



THE SCULPTED *vegan*

MENOPAUSE

MASTERCLASS
SERIES

MASTERCLASS 1

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HOW TO SHRED BELLY FAT - FOR GOOD!

The middle-age spread is the common name for the extra roll of abdominal fat many women develop around menopause. And surprise, surprise, it's also directly due to reduced estrogen levels which change how the body stores fat. It is estimated that, between the ages of 45 and 55 years, the average woman will gain at least half a kilo each year! This first session will explain the science behind why our bodies change, how they store fat, and most importantly, how we can short-circuit the process to turn the body into a fat-burning, muscle-building machine!



UNDERSTAND WHY YOUR BELLY IS GETTING FATTER

It's not your imagination—our bellies really do get bigger, flabbier, and squishier faster than ever as we inch closer to menopause. And although you may feel hopeless, I promise you that you can halt this process quickly and permanently if you follow everything I'm going to teach you here. One of the first things I want you to know is that you cannot get away with the habits you got away with in your younger years. Your hormones are not the same. Your lifestyle is not the same. If you raised kids, you're probably nowhere near as active as you were when you were chasing them around. And all of this needs to be considered when forming your new menopause lifestyle habits to ensure you're able to keep the fat gain at bay. These "little" details do make a difference to our metabolisms, and they may have made life easier for you back then, but the good news is that they aren't required for you to see lasting results long into menopause. Yes, it will feel harder now at times. Yes, you will probably long for your younger years when you "got away" with eating recklessly with far fewer repercussions. You may even find yourself resenting this new phase of your life. This is all very normal, and I want you to know you aren't alone. There is nothing wrong with you. But I am going to show you how utterly beautiful menopause can be, how in control

you really are over your physique, and how best to change your lifestyle and dietary habits to adjust for the crazy hormonal rollercoaster ride so that you aren't getting fatter by the minute. And understanding what's going on behind the scenes hormonally is the first step.

Our sex hormones are your life force. They are essential to living a long, healthy, pain-free life with ease and comfort. So when they start down-regulating with age, you will feel the negative effects of not having a healthy hormonal circulation.

➔ **Your vitality suffers**

➔ **Your mood suffers**

➔ **Your bones get weak**

➔ **Your internal temperature regulation goes haywire**

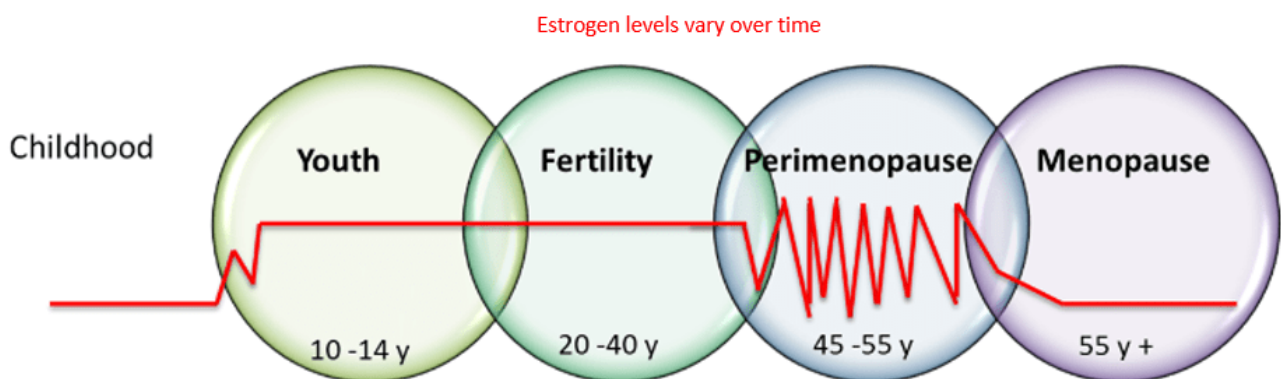
➔ **Your fat cells increase in size and number**

➔ **Your cells lose their ability to process certain nutrients properly**

With every year you get older, your hormones are shifting. When your body begins to change internally, you typically have a very short window of time to alter your habits in response to what's happening inside. If you don't respond to the changes, your body will continue doing whatever it needs to do to keep you alive (and in the case of menopause, one of those ways is to make you fatter.)

As you get closer to menopause, one of your primary sex hormones, estrogen, starts to decline irregularly. (This is perimenopause, or the timeframe before you officially enter menopause.)

insulin resistant you become (this is when the muscles, fat, and liver cells don't respond well to insulin and they resist your body's attempt to give them energy. This causes the pancreas to secrete more and more insulin, causing the increased sugar to be diverted to fat cells.) At healthy levels, estrogen makes you more insulin sensitive, where your cells handle sugars/starches effortlessly (the way they did when you were younger!) At levels that are too low OR too high, your body becomes highly inefficient at handling these sugars, and fat storage accumulates rapidly with an uncontrolled diet (i.e., too many carbs and overall calories).



Adapted from "Healthy Aging," Kirti Salunkhe, MD, Metagenics, 2017

Estrogen is critical in healthy doses for us to function properly and NOT gain weight. So when its levels haphazardly fluctuate like this, it means that you will sometimes be in a state of estrogen dominance. This increases cortisol levels and appetite (ugh!) and decreases your desire and motivation to move your body. The more sedentary you are, the more

Pay attention very carefully to this next part. Your ovaries naturally produce estrogen; however, as your ovarian function begins to fade away in menopause, your body still makes every attempt to produce this critical sex hormone, so your adrenal glands take over production (albeit rather poorly, because this isn't what they were designed for).

Your body now diverts excess food energy to be stored in the fat cells in hopes that more estrogen can be produced where the adrenal glands cannot adequately pick up the slack. Why does this happen? Because fat cells are fantastic creators of estrogen, and your body becomes desperate for this much-needed sex hormone. But it doesn't stop there.

Remember the increased cortisol I mentioned above due to the unpredictable rise and fall of estrogen? Cortisol is another important hormone related to your weight. It's produced in your adrenal glands (the ones that are now on overdrive trying to make estrogen). It increases blood sugar to give you energy (especially in the morning, when cortisol is the highest to wake us up), stabilizes your blood pressure, suppresses inflammation, motivates you, and

helps control your body's use of fats, proteins, and carbs. When levels are too high, as with menopause, it leads to insomnia, low energy, hot flashes, low mood, junk food cravings, digestive issues like bloating, and causes a rapid increase in weight around the middle! Do you see how so many factors are pitted against you and your desire to keep body fat at bay in menopause? Your body is just trying to keep you alive and functioning at its best, but these attempts do absolutely nothing for your physique.

But it's not all bad news (I promise)! Despite everything going on beneath the surface in menopause, you can actually trick your body into losing the fat it's trying so desperately to keep (& grow). And the best part? It's actually quite simple to implement, and you can safely and easily do this forever!



THE 3 MAIN RULES OF MENOPAUSAL DIETING

Getting your nutrition under control is the single most important thing you can do for your physique and overall health. The following 3 rules will produce the most jaw-dropping physique changes you could ever imagine would be possible in menopause. Give yourself time to adjust and make them concrete habits. Once you do, you will be unstoppable in this beautiful new phase of your life!

RULE #1

30g protein within 30 mins of waking.

This is one of the most fundamental parts of my diet and the one habit that's super easy to start and maintain. Getting adequate protein in your diet on a daily basis is critical for burning fat and building muscle and will be even more essential in menopause when aging and hormonal fluctuations make your physique goals more difficult.

But why is protein so important, and why should you be aiming to consume it so quickly upon waking?

In simple terms, the amino acids that make up protein help repair your muscle tissue and grow and keep it. Muscle tissue is very “needy”; it requires vast amounts of nutrients and calories to keep it alive. Because of this, it raises your metabolism just by existing. With breakfast typically being the hardest meal for people to modify (thank you, cereal and toast!), switching up just this one meal will put you at a far greater advantage metabolically for the rest of your day.

When we sleep, our metabolism slows down about 15%, reaching its lowest by morning. Starting your day with adequate protein will help build and repair muscle tissue throughout the day. It will also decrease your junk food cravings, make you more satiated, and (because of the immense energy required to digest it) turn your metabolism into a furnace.

The more muscle you grow by the time you hit menopause, the better off you'll be metabolically, and the easier it will be to keep excess fat away. As we age, we naturally become more sedentary if we're not strategic about movement and exercise, which causes our muscle tissue to waste away (think: whatever you don't use, you lose). Don't worry if your younger years weren't spent building up a lot of muscle—it is never too late. You just need patience, consistency, and discipline (just like in any other phase of life)!

RULE #2

Avoid fruit.

We all know fruit is loaded with nutrients and is insanely delicious and healthy. But just because something is healthy doesn't make it automatically great for fat loss. Fruit is absolutely going to hit the brakes on your fat-burning potential in menopause due to fructose.

The body cannot use fructose as energy to fuel the muscles. So when it's ingested, it's absorbed into the bloodstream through the small intestine, sent to the liver, and then the liver converts it into triglycerides (the main constituents of human body fat). That's the only place fructose can go—there is no other organ in the human body that can use fructose besides the liver, and the storage capacity for it is extremely limited. Please understand that I am not saying fruit is bad; it's just not a good choice for dieting, especially in menopause!



RULE #3

Avoid white starchy carbs.

Carbohydrates' main job is to provide energy to the body, and they are good for very little else. Unlike fats and proteins (which contain essential amino acids that your body can't make and must obtain through food), carbs do not contain any essential amino acids, which is why you can eat less of them for great fat loss results.

But not all carbs are equal. In menopause, you will need to specifically avoid white starchy carbs if you want the best possible chance at beating the middle-age spread.

A white starchy carb is just a carbohydrate where the fiber has been removed, causing it to be absorbed much more quickly into the bloodstream— **I want you to avoid anything white, was white, or could be white.** Avoid all brown pasta, brown rice, and brown bread too. The faster a carb has been broken down, the faster it is absorbed into the bloodstream, and the more rapidly the glucose in the blood rises.



The more rapidly it rises, the quicker insulin is released into the bloodstream to reduce the glucose levels in the blood. Due to menopause, your body is now insulin resistant, and the faster carbs are redirected to fat stores, plain and simple. If you change your carb intake exclusively to slow carbs, your body will get a constant slow drip of usable energy, and you will be less likely to get those insulin spikes and fat storage.

What exactly are slow carbs? 'Slow carb' is a term that I have borrowed from Tim Ferriss and 'The Four Hour Body.' They are very fibrous carbs, such as green cruciferous vegetables. Crucifers are vegetables grown above the ground, e.g., spinach, green beans, asparagus, broccoli, and cauliflower, and are a fantastic source of slow-release energy. You can eat as much of these as you desire! They contain insoluble fiber, which dissolves in water. It sits in the gastrointestinal tract and absorbs fluid, sticks to other digestible bits, and is then formed into a stool that gets passed. Your body can't digest it, and your gut flora can't use it. It quite frankly just goes in your mouth and straight out the other end. Enjoying cruciferous veggies in unlimited amounts will not only give you loads of beneficial nutrients and keep you full, but because they aren't absorbed into the bloodstream, you will not store them as fat. Eat up!

Let me just say that I know menopause might feel like a scary place for you right now and that these rules may feel daunting at first. This is normal! Anytime we eliminate old habits and replace them with new ones, it can feel like a tremendous burden. But I want you to reframe menopause in your mind—you have all the resources you need here to take full control of your menopausal body! And even though it may feel hard initially, not everyone has the same luxury. So while you do have some work ahead of you, it's really no different than losing weight outside of menopause. It takes all the same things: consistency, patience, and discipline—just like before you hit menopause! Of course, there is no magic bullet, but following the principles above will give you a much higher chance of success.



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