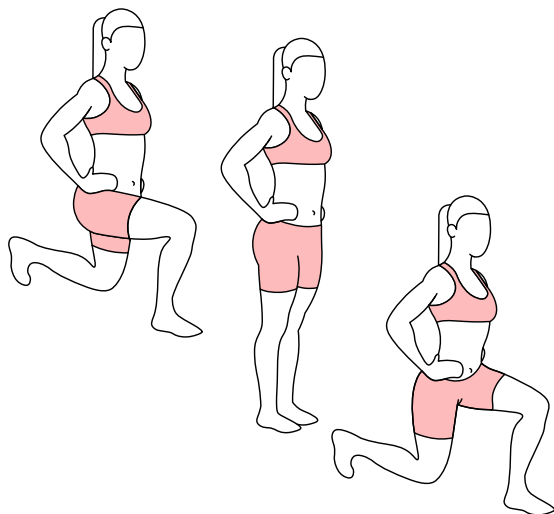


15 - 20 seconds

REPEAT 2X

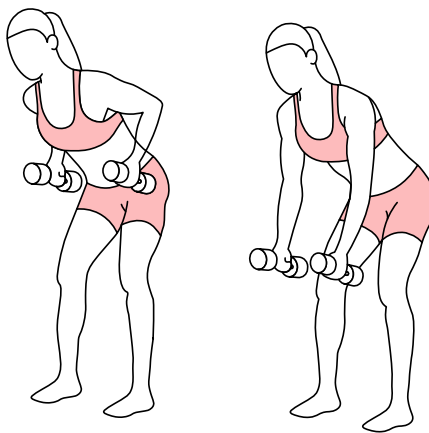
DAY 2

Backward-stepping lunges (per side)



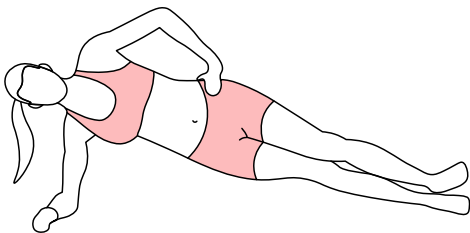
8 reps

Rows (use a TRX strap or dumbbells)



6 reps

Plank



15 - 20 seconds

REPEAT 2X

We highly recommend working with a professional trainer to avoid injury! As always, please consult with your healthcare provider before starting a new exercise routine.

#4. DEEP BREATHING

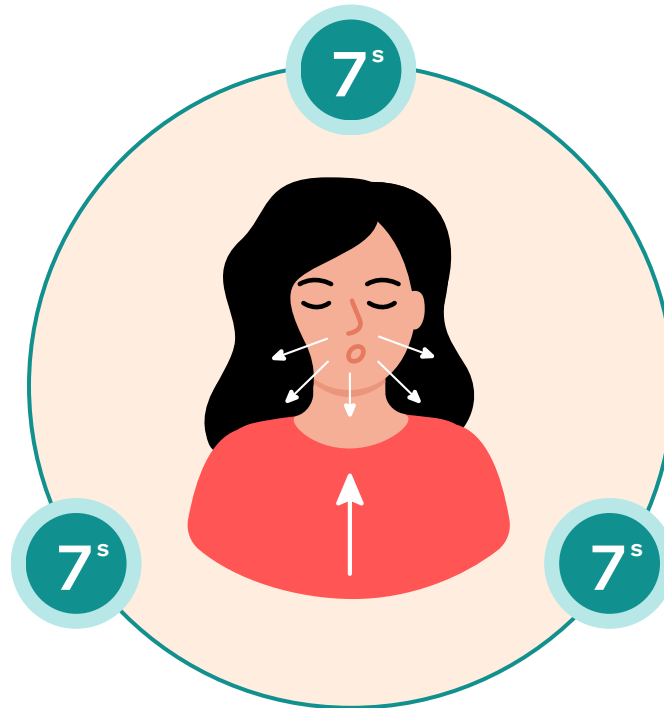
Hormone fluctuations during perimenopause can increase anxiety, which can cause that awful overwhelmed feeling. Deep breathing has proven to be highly effective for calming the nerves, and managing stress. The friction of the air going through your sinuses sends calming nerve signals throughout your body and mind. Try the two exercises below.



NEED SOME INSPIRATION?

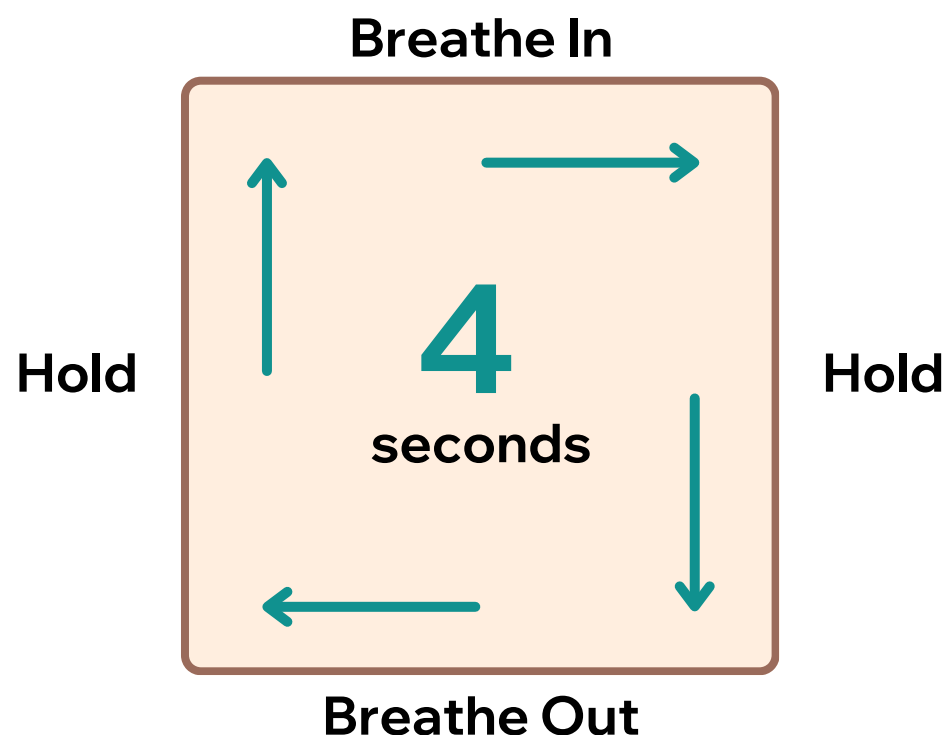
THE 7S BREATHING EXERCISE:

- Breathe in through your nose for 7 seconds.
- Hold your breath for 7 seconds.
- Exhale through your mouth as if you are blowing through a straw for 7 (or more) seconds.
- Repeat up to 7 times.



BOX BREATHING:

- Breathe in, counting to 4 slowly. Feel the air enter your lungs.
- Hold your breath for 4 seconds. Avoid inhaling or exhaling for 4 seconds.
- Slowly exhale through your mouth for 4 seconds.
- Hold your breath with no air in your lungs for 4 seconds.
- Repeat as many times as you'd like.



#5. CONSIDER HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) has come a long way in the last 50 years. The hormones progesterone, estrogen (a few types), and testosterone all fluctuate and fall during perimenopause. Many women benefit greatly from hormonal treatment to improve sleep, increase your “oomph” and drive, and help with cognitive issues like brain fog, memory issues and temporary depression. Some women, due to surgery or illness, are thrown into menopause suddenly at a younger age than is typical.

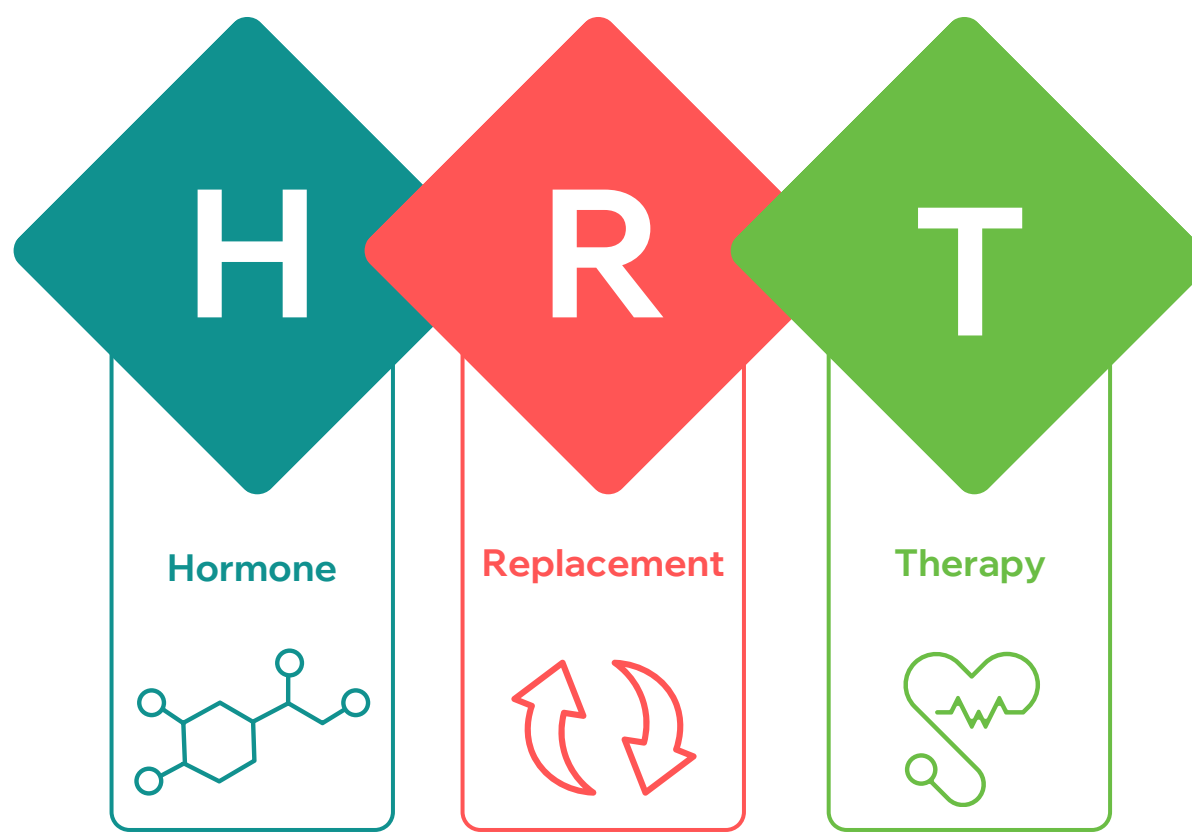
The latest research available has shown us that, starting at the right time, hormones can actually protect women from conditions that increase post-menopause, such as heart disease, some cancers, and cognitive decline. Poor research from the past has caused a lot of confusion and fear in this area, but reviews of that research and newer research has proven the benefits often outweigh the risks.

There are so many delivery methods for HRT, some systemic or affecting the whole body, and some localized to certain areas. Delivery varies greatly and may include patches, vaginal creams, oral pills, IUDs, injected pellets, or a combination of these. Some women are able to start with a one-size-fits-all approach, and others opt for specialized testing followed by compounded formulas specific to their hormonal situation. There are even estrogen creams used to help with the aging process of facial skin.

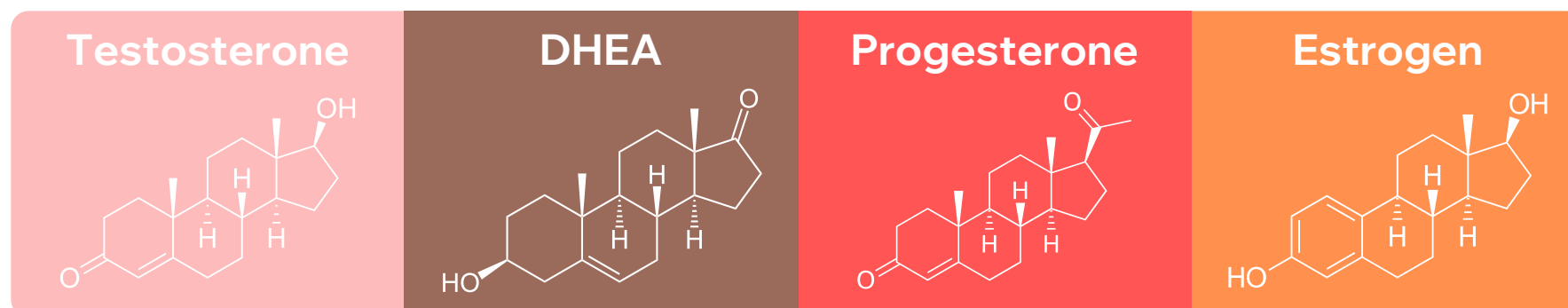


Talk to your naturopath or Ob/Gyn about the latest information. Here are some questions you can ask to see if HRT is right for you.

- Do I have any past medical conditions or genetic reasons that would disqualify me from pursuing HRT?

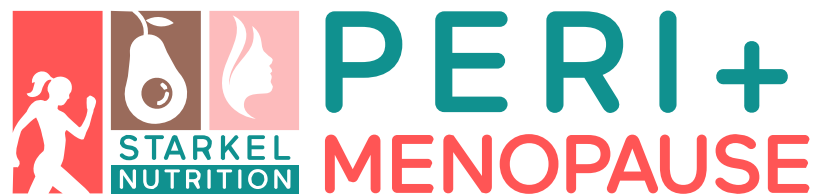


- If interested, you may ask if they are qualified to test for and prescribe compounded formulas.
- At what age do you think I should start HRT? (Are you perimenopausal with symptoms, menopausal, or postmenopausal?)
- How long do you think I should be on hormones?
- Should I take testosterone, DHEA, and progesterone in addition to estrogen, and why?



It is a personal decision to go on HRT that no one can make for you. Get informed about the pros and cons, benefits and risks, by talking to experts who know the research.

If you'd like to **learn more** about **what is really going on with your body** and how you can help **improve your health** and **reduce symptoms** during perimenopause and menopause, check out:



The Details:

- Sessions covered by most insurance plans
- Next 'live' session starts September 24, 2024, Tuesday evenings 6-7pm
- This is a live, 8-week program, with online meetings led by functional medicine registered dietitian, founder and president of Starkel Nutrition, Julie Starkel, and women's health expert naturopathic physician, Dr Lea McKinstry

Informative sessions and supportive conversation

- Optional add-on: nutrient and environmental pollutant testing + supplements



Led by **Julie Starkel**, MS, MBA, RDN and **Dr. Lea McKinstry**, ND

**Join us in the next LIVE program
beginning September 24th, 2024!**

**To register, call our administrative team at 206-853-0534,
or visit our website by scanning the QR code!**

