

### Your Menopause Journey

Here are some issues to consider as you navigate your menopause journey.

1. Track or chart your symptoms. Some symptoms you think aren't menopausal might be (joint pain, palpitations or anxiety for example). Also, some symptoms might be medical issues and not due to menopause. Look up the Greene Scale online.
2. Read a book on menopause or women's health. Good authors (all are physicians): Mary Clare Haver, Louise Newson, Gabrielle Lyon, Heather Hirsch, Peter Attia, Vonda Wright, Jen Gunter, Sharon Malone.
3. Follow the above experts (or others) on social media.  
Podcasts, Websites, You Tube, Instagram (Jen Gunter, MD and Susan Davis, MD are great).
  - a. Beware: GOOP, Gwyneth Paltrow, Christiane Northrup
  - b. Beware: Longevity and anti-aging sites that will do and say almost anything to get you to spend money.
4. Online Menopause health
  - a. Consider: Midi or Alloy Health.
  - b. More expensive: Thrive (Arianna Huffington), or Respin (Halle Berry)
5. Design your healthy lifestyle to include:
  - a. Good quality sleep – the single most important thing you can do for your day-to-day quality of life and health.
  - b. Regular exercise – cardio, flexibility and strength training. Daily if possible. The second most important thing you can do for your quality of life and health.
  - c. Stress management – meditation, mindfulness, outdoor activities, sun exposure, yoga, tai chi, etc.
  - d. Vitamins and Supplements: Vit D (D3), Vit B (multivits), calcium, omega-3, extra fiber, extra protein.
  - e. Healthy diet: high protein (1.2 gm/kg minimum daily); high fiber (25-30 gm daily); low intake of ultra processed foods, starches and sugar; minimize alcohol, focus on good quality fats (avocado, olive oil, dairy, mono-unsaturated); whole grains, colorful fibrous veggies, some fruit, good fluid intake. Learn about the Mediterranean or the MIND diet. Try this: write down everything you eat and drink plus portion size for 1 week.
6. How to manage your symptoms – learn more about the following:
  - a. What non-hormone treatments can help?
  - b. What lifestyle or non-medication treatments can help?
  - c. Could you benefit from hormone treatment?
7. Thinking about hormones:
  - a. Short-term benefits – relief of symptoms.
  - b. Long-term benefits – prevention of certain conditions.
  - c. Side effects and Risks – these are less than most people think.
  - d. Costs, inconvenience, hassles – worth it if the benefits outweigh the risks!
8. Sign up for low-cost prescription medication online:
  - a. Good Rx: <https://www.goodrx.com/>
  - b. Cost Plus Drugs: <https://www.costplusdrugs.com/> (Mark Cuban's business).

## Thoughts about Managing the Menopause Journey and Improving Mid-Life Health

Behavior change is required. Einstein supposedly said, “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” W. Edwards Deming is often quoted as saying “Every system is perfectly designed to get the results it gets.” This means to get better results you have to make changes. How to go about this is usually the challenge.

Management and Leadership guru John Maxwell said “You’ll never change your life until you change something you do daily. The secret of your success is found in your daily routine.” Changing your life means changing your daily habits and your daily routine. Read *Atomic Habits* by James Clear (he has a podcast too) or *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey. Another good book (and podcast) is by Charles Duhigg, *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business*.

Commit to the process. Do not choose a specific goal or timeline. You are trying to change your life; this is the long game (Famed author Simon Sinek would call this the “infinite game”). Change your “direction” and implement new behaviors and activities gradually and steadily. It will never work if you decide that tomorrow “I am going to start exercising, go on a diet, quit drinking alcohol, and start taking vitamins”. Try small changes, small achievable goals, and rewards for meeting those goals. How do you save money for retirement? A little bit at a time, year after year, and it slowly grows and compounds until one day, wow, you’ve got savings! Same thing with adding healthy behaviors to your life.

Imagine you decide to walk to New York. This is a long and arduous journey. There is risk and it will probably be uncomfortable and a little scary. But you’ve made the decision that you really want to make it to New York and in this case the only way to get there is to walk. There are no shortcuts for health and life, so this metaphor is about “taking a long walk.” How do you prepare? You do research. You learn more about the road from here to there. Maybe a friend joins you for some or all of it. You set small goals, allowing for good days and bad days. As you make progress there will usually be more good days and fewer bad days. You might get lost but if so, you can ask for help with directions! Other people are available to help you get to New York. Be careful who you ask for help, not everyone wants you to get there, some people just want your money or attention. You choose who to trust when you ask for help. Ultimately, you have to walk the walk. One day you may arrive, or maybe you never arrive. Most importantly, it was a marvelous adventure and you’re so glad that you “walked the walk.”

Good luck with your Menopause Journey!

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