



National Institutes of Health  
*Office of Management*

# Menopause 101: Managing the Shift with Diet, Physical Activity and Sleep

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## Topics for today's interactive session:

- **What Does Menopause Mean?**
- **What is Happening to My Body?**
- **Managing the Shift through Lifestyle**
- **Hormone Replacement Therapy**
- **Resources & Support**





**“So many women (continue to) feel shame or confusion or frustration about this phase of life. If you’re one of them, what you need to know for sure is that you are not alone.”**

**- Oprah Winfrey**

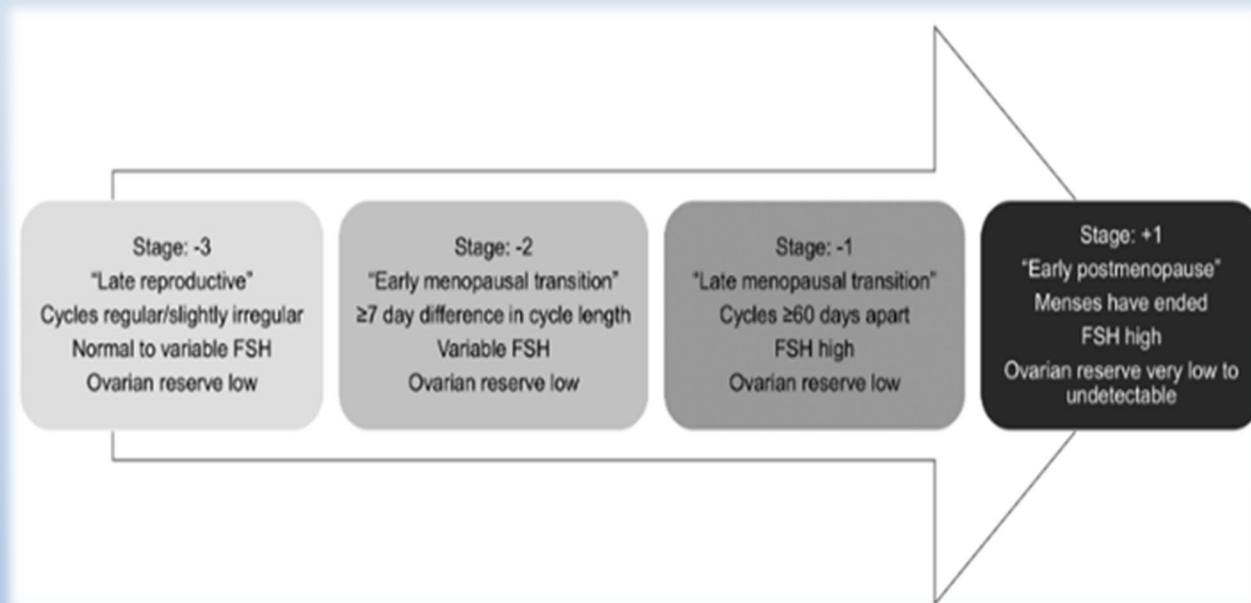


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# What is Menopause? Terminology & Research

- A specific point in time
- 12 months after a woman's last period
- Occurs among ALL women naturally, surgically, or via medication
- Ovaries stop producing estradiol (E2) and progesterone
- Perimenopause or the “menopausal transition” refers to the years leading up to menopause

## Menopause Terminology



## Menopause Data

**Average age is 52 years  
(45-55 years)**

**Perimenopause typically  
lasts 7-10 years**

### **Race/ethnicity and lifestyle factors may affect menopause transition:**

- Black and Hispanic: earlier age of menopause (1)
- African American: may experience a longer duration of perimenopause (2)
- Obesity/BMI: related to later onset of menopause (2)
- Smoking: can lead to earlier onset of menopause and shorter duration of perimenopause (2)



## Menopause: Puberty Part II



**“Many women fear the word ‘menopause’,  
so I prefer to call it Puberty, Part II.”**

Critical neuroendocrine events with overlapping health implications:

- Mood disorders/mental health
- Increased insulin resistance, weight gain, and cardiometabolic health
- Autoimmune issues
- Possible cancers (i.e., breast cancer)

Such changes combined with stressful life events, chronic stress, risky behaviors, or poor environments increase/exasperate risks

## Summary: What Menopause Is

- Natural transition - occurs among ALL women
- Not a disease – it increases your risk for cardiovascular disease, low bone density/osteoporosis, autoimmune and thyroid disease, dementia and cognitive decline, cancer, and obesity
- Associated with - insomnia, depression, anxiety and other mental health disorders
- Challenge - teasing apart hormonal changes associated with menopause vs. chronological aging and symptoms of stress



# What is Happening to My Body?

## Psychosocial & Health Implications

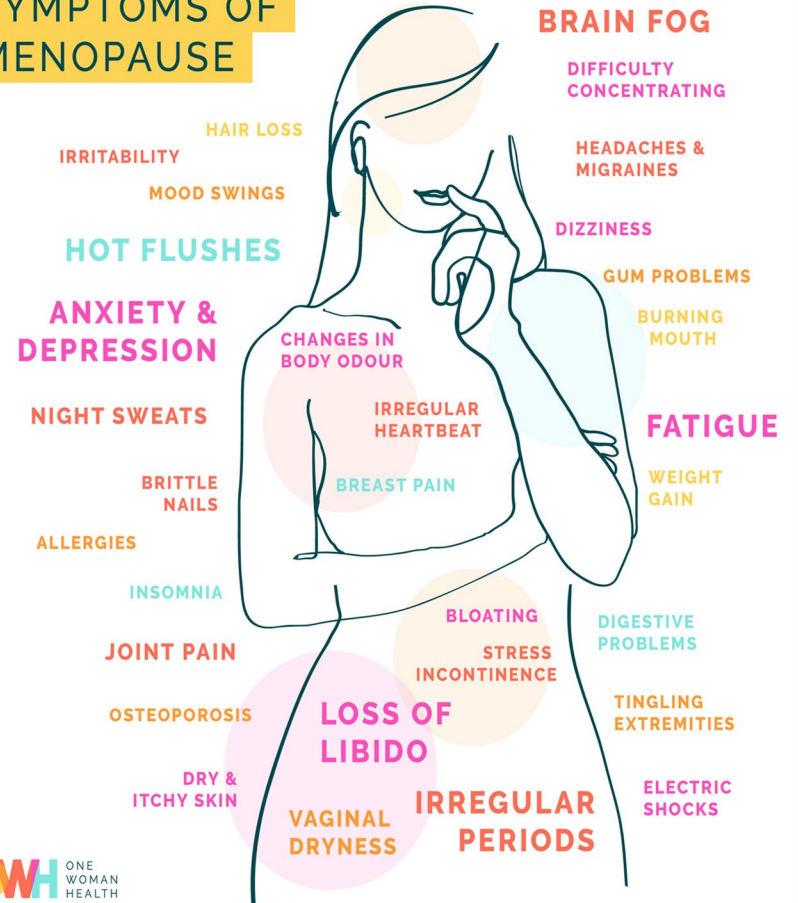
# What Is Menopause?



# What is Happening to My Body? Psychosocial and Health Implications



## SYMPTOMS OF MENOPAUSE



**+OWH** ONE WOMAN HEALTH

# In one word, name a symptom you experience which could be attributed to menopause. (For more than one symptom, you can answer multiple times)

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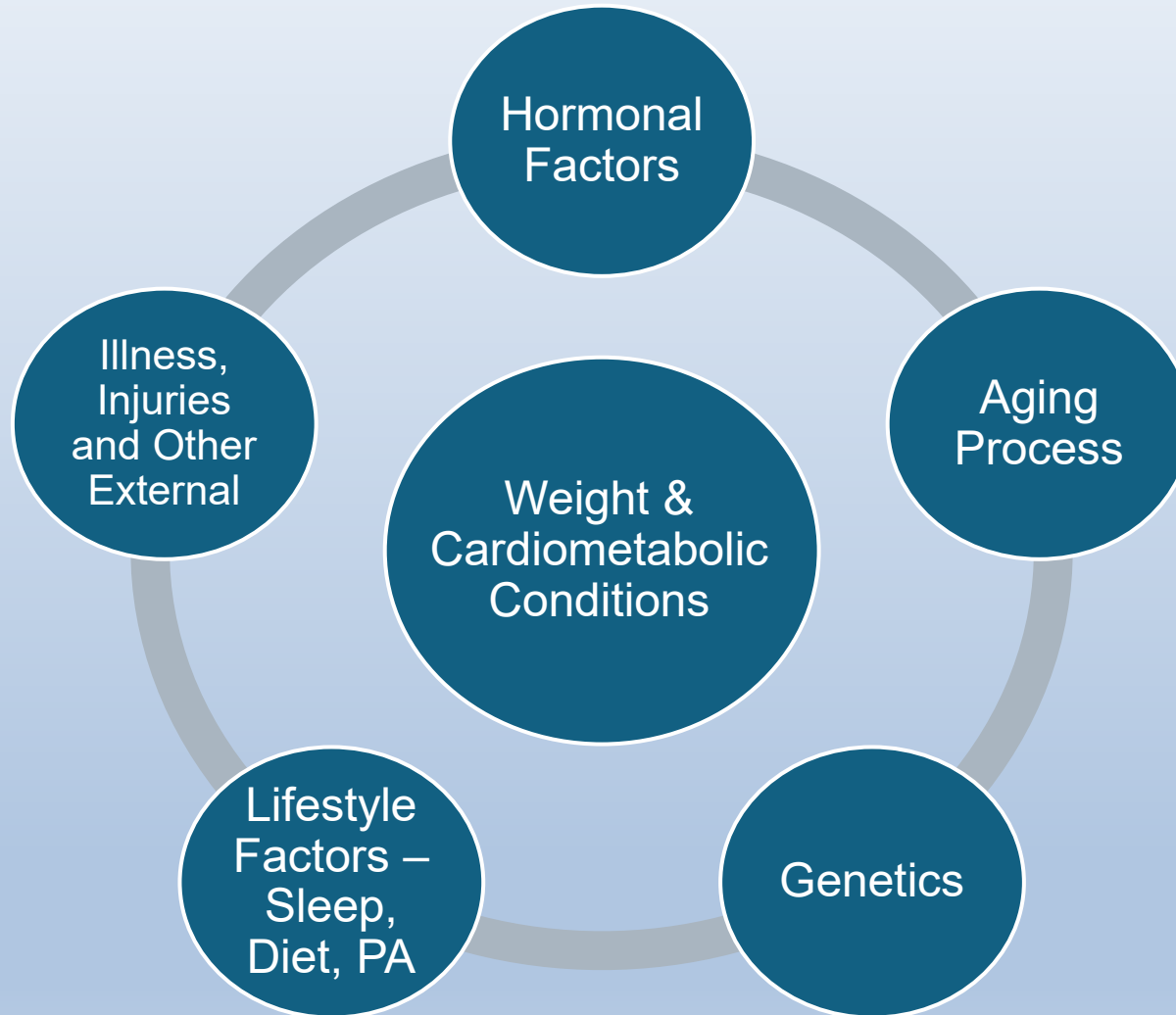
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# What is Happening to My Body? Psychosocial and Health Implications





**“So much of what we know is based on male physiology. And that bias has become so deeply ingrained that guidelines, protocols and treatment decisions are now biased and will be for generations to come until we figure this out.”**  
**- Heather Hirsch, MD**

## Study of Women's Health Across the Nation (SWAN)

- Multi-site, longitudinal, epidemiological study
- Launched 1994, N=3,302
- Examines women's health during mid-life and associated physical, biological, psychological, social changes

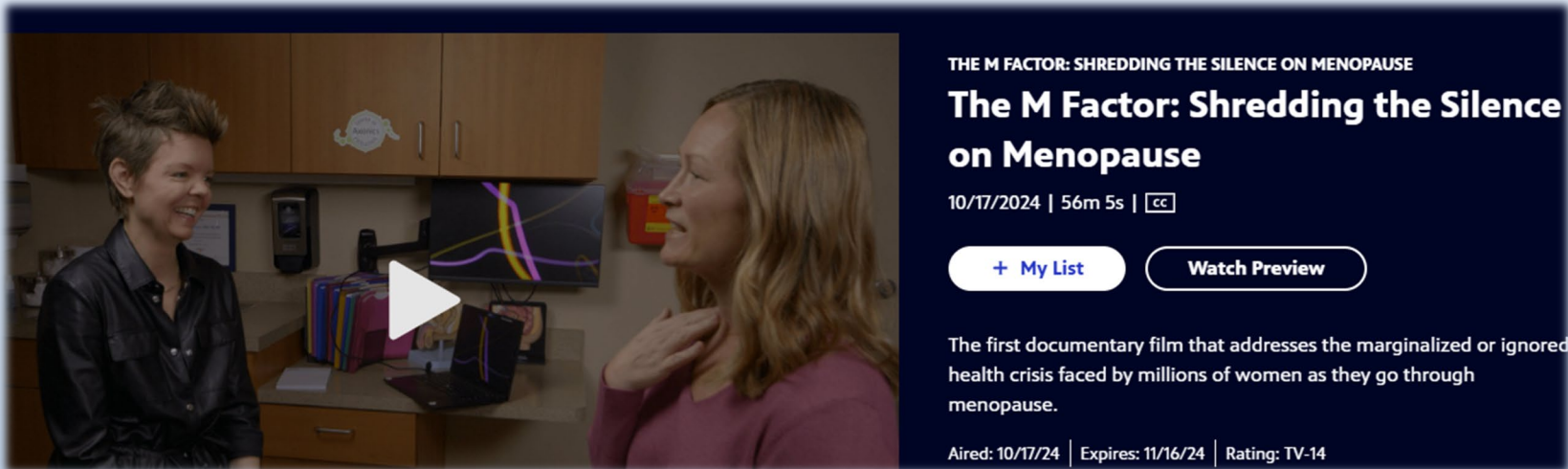
**SWAN is co-sponsored by:**



## NHLBI's Women's Health Initiative (WHI)


- Launched in 1992, concluded in 2005
- Included 3 clinical trials and observational study
- Extension studies continue to be funded

## Documentary Film from PBS – available until 11/16/24



THE M FACTOR: SHREDDING THE SILENCE ON MENOPAUSE

### The M Factor: Shredding the Silence on Menopause

10/17/2024 | 56m 5s | 

[+ My List](#) [Watch Preview](#)

The first documentary film that addresses the marginalized or ignored health crisis faced by millions of women as they go through menopause.

Aired: 10/17/24 | Expires: 11/16/24 | Rating: TV-14

Link: <https://www.pbs.org/video/the-m-factor-shredding-the-silence-on-menopause-uwesx6/>

## Oprah Daily Magazine

### *Special Edition: Straight Talk About Menopause*

- Available in Whole Foods, CVS and other grocers through November.



# Managing the Shift with Lifestyle

## Staying Healthy During and After Menopause

These tips may help you lower your risk for health problems such as heart disease and osteoporosis.



**Eat a healthy diet.**

**Get enough calcium and vitamin D.**

**Be physically active.**

**Maintain a healthy weight.**

**Limit or avoid alcohol and don't smoke.**

To learn more about menopause, visit [www.nia.nih.gov/menopause](http://www.nia.nih.gov/menopause).



- **Establish habits that support weight management and optimize hormonal health and gut microbiome**
  - Consult with a dietician or nutritionist as needed
- **Maintain energy balance to avoid weight gain**
  - Understand your macros. Monitor and track if needed
- **Support muscle growth with lean animal or plant-based protein**
- **Support bone health with calcium and vitamin D**
- **Optimize with healthy fats and foods high in fiber**
- **Limit foods high in sodium, saturated fats, and sugar; empty calorie beverages, and alcohol**





## Physical Activity

### Know Your Why

- Movement is not just for weight loss

### Use it or lose it

- Brain, heart, lungs, muscles, bones, and more

### Strengthen your body and build muscle

- Allow for more rest and recovery

### The Blue Zone Approach

- Increase overall PA, NEAT (non-exercise thermogenic activity) and decrease sedentariness.

### The Structured Exercise Approach

- Various forms and types of Cardio, strength training, stability/core. Combination of types is key

### Should be a source of stress-relief

- Not a source of stress

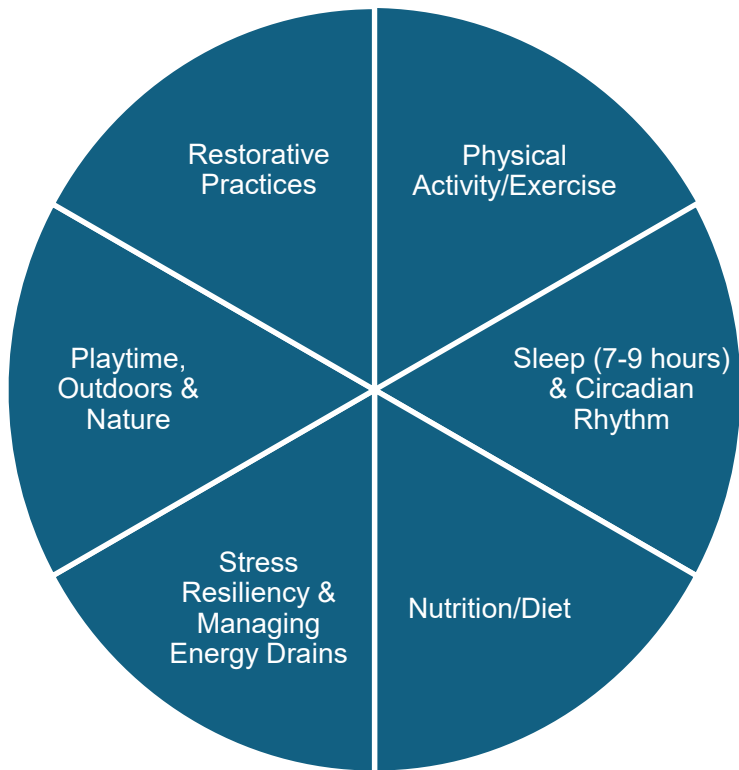


## Sleep, Stress & Self-Care

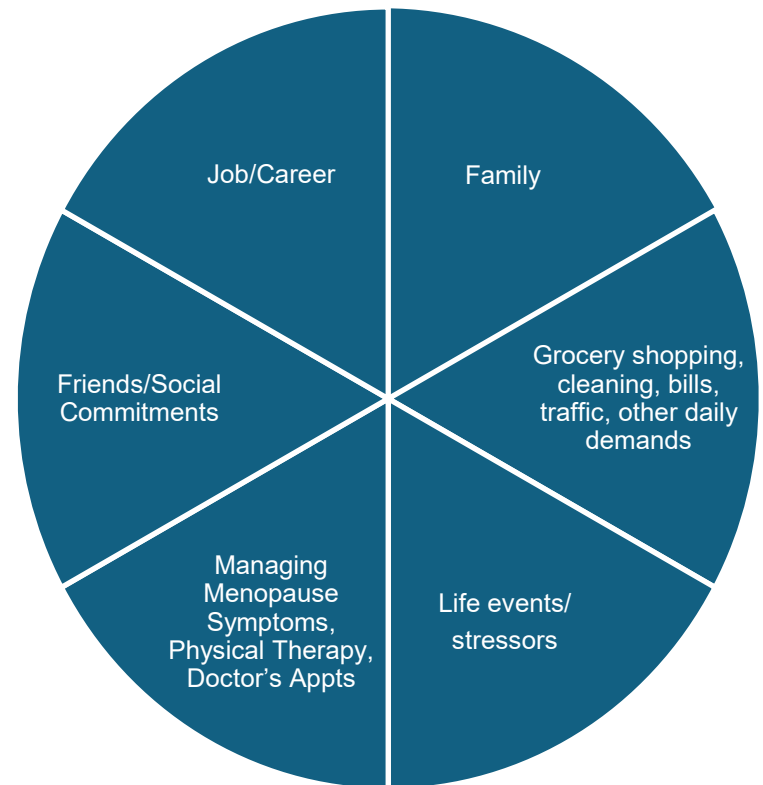
- **No longer a luxury** – now critical to health and wellness
- **Re-establish sleep habits**
  - Ensure 7-9 hours/night
- **Honor your circadian rhythm**
  - Early morning and afternoon sunlight, and evening darkness
- **Establish self-care non-negotiables**
  - Physical activity, sleep, time in nature, or with loved ones
- **Consider restorative practices to boost relaxation response**
  - Yoga nidra or non-sleep deep rest
- **Balance yang with yin**
- **Protect your energy**
  - it is okay to say no



## Menopause Mastery Wheel vs. Realities of Life



**VS.**



## In 1-2 words, name something you have done to support your self-care this week. (or describe your next steps)

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Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

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# Medical Support & Hormone Therapy



## What the Science Says

### **About Complementary Health Approaches for Menopause Symptoms** *from the National Center for Complementary & Integrative Health (NCCIH)*

- Complementary approaches are classified by their primary therapeutic input (how the therapy is taken in or delivered), which may be:
  - Nutritional (e.g., special diets, dietary supplements, herbs, probiotics, and microbial-based therapies).
  - Psychological (e.g., meditation, hypnosis, music therapies, relaxation therapies).
  - Physical (e.g., acupuncture, massage, spinal manipulation).
  - Women should discuss the risks and benefits with their health care provider
  - Read and learn more from NCCIH

**From the National Institute on Aging (NIA), hormone therapy (HT) is an effective treatment for menopausal symptoms, but it's *only recommended* for women who are at a low risk for certain medical conditions *and* who have recently entered menopause.**

- **Eligibility:** Women who are at low risk for stroke, heart disease, blood clots, and breast cancer are considered candidates for HT.
- **Timing:** HT is most effective when used early in menopause.
- **Dose and duration:** HT should be used at the lowest dose and for the shortest period possible.
- **HT can help with symptoms like:** hot flashes, vaginal dryness, and bone loss. HT comes in the form of pills, creams, patches, rings, implants, or gels. The most common types of HT are estrogen alone or estrogen combined with progestin, a synthetic form of progesterone.
- **Before deciding to use HT:** women should discuss the risks and benefits with their health care provider.

# Community, Support & Outreach

## Schedule Time to Breathe

One study found that choosing to be alone for even 15 minute could lessen stress

## Donate Your Time

Volunteering gives people purpose, raising self-esteem and lowering loneliness. Even online options are possible post-COVID.

## Join an Online Support Group

[Support Groups Central](#) is a place to find online groups by condition and also groups specifically for people of color, LGBTQIA+, and military veterans. All groups are led by people who are certified or licensed.

## Unfollow People Who Bring Your Down

At least, work to restrict how much time you interact with social media.

## Become a Plant Owner

Actively caring for plants can calm the ANS & lower blood pressure.



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**“We can commit to building bigger, more accessible cultural conversations around the reality of living in bodies with uteruses.”**

- Kenne Dibner, a senior program officer, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Study Director for [Equity in STEM Education](#).

mymenoplan.org

About  
Menopause

Symptoms

Treatments

Toolbox &  
Create Your  
MenoPlan

Women's  
Stories &  
Videos

Our Story

## Am I in Menopause?

Start here to find out where you are in the menopause transition. This tool is based on research with many women, but each woman's menopause transition is unique. So your story may not fit exactly what we describe below.

Have you had a period in the last 12 months?

Yes

No

NEXT

### ABOUT MENOPAUSE

[What is Menopause?](#)

[Women's Stories](#)

[Questions and Answers](#)

[Menopause Myths](#)

[Am I in Menopause? A Personalized Tool](#)

[Strategies to Talk with Your Doctor](#)

[What If I Have Breast Cancer](#)

[What if I'm Transgender or Nonbinary](#)

[Staying Healthy in Midlife](#)

## Workplace Resources

0 surveys completed

0 surveys underway

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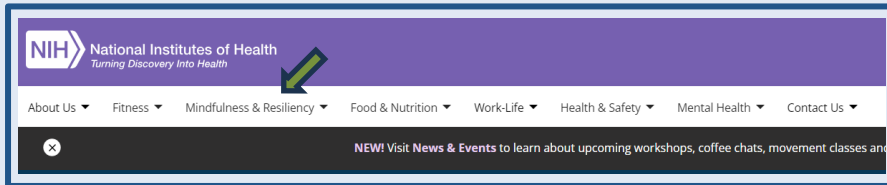




## Areas of Support: Wellness Website

- [Fitness](#)
- [Work-Life](#)
- [Mindfulness & Resiliency](#)
- [Health & Safety](#)
- [Food & Nutrition](#)
- [Mental Health](#)

With a new **Mindfulness & Resiliency** page and a newsletter that's now monthly, **Wellness@NIH** is ready to support you!



## Prioritize Your Well-being

## Wellness@NIH Community

[wellnessatnih.ors.od.nih.gov](https://wellnessatnih.ors.od.nih.gov)

## NIH Joined the Mindful FED Program

### Ways to Participate in Mindful FED

- Join the [Mindful FED Listserv](#): Federal employees can send a blank email to receive weekly invitations and resources
- Attend [NIH's Mindful FED Offering](#) every Thursday at 2pm
- Listen to "[Mindful Musings](#)" [Audio Blog Series](#)
- Participate in the [Weekly Class Schedule](#)
- View and attend *any* [Inter-agency Offerings](#)
- Register for the [Mindful Approaches to AI Webinar Series](#)



# What questions do you have? Audience votes on the top questions.

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Nobody has responded yet.

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## Additional References

- Greendale GA, et al., Changes in body composition and weight during the menopause transition. JCI Insight, 2019. 4(5). [[PMC free article](#)] [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
- Serretti A and Mandelli L, Antidepressants and body weight: a comprehensive review and meta-analysis. J Clin Psychiatry, 2010. 71(10): p. 1259–72. [[PubMed](#)] [[Google Scholar](#)]
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- Chopra S, Sharma KA, Ranjan P, Malhotra A, Vikram NK, Kumari A. Weight Management Module for Perimenopausal Women: A Practical Guide for Gynecologists. J Midlife Health. 2019 Oct-Dec;10(4):165-172. doi: 10.4103/jmh.JMH\_155\_19. PMID: 31942151; PMCID: PMC6947726.

# Thank you!



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