

# Ultimate Guide – All Natural Remedies for Menopause

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## Table of Contents

### Introduction -

Self-care

### Nutrition Support for Menopause

- Digestive health

- Inflammation

- Nourishing herbal infusions

- Supplements

### Herbal Support for Menopause

- 12 Herbs for Menopause Relief

### Recipes

- Hot Flash Tea

- Calm the Heck Down Tea

- Power Balls

### Resources - Where to buy

### References

## Introduction

Hot flashes, wild mood swings, insomnia, irregular menstrual cycles, difficulty losing weight, brain fog, forgetfulness – all of these symptoms can make us feel like we are losing our minds!

Once I realized I wasn't actually crazy (*my family might disagree on that point*), I started looking for natural ways to find relief. Through conversations with my doctor, community herbalists, reading, and research, I realized there is a long list of natural remedies available for women in their menopausal years. And these remedies have a rich history of use as well as modern research to confirm their benefits.

Many of these have become a regular part of my daily self-care, and I am feeling more like myself again.

### **How about you? Wouldn't you like to feel like yourself again?**

With the right combination of self-care, good nutrition, and herbal remedies, you can expect to:

- **Have more energy**
- **Enjoy more clarity (get rid of that brain fog!)**
- **Find relief from hot flashes**
- **Stop the crazy mood swings**
- **Stabilize your cycles as you move through menopause**
- **More easily manage your weight**

## How to Use this Guide

*The truth is that our finest moments are most likely to occur when we are feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For it is only in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, that we are likely to step out of our ruts and start searching for different ways or truer answers.*

*-M. Scott Peck*

This guide offers a foundation for good health during menopause and includes information on nutrition and herbal remedies. You can read the guide from the beginning, or go straight to managing symptoms and finding a remedy.

Please keep in mind, not all herbs work for all women. Each of us has a unique constitution, and the herbs work deeply with the body to bring balance, not simply treat the "symptoms". Ideally, you will seek the guidance of an experienced herbalist, or a physician with a functional approach to health.

I have provided a link with a list of references – including current research and recommendations from respected herbalists.

I also include a list of suppliers for quality herbs and supplements. These are the companies I use and are the ones most frequently recommended by the herbalists I know and trust. Do your own research and reading, and experiment and see what works for you. I wish you all the best on your journey.

*Please Note: the information provided here is not intended to replace professional medical advice and care. It is simply my perspective for you to consider as you make good choices for you and your family's health. The use of herbs is a time-honored approach to strengthening the body and maintaining health. Herbs, however, can trigger side effects and can interact with other herbs, supplements, or medications. For these reasons, you should take herbs with care. The information provided has not been evaluated by the FDA and is not meant to diagnose any disease, nor is it intended to treat, cure, or prevent any disease.*

### Menopause and Self-Care

More than ever, we have to pay attention to our bodies and make caring for ourselves a priority. Now is a great time to start, or deepen the activities that support good health – physical, emotional, and spiritual. This includes simple practices like:

- Journaling
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Spending time in nature
- Inspirational reading
- Spiritual practices
- Regular movement

Menopause can be an especially stressful time for many women. We need to honor this and take care of ourselves, seek support when we need it, and give ourselves permission to feel vulnerable.

**But we don't have to feel stuck with the fatigue, mental fog, embarrassing hot flashes, and other symptoms common during these years. Let us use these midlife years to enjoy a deeper relationship with ourselves, and nourish our bodies with good food, physical activity, and meaningful activities.**

## Nutrition Support for Menopause

Nutrition remains the foundation of good health throughout our lives. Nutrition affects every aspect of our physical and emotional health, helps us cope with the overwhelming amount of stress we are faced with, and the food choices we make can both relieve and exacerbate our menopausal symptoms.

Unfortunately, the ability to absorb and use nutrients decreases as we age, we carry accumulated toxins and oxidative stress, and we simply can't manage on a poor quality diet the way we might have in our youth.

Now, more than ever, we need to focus on providing our bodies with high-quality foods. Eating well doesn't require strict rules or complicated meal plans. Using common sense, listening to the signals our bodies send, experimenting with what works and doesn't work, and focusing on real food with as little processing as possible all go a long way to maximizing our energy and improving our lives.

But even before considering the best foods, there are two things you can do that will have a profound effect on your health – reducing inflammation and improving your gut health.

## Inflammation and Diet

As estrogen levels decline, we become more vulnerable to acute and chronic inflammation. Reducing our exposure to inflammatory foods and increasing our intake of anti-oxidant rich fruits and vegetables is essential to our health and well-being, and can even improve our skin!

### Health benefits of antioxidant foods include:

- **Slow the effects of aging caused by free radical damage**
- **Protect eyesight**
- **Reduce the effects of aging on the skin**
- **Help prevent stroke and heart disease**
- **Help prevent cognitive decline**

### Inflammatory foods to limit:

- Simple sugars
- Processed foods high in omega-6 fatty acids (safflower oil, corn oil, canola oil)
- Saturated and trans fats (processed foods)
- Refined carbohydrates
- Alcohol
- Gluten and casein (for many people)

### **Anti-Inflammatory Foods**

Increasing our intake of anti-inflammatory foods will help the body reduce the inflammatory response. Aim to include these in your daily and weekly meal plan:

- **Antioxidant rich fruits – strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, elderberries, goji berries**
- **Antioxidant rich vegetables –cabbage, kale, spinach, sweet potatoes, winter squash**
- **Antioxidant rich herbs and spices – clove, cinnamon, turmeric, cocoa, basil, ginger, thyme**

### **Gut Health**

The intestinal tract does so much more than simply digest and absorb food! A healthy gut is an essential part of the human immune system and integral in the gut-brain connection. What this means is, supporting a healthy gut can:

- **Drastically improve our moods**
- **Decrease chronic inflammation**
- **Improve our resistance to illness**
- **Relieve symptoms of autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, fibromyalgia, and more**

Simple steps for a healthy gut:

- **Include probiotic-rich foods daily or take a good probiotic supplement**
- **Consume plenty of fiber and prebiotic-rich foods (high fiber fruits and vegetables, and specifically - onion, sweet potato, dandelion leaf, apple-cider vinegar)**
- **Avoid inflammatory foods**

### **Nourishing Herbal Infusions**

Most herbalists recommend drinking herbal infusions daily. Herbal infusions are made with tonic herbs that offer nutrients and phytochemicals. The minerals and phytochemicals present in the herbs create a nutrient-rich beverage that can be sipped throughout the day.

In addition, the herbs offer specific health benefits, and help the body systems regain a healthy balance – especially important for women during the menopausal years!

Making herbal infusions is easy and inexpensive. Unlike herbal tea, infusions are steeped for longer periods of time. Dried herbs (can be purchased in bulk), combined with hot water infused over 4-10 hours creates a nourishing herbal infusion.

### Basic Daily Wellness Infusion

To a quart-sized jar add:

- 1 tablespoon Nettle leaf
- 1 tablespoon dried Milky oats or Oat tops
- 1 tablespoon Tulsi (Holy Basil)
- 1 tablespoon dried Peppermint leaf

Cover with boiling water; allow to infuse for 4 hours or more (I infuse mine overnight). Strain the herbs and drink over the next two days.

Nettles are rich in minerals and amino acids, milky oats are soothing for the nervous system, Tulsi is calming, improves mental clarity, focus, and helps the body adapt and cope with stress, and peppermint is cooling and delicious.

### Digestive Herbs

Changes in estrogen and progesterone can affect our digestive process, and our production of stomach acid decreases with age. Digestive herbs are a wonderfully natural way to support the healthy breakdown and absorption of nutrients.

The bitter taste on the tongue causes a signal to be sent by the vagus nerve to stimulate the digestive organs. Bitters cause an increase in the digestive secretions – saliva, bile production, digestive enzymes, and insulin. This starts the digestive process, enabling the body to function efficiently at breaking down food, absorbing nutrients, and eliminating waste.

In addition to supporting the digestive process, **bitters stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system, allowing us to recover from stress, relax, and digest. This response relieves our stress-related symptoms.**

To learn more about the many benefits of bitters you can read my post – [Bitters for Health and How to Make a Bitter Tincture.](#)

Ways to include more bitter foods – add small amounts of the bitter greens like arugula, watercress, endive, radicchio, and mustard greens to salads. Dandelion greens are wonderfully bitter and abundant and can be eaten raw in salads or added to stir fry.

A more convenient way to include bitters in your diet is to enjoy bitter tinctures. Tinctures are made with bitter roots (like dandelion and burdock) infused into alcohol. You can purchase bitter blends or [make your own.](#)

Bitter tinctures are typically taken 10-15 minutes before meal time (but can be taken any time, really). A dropper full of bitter tincture produces the same digestive and parasympathetic stimulation as bitter greens.

## Supplements

Food, spices, and herbs are my first choice for nutrients, but getting enough of what we need can be tricky when we are rushed and overwhelmed. In addition, we carry years of accumulated oxidative stress, exposure to toxins, and especially during the tumultuous menopausal years, we may be challenged in getting all we need from foods.

A high quality, food-based multivitamin, combined with supplemental vitamin D, magnesium, and calcium will help support our needs and prevent deficiencies.

In addition, the following supplements offer wonderful benefits to women.

## Curcumin

Curcumin, a compound in turmeric, a common spice used in Indian cooking, has thousands of peer-reviewed studies proving its benefits. Benefits of curcumin include:

- **Anti-inflammatory**
- **Pain-reducing properties, specifically relating to different types of arthritis**
- **Anti-cancer properties**
- **Diabetes management**
- **Obesity and weight loss**

Cooking with turmeric is one way to add curcumin to your diet. Supplemental curcumin can be used as well, and 1,000 – 2,000 mg daily is the recommended dose.

## Quercetin

Quercetin is a flavonoid antioxidant found in many plant foods including onions, leafy greens, berries and broccoli. Quercetin plays an important role in fighting free-radical damage, the effects of aging, and inflammation. Research shows the following benefits of quercetin:

- **Lowers inflammation**
- **Fights allergies (is a natural antihistamine)**
- **Antioxidant**
- **Reduces inflammatory-related pain in conditions like rheumatoid arthritis**

The best food sources of quercetin include:

- **Apples**
- **Dark berries**
- **Tomatoes**
- **Cruciferous vegetables including broccoli and cabbage**
- **Leafy green vegetables like spinach and kale**
- **Cranberries**

Supplemental quercetin offers a convenient way to increase our intake. Most studies recommend taking supplemental doses of up to 500 mg twice daily. Avoid supplemental quercetin if pregnant or you have a history of kidney disease.

### Recommended Women's Supplements

These recommended supplements and doses are from [Dr. Aviva Romm](#), herbalist and Yale - trained physician.

- **Multivitamin – daily**
- **Vitamin D3 – 2,000 - 4,000 mg daily**
- **Magnesium glycinate – 600 mg daily**
- **Calcium citrate – 800 mg daily**
- **Curcumin – 1,000 – 2,000 mg daily**
- **Quercetin – 500mg twice daily**

## Herbal Support for Menopause

These transition years require compassionate self-care, and herbs are a wonderfully natural way to support ourselves through the changes of midlife. The following 12 herbs have a long history in supporting women's health and they can offer us relief, bring balance, and support deep healing.

1. Motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*)
2. Angelica (*Angelica sinensis*) Dong quai
3. Lady's Mantle (*Alchemilla vulgaris*)
4. Raspberry leaf (*Rubus idaeus*)
5. Vitex (*Agnus castus*) Chasteberry
6. Maca (*Lepidium meyenii*)
7. Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*)
8. Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)
9. Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)
10. Damiana (*Turnera diffusa*)
11. Tulsi (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*)
12. Black Cohosh (*Cumicifuga racemosa*)

<p><b>Motherwort (Leonurus cardiaca)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Calming the emotions</li> <li>- Relieving heart palpitations (and strengthening the heart)</li> <li>- Reducing general PMS</li> <li>- Relieving menstrual cramping</li> <li>- General menopausal support</li> <li>- Reducing severity of hot flashes</li> <li>- Support for the nervous system – soothing anxiety, insomnia, and nervousness</li> </ul>	<p><b>Angelica (Angelica sinensis) Dong quai</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relieving hot flashes</li> <li>- Improving menopausal insomnia</li> <li>- Relief from menstrual cramping (analgesic and muscle relaxing properties)</li> <li>- Replenishing the blood and increasing blood flow</li> <li>- Regulating menstrual cycle</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lady's Mantle (Alchemilla vulgaris)</b></p> <p>Relief for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- heavy menstrual flow</li> <li>- painful menses</li> <li>- gastrointestinal disorders</li> <li>- relaxant for muscle spasms</li> <li>- anti-inflammatory</li> </ul>	<p><b>Raspberry leaf (Rubus idaeus)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relieving menstrual cramps</li> <li>- Toning the uterus</li> <li>- Antioxidant properties</li> </ul>
<p><b>Vitex (Agnus castus) Chasteberry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cramps</li> <li>- Hot flashes</li> <li>- Mood swings and irritability</li> <li>- Insomnia associated with menopause</li> <li>- Heavy menstrual flow</li> <li>- Headaches</li> <li>- Depression</li> <li>- Water retention</li> <li>- Constipation</li> <li>- Acne</li> <li>- Breast tenderness</li> <li>- Irregular or scanty periods</li> </ul>	<p><b>Maca (Lepidium meyenii)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Balanced hormones and relief from symptoms of PMS and Menopause</li> <li>- Increased sense of well-being and relief from depression</li> <li>- Increased energy and stamina</li> <li>- Positive effects on the body's response to stress</li> <li>- Improved adrenal and thyroid function</li> <li>- Improved memory</li> <li>- Increased libido</li> </ul>	<p><b>Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reducing hot flashes</li> <li>- Improving memory</li> <li>- Increasing libido</li> <li>- Reducing anxiety</li> <li>- Adaptogen – helping the body cope with stress</li> <li>- Improving digestion and bowel movements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sage (Salvia officinalis)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reducing hot flashes</li> </ul>

<b>Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera)</b>	<b>Damiana (Turnera diffusa)</b>	<b>Tulsi (Ocimum tenuiflorum)</b>	<b>Black Cohosh (Actaea racemosa/Cimicifuga racemosa)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neurogenerative</li> <li>- Anti-arthritis</li> <li>- Adaptogen for stress</li> <li>- Muscle strengthening</li> <li>- Remedy for hot flashes</li> <li>- Calming for the mind and body</li> <li>- Anti-inflammatory</li> <li>- Improving concentration</li> <li>- Decreasing anxiety</li> </ul>	<p>Increased libido</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving concentration</li> <li>- Reducing anxiety</li> <li>- Increased mental clarity</li> <li>- Adaptogen – strengthens the adrenals and helps regulate cortisol levels</li> <li>- Acts as a COX-2 inhibitor, similar to many pain-relieving medications, making it useful for arthritis and other inflammatory conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In Germany, the government has approved Black cohosh as a prescription alternative to hormone therapy</li> <li>- Remedy for hot flashes and night sweats</li> <li>- Reduce anxiety</li> <li>- Reduce inflammation associated with osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis</li> <li>- Improving sleep during perimenopause</li> </ul>

## Recipes for Menopause

Teas are a delightful way to practice self-care. It can be a simple matter of adding hot water to loose herbs or purchased teas. Even better, we can use “tea time” as a moment to pause in our day, breathe deeply, and perhaps check in with how we are feeling.

### Hot Flash Tea:

These herbs make a lovely tea which can be enjoyed warm or cold. Taken regularly this tea will help lessen the frequency and duration of hot flashes.

#### Ingredients:

- ½-1 teaspoon fresh or dried sage
- ½ - 1 teaspoon fresh or dried mint
- \*optional – 1 teaspoon lemon balm or dried hibiscus roselle
- Honey or stevia to taste

#### Directions:

Combine the herbs, add 16-ounces of boiling water, and steep for 10-15 minutes. Strain and drink once or twice daily as needed.

### Calm the Heck Down Tea:

When our hormones are raging and we can't seem to get a grip, or maybe we are just feeling frazzled and need to relax, herbs can bring soothing relief. The best part about herbs is they are non-addictive and the blend below will help you relax without making you sleepy.

For this homemade tea blend, I like to combine all my dried herbs in quart-sized mason jar (using equal parts), and then use by the teaspoon or tablespoon when I am ready to make my tea. The amounts given are just general guidelines. To make an 8-ounce serving of tea, ½ teaspoon of each herb is all you need.

#### Ingredients:

- 1 part dried motherwort leaves and flowers (*Leonurus cardiaca*)
- 1 part dried passionflower leaves and flowers (*Passiflora incarnata*)
- 1 part Holy Basil/Tulsi leaves and flowers (Rama, Krishna, or Vana varieties)
- 1 part milky oats (*Avena sativa*)
- Honey to taste

#### Directions:

Use all or any combination of the herbs and prepare an infusion: Combine the herbs, add 16-ounces of boiling water, and steep for 10-15 minutes. Strain and drink 1-2 cups throughout the day as needed.

### Restful Sleep Tea

When you struggle to fall asleep, a restful tea blend can be part of your bedtime routine. You can certainly make your own blend using dried herbs, but there are some lovely tea blends available at most stores. Yogi brand is a good one to try. Herbs for sleep vary from mildly relaxing to somewhat sedative. A good blend uses a combination.

#### **Look for tea blends that contain several of the following:**

- Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*)
- Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*)
- Chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla*)
- Hops (*Humulus lupulus*)
- Skullcap (*Skutellaria laterifolia*)
- Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*)

### Women of Power – Zoom Balls

Power balls, or Zoom balls as herbalist Rosemary Gladstar calls them, are a delightful way to treat your mind and body with medicinal herbs. They are a combination of nut butter, natural sweetener, and powdered herbs.

You can vary the recipe depending on what type of nut butter you want to use, the herbal benefits you are looking for, and you can dress them up with chocolate, chopped nuts, shredded coconut, and spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, and cardamom.

#### **Nut butters you can use include:**

- Almond butter
- Peanut butter
- Cashew butter
- Sunflower seed butter

#### **Sweeteners can be:**

- Raw honey
- Real maple syrup

I recommend using adaptogen herbs – these herbs are deeply nourishing to the body, help us cope with stress, and are safe to take over long periods of time.

Adaptogen herbs are perfect for helping us ignite our inner woman of power and offer the following benefits:

- Increase our energy
- Build our resistance to stress
- Support the heart
- Increase endurance and stamina
- Improve memory
- Stimulate the immune system

**Recommended Powdered Adaptogen Herbs:**

- Ashwaghandha (*Withania somnifera*)
- Astragalus (*Astragalus membranaceus*)
- Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*)
- Eleuthero/Siberian Ginseng (*Eleutherococcus senticosus*)
- Reishi (*Ganoderma lucidum*)

**Women of Power Balls – Herbal Health Treats**

**For these Power Balls, we will use:**

- ¼ cup astragalus powder
- ¼ cup eleuthero powder
- ¼ cup ashwagandha powder
- 1 tablespoon ginger powder
- 1 tablespoon cardamom
- 1 tablespoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup cocoa nibs (or chocolate chips)
- ¾ cup nut butter
- ½ cup raw honey or pure maple syrup

**Directions:**

1. Over low heat, gently warm the nut butter and honey mixture. Just warm enough to make them soft and easier to mix. Once combined, remove from heat.
2. In a second bowl, stir together the powdered herbs and spices.
3. Slowly add the powdered ingredients into the nut butter/honey mixture until a thick paste forms.
4. Once the mixture has cooled, add the cocoa nibs (adding too soon will make a goey mess).
5. Form the paste into 1-inch balls. If you like, you can roll these in cocoa or shredded coconut.
6. Store the balls in an airtight container and enjoy 2-3 daily.

**Summary**

With a combination of daily self-care, simple foods, and healing herbs, you can calm your frazzled nerves, feel focused, peaceful, and happy. Even if you don't have a lot of time, making small changes in your diet and adding plant medicines as part of your daily self-care can make a significant difference in the quality of your health.

I hope you use this guide to make changes. By taking care of yourself, you can experience a more joyful and satisfying life.

*"A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor's book."*

*~ Irish Proverb*

I sincerely hope you found this guide helpful, and if you have any questions or there is anything I can help you with, please let me know. You can email me at:

[seekingjoyfulsimplicity@gmail.com](mailto:seekingjoyfulsimplicity@gmail.com).

In health,  
*Michelle*

### Recommended Resources for purchasing bulk herbs and herbal products

[Mountain Rose Herbs](#) – Sustainable and organic ingredients and products.

[Starwest Botanicals](#) – committed to selling high quality natural products while preserving the environment.

[Frontier Herbs](#) - Frontier's eclectic offering of dried herbs and teas are sourced and grown by trusted farmers from all over the globe.

[Gaia Herbs](#) – organic products produced with purity and integrity.

[The Bulk Herb Store](#) – Organic herbs, ingredients, and products.

Many of these can be purchased online through Amazon as well.

### References:

[This link](#) offers a pdf document with references for the herbs.

### Supplement recommendations and doses:

[Aviva Romm](#), herbalist and Yale-trained physician.

[University of Maryland Medical Center Turmeric Overview](#)