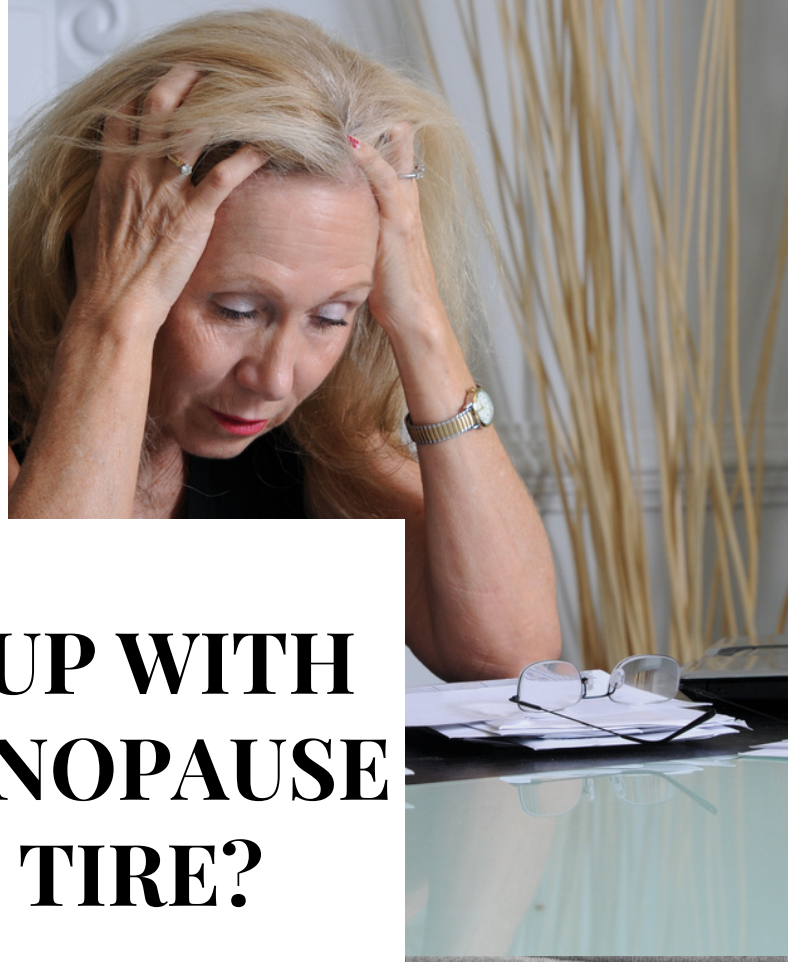
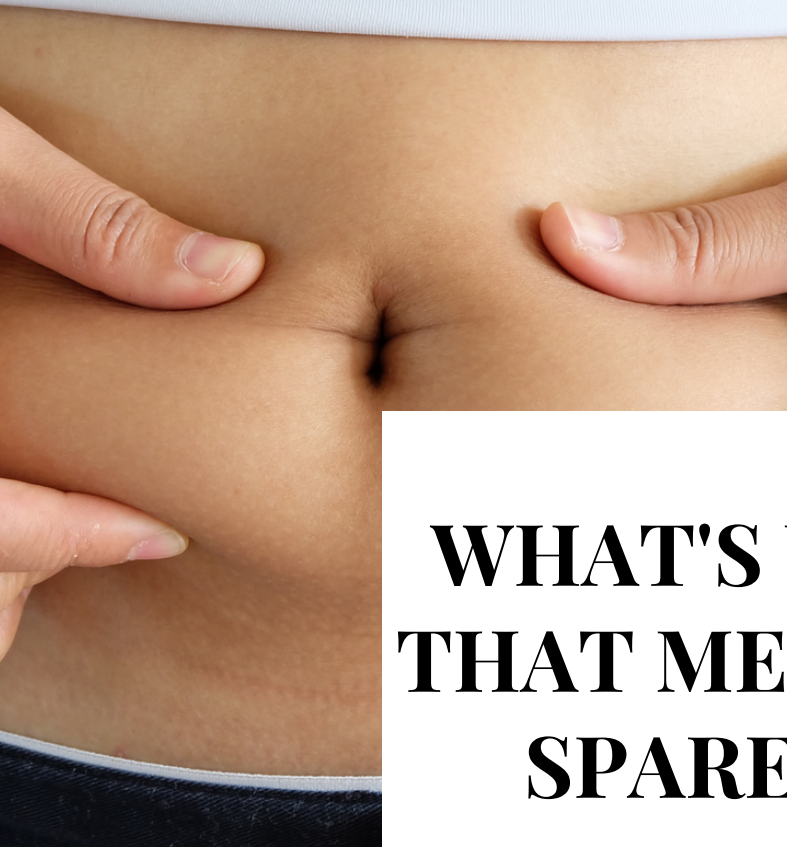
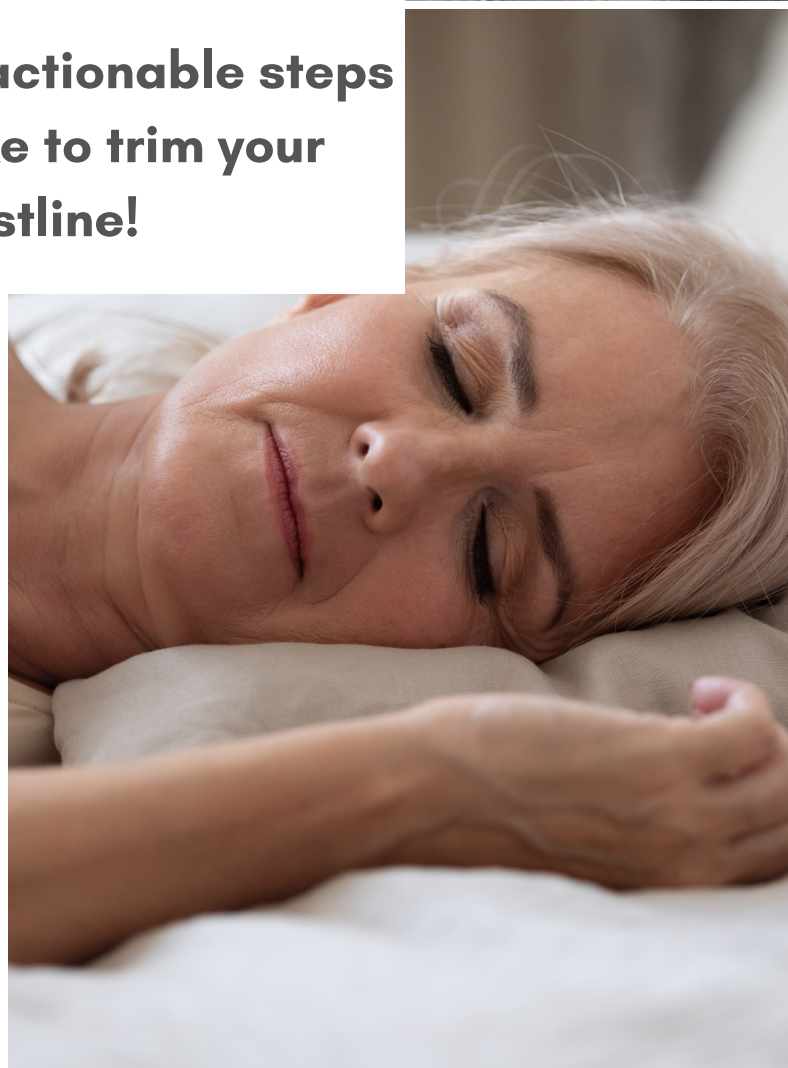


THE SLIMMER BELLY GUIDE FOR WOMEN MENOPAUSE



WHAT'S UP WITH THAT MENOPAUSE SPARE TIRE?

Plus 5 simple actionable steps you can take to trim your waistline!



WELCOME!

Hi gorgeous! Thank you for downloading your free guide to a Slimmer Belly in Menopause. It is my hope and desire you will find the information valuable.

The reason that you decided you wanted this guide is that this "meno-belly" is causing you much frustration, and no matter how healthy you eat and how much exercise you try to do each day, the belly won't budge, right?

I hear you! I struggled with weight almost my entire life. As with most women who have weight issues, during their younger and more fertile years, the weight usually sits around the hips, butt and thighs.

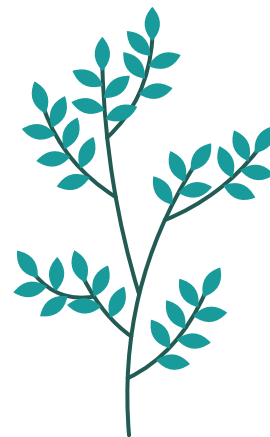
I remember feeling grateful that even though my weight struggles were ongoing, my waist and belly were always slimmer in comparison.

I was suddenly hit with a rude awakening while transitioning into menopause: weight increasing around my belly. Ugh!

I became far stricter with my "diets", restricting calories further, along with intense cardio workouts to help burn calories and the belly fat.



Margot Shute
CHHP & FDN-P



I knew that the midlife hormonal shifts during the menopause transition were in play, but the calorie restriction and intense cardio exercise routine were clearly not working.

I also battled other menopause symptoms: hot flashes, night sweats, mood issues, (sad and then angry), low sex drive, tired all the time and my brain felt like it was on fire - I couldn't remember things. It was a frustrating time, always battling with my weight as it is.

On a routine gynecology check-up, I shared my "meno woes" with my doctor. His response was: "menopause symptoms are normal, this is also a time when many women start to gain weight around the belly. We just have to accept this is all part of the aging process. I can write a prescription for your depression and insomnia. Watch your portions, and you probably need to exercise a bit more."

I respected my doctor, but his weight loss advice felt like a gut punch, and as a holistic health practitioner I was not willing to take prescriptions. No advice on adopting a healthy lifestyle was offered. I walked away feeling more frustrated.

I realized it was time to do my own research. This was the catalyst that led me further down the education path I was already on as a functional health coach, and into a deep dive into women in menopause. I delved into the current research. What I discovered is that food and exercise are not the main players when it comes to weight gain and "meno-belly." There are other hidden reasons why that spare tire won't budge!

If you're in menopause and your mid(life) section is expanding...

My message to you is: don't give up - there is hope!

The reasons I share are what helped me find the missing pieces to my stubborn weight and belly fat puzzle!

Now let's dive in...

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LET'S GET STARTED

Disclaimer

The information provided in this guide is not medical advice. It is provided to you for educational and informational purposes only and solely as a self-help tool for your own personal use.



As we transition into menopause, many of us notice our weight creeping up – particularly around our belly. There are many factors at play, but the most common are hormonal shifts plus, lifestyle factors over the years that led not only to weight gain, but other menopause symptoms .


Many of us have been told by our doctor that weight gain in menopause is normal and that we just have to live with it! In my own research, I hear the same story over again from women in menopause: "My doctor told me to watch my calories and portion sizes and do more cardio exercise to burn calories."

The doctors may mean well, but unfortunately this has left thousands of these women more deflated and frustrated, since the weight and belly bulge won't budge.

Belly fat in menopause and beyond is not something we want, both from a weight loss and health and longevity perspective. Belly fat increases the risk for chronic and metabolic illnesses down the road. The fat around our belly is known as visceral fat. It lies deep inside the abdomen, surrounding our organs. The other kind of fat is subcutaneous fat, which sits right below your skin, found in places like your thighs, buttocks and outer abdomen.

Visceral fat is linked to insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart and other diseases. We want to avoid these especially as we age!

It may be common but don't settle for normal. There is hope and why I created this guide to share what's behind that stubborn belly fat, plus some actionable steps to get you started on finding the missing pieces to your own weight loss struggles. You **have the power** to trim your midlife midsection without starving yourself or spending hours at the gym.



HORMONES

1. YOUR HORMONES ARE SHIFTING

In the years leading up to menopause, our sex hormones like estrogen and progesterone start to shift. And research suggests that these shifts likely lead to changes in body shape, along with hot flashes, mood changes, irregular periods, trouble sleeping and more. This transition is known as peri-menopause, which typically begins in our early 40s, (sometimes earlier) and can last for about 10+ years until we officially transition into menopause, which is 365 consecutive days without a cycle. After that point, women are considered post-menopausal.

Before the menopausal transition, women tend to store more of their body fat in the thighs and hips, resulting in a "pear-shaped" body.

But around menopause, with the decline in these hormones, fat distribution starts to shift towards the midsection, hence the dreaded "meno spare tire" or "middle aged spread"! It can be frustrating if you've had a trim waist most of your life.

While sex hormones are declining, some hormones are increasing: cortisol (our stress hormone) and insulin (blood sugar regulation AND fat storage hormone).

Tips for addressing hormone imbalance

- Run functional lab tests to assess hormone levels: stress and sex hormones, insulin (for blood sugar balance) and cortisol (stress response hormone).
- Do at home blood sugar testing before and after meals each day.
- Eliminate processed foods - including diet shakes, bars and meals
- Eliminate inflammatory foods: gluten, dairy, soy and corn
- Eliminate sugar and stick to natural sweeteners
- Focus on whole, real foods and colorful non-starchy vegetables and fruits each day
- Get adequate sleep - 7-9 hours/night
- Manage your stress response - deep breathing, gratitude, prayer, meditation, yoga



2. ADD MORE PROTEIN AT EACH MEAL

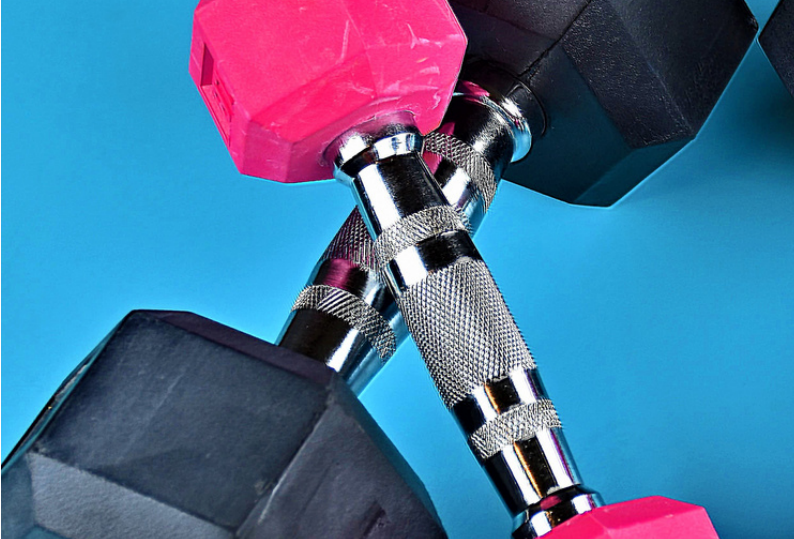
Many women in menopause believe that they have to ***eat less and restrict calories***. Initially there may be some weight loss, but then weight loss stalls. The body senses less food and will hold onto stored fat for survival. The more we restrict, the more our metabolism slows down leading to weight gain. Furthermore, restriction leads to cravings, eventual overeating and further weight gain.

It is also a myth that we should be eating 5-6 small frequent meals a day to balance our blood sugar and boost our metabolism. When we constantly ingest food, we raise our insulin levels. Insulin is the hormone responsible for blood sugar regulation by carrying glucose to our cells to be used for energy. It is also a fat storage hormone, and when it is constantly elevated, our cells can eventually become less responsive to its signal, resulting in a condition known as insulin resistance leading to weight gain.

In order to burn fat (especially around the belly), midlife women should eat 3 balanced meals a day that include healthy proteins, fats and carbohydrates. They should pay particular attention and increase their protein intake. Protein is essential for muscle building and preservation, especially during midyears and beyond where muscle mass starts to decline. Protein also helps with satiety (feeling of fullness after a meal) and wards off cravings in between meals.

Protein tips:

- Add protein at EACH meal. Animal protein is best: free range eggs, chicken, grass-fed beef, bison, lamb and wild game. For plant based, hemp seeds are a great source of complete protein.
- Include at least 35gm protein at each meal.
- Drink a protein smoothie a few times a week with either a complete protein, bone broth, collagen or plant based powders, with added healthy fats and green leafy veggies and low glycemic fruit like berries for fiber.



3. YOUR EXERCISE ROUTINE IS CARDIO-FOCUSED

When it comes to our exercise routine, what worked in our 30's and 40's may not bring the same weight loss results in our 50's and beyond. For the marathon runners, avid cyclists and indoor spinners, this may be hard to accept.

Reduced estrogen levels may slow your resting metabolic rate. Your body can't convert stored energy from your food into energy as efficiently as it once did.

Your muscle mass declines by about half a pound a year as you age, which, in turn, lowers your resting metabolism (as well as your strength and mobility).

Believe it or not, steady-state cardio workouts can actually make you store fat, not burn it! According to research, these types of exercises increase the production of cortisol, the stress hormone, sending a signal to the body to break down muscle for energy, thereby causing the body to store fat, particularly around the belly. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't workout. We have to rethink our exercise regimen for healthy aging and weight loss.

Exercise tips:

- Replace long cardio sessions for 15-20 minutes high intensity interval training (HIIT) 2-3 times a week.
- For muscle building and preservation, strength or resistance training 2-3 x/ week. You will notice a change in physique in that you will build lean muscle while shedding excess pounds and the dreaded belly fat at the same time!
- These are essential exercises and trying to "spot" reduce belly fat with abdominal crunches are not the best strategy based on the research. Planks are more effective.
- Recovery days are key as this is when the "wins" from exercising are achieved. Walking, gentle yoga, pilates and stretching are great options.



4. YOU ARE NOT GETTING GOOD QUALITY AND QUANTITY SLEEP

Women don't get enough sleep and most average less than 7 hours a night. This wreaks havoc on our health and weight. A shift in sleep patterns is more noticeable in midlife due to hormonal change. Whether you are in late stage peri-menopause or are post-menopausal, poor interrupted sleep is very common. This may be due to night sweats, anxiety, declining sex hormone, progesterone, also known as the calming, or a poor sleep routine in general.

Poor sleep is a **major contributor** to belly fat.

Averaging 7 hours or less each night can cause an imbalance in our appetite balancing hormones - leptin and ghrelin - throwing them both out of whack, making you feel hungrier and more likely to fall prey to sugar and carb cravings and binge eating or that "I'm-hungry-all-the-time-must-be-because-I-didn't-get-enough-sleep" syndrome. Also, lack of sleep triggers a rise in our insulin responsible for blood sugar control. Insulin is also a fat storage hormone and elevated levels cause the body to store excess fat particularly around the belly.

Furthermore, poor sleep is stressful to the body, keeping our stress hormone, cortisol elevated. When that happens, we store fat around our middle.

Sleep tips

- Adults need 7-9 hours of quality and restorative sleep each night.
- Ideal "lights out" time is 10pm, as every 1 hour of sleep before midnight is worth 2 hours of rest for the body needed to properly restore, recover, heal - all needed for optimal health and a healthy weight.
- Start your bed time routine 1-2 hours before bed time.
- Switch off electronic devices and wifi.
- Dim the lights and take an Epsom salts bath with essential oils like lavender and Roman chamomile.
- Track your sleep quality using a sleep app or a smart sleep tracker like the Oura Ring.



5. YOU ARE NOT MANAGING STRESS

Menopause can be a stressful time—a time of change and upheaval for many of us. And stress can lead to overeating, especially foods that are high in salt, sugar and fat. Aside from that, the hormone cortisol, which is released during times of stress, can shift fat accumulation to the midsection.

Chronic ongoing stress can take a toll ***physically, emotionally and mentally***. Cortisol levels elevate when we are stressed. This is a survival response preparing the body to "fight or flee".

This leads to poor blood sugar balance, cravings, over-eating processed foods high in sugars, carbs and fats which thwart any weight loss efforts. It also signals the body to hold onto and store fat, particularly around the belly, most noticeable in midlife. This is a survival mechanism in response to a perceived threat - anything that drives cortisol up!

Stress management tips:

- Although we cannot avoid stress, there are many steps we can take to minimize the affects in our response to the thing/event that caused the stress. Also, there are many recent trends and tools available to us that don't involve "talk therapy" and medication.
- Life gets busy, but carve out time daily to take a regular pauses throughout the day.
- Get outdoors walking in nature for at least 20 minutes, come sunshine, snow or rain.
- Practice yoga, mindfulness and meditation.
- Avoid "toxic" relationships that don't serve you.
- Find connections with like-minded people that love and support you.
- Engage in fun activities that bring joy and laughter.
- Engage in breathing exercises like 4-7-8 breathing. Inhale through your nose for 4 seconds, hold for 7 seconds, exhale through your mouth for 8 seconds. Repeat

Checklist

I have provided you with a checklist to help you to stay focused on these hidden factors that may be impacting your belly fat loss results. Use this weekly or find a regular time that works for you. I suggest you make copies for yourself to help you stay on track..

Description	Yes	No
Did I run functional lab tests that checked all my hormone levels: cortisol, melatonin, (saliva or urine test), thyroid (full panel), sex hormones: estrogen, progesterone and testosterone (saliva or urine), and a fasting blood sugar and insulin, and HbA1c test (ordered direct or via your doctor)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did I check my at home blood sugar levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did I eat 35 gm protein at each meal this week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How was my exercise routine this week? Strength training at least 2-3x a week and HIIT 2-3 times a week.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How is my sleep hygiene? Am I prioritizing the timing of my sleep? Ideal is 10pm-6am.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How were my stress levels this week? Did I take actionable steps to help manage the stress and my response to stressful situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

NOTES

Weekly Waist Measurements (above the navel area):

OKAY, THERE YOU HAVE IT! A FEW TIPS TO HELP YOU JUMPSTART YOUR JOURNEY TO A SLIMMER BELLY IN MENOPAUSE .

Are you feeling fatigued, frazzled and flabby? You just want to feel like YOU again, so that you can live your best years ahead?

Inside my signature 1:1 **Flourish In Menopause and Beyond Solution** coaching program, my mission is to help you while on your menopause journey navigate the hormonal transition with grace, power and ease, lose the belly fat, so that you can finally get back to feeling like yourself again.

Just **click the link below** to determine whether the Mindful Menopause and Weight Loss Solution program is right for you.



LEARN MORE ABOUT IT HERE!



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