



# **Bone Dry: Joints, Skin, and That "Other Place"**

*A Cliff Notes Guide to Midlife Dryness and How to Hydrate Your Life Without Moving to the Rainforest*

**A Menopausal Survival Series  
by Virginia Crowe  
Thrive by Design**



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## About Thrive by Design with Virginia Crowe

Thrive by Design was born out of my own personal journey through menopause and a deep desire to change the experience for other women. After facing a terrifying panic attack on a hike—one that resulted in me being airlifted off a mountain—I realized how little support and information was available for women going through such a major transition.

My doctor brushed it off as “just perimenopause,” offering no guidance or solutions. That moment changed everything for me.

With years of experience as a personal trainer, wellness coach, art for healing facilitator, and nutrition coach, I had many of the tools—but I knew I needed to understand menopause on a deeper level. That’s why I became a Certified Menopause Coaching Specialist. Thrive by Design is the program I wish I had: a fully customizable blend of fitness, nutrition, mindset, and creative healing, tailored to support the unique and complex needs of women in midlife. Whether online or in person, this program is designed to help you feel informed, empowered, and truly supported.

If you’ve ever felt confused, dismissed, or alone during this transition—you’re not. I’m here, and so is Thrive by Design. Reach out if you have questions. Let’s change the narrative together.

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# Introduction: "It's Like the Sahara Down There... and Over There... and, Yep, There Too."

Dry eyes. Dry skin. Dry joints. Dry... other areas. If you feel like you've been personally transformed into a human raisin, you're not imagining things.

Midlife dryness is very real—and very common—but rarely talked about in polite conversation. Well, this isn't a polite conversation. This is your **Cliff Notes crash course** on what's happening, why it's happening, and how to get the moisture back into your tissues, your joints, your glow—and yes, your intimate life.





## Section 1: Your Estrogen Took a Vacation... and Took the Moisture With It

Estrogen is the unsung hero of hydration. It helps your body retain moisture everywhere—from your skin and eyes to your joints and vaginal tissues. When it dips during perimenopause or menopause, you start to feel like a dry sponge that's been left on the edge of the sink for a week.

Common symptoms of The Great Drying-Out include:

- Skin that flakes like it's auditioning for a snow globe
- Eyes that feel like you slept in your contacts (even if you didn't)
- Vaginal dryness that makes you dread intimacy—or even just sitting
- Achy, cracking joints that sound like popcorn in yoga class
- Dry mouth, nose, or even... ear canals (yep, that too)

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# Section 2: The Moisture Crisis—Top to Bottom

Let's take a quick tour of where estrogen's absence is most noticeable:

- **Skin:** Collagen declines + less sebum = dry, saggy, papery skin. It's not age—it's hormones.
- **Eyes & Mouth:** Estrogen affects tear and saliva production, so everything feels tighter, stickier, and more sensitive.
- **Joints:** Less lubrication in your joints leads to that rusty-hinge feeling. No, you're not 90—you just need better internal oil.
- **Vaginal Tissue:** With thinning tissue and less natural lubrication, things that used to be comfortable... aren't. This is more than just discomfort—this is quality of life.

And the kicker? Most women don't talk about it. You're not crazy. You're not alone. And we're going to fix it—gracefully, science-first, and with a few laughs along the way.

# Section 3:

## How to Hydrate Without Turning Into a Cactus

# 1. Start With Water— Yes, That Old Trick

- Aim for half your body weight in ounces daily.
- Add electrolytes if plain water doesn't do the trick.
- Herbal teas and infused water help if you need flavor motivation.







## 2. Eat Your Way to Hydration

- Healthy fats like avocado, olive oil, flaxseed, and nuts help your cells hold moisture.
- Omega-3s (fish oil or plant-based) reduce joint stiffness and support skin.
- Collagen supplements may help rebuild moisture-retaining skin structure.
- Don't forget Vitamin C and zinc—they help collagen and tissue repair.

# 3. Move It So You Don't Lose It

- Movement increases synovial fluid in your joints (aka internal WD-40).
- Walking, gentle strength training, and yoga are all excellent joint-lubricators.
- Foam rolling helps you hydrate fascia and feel more mobile—really.





## 4. Topical & Targeted Support

- Use non-toxic moisturizers with hyaluronic acid or ceramides.
- Consider vaginal moisturizers (daily) and lubricants (during intimacy).
- Ask your doctor about low-dose vaginal estrogen or DHEA cream—it's life-changing.
- Use a humidifier in dry climates or during winter to save your skin and sinuses.

## Section 4: What Doesn't Help (AKA Mistakes I've Made So You Don't Have To)

- Hot showers without moisturizing afterward
- Skipping meals that contain fat (your skin notices)
- Using harsh soaps or fragrance-heavy body washes
- Drinking 4 cups of coffee before drinking any water
- Ignoring intimacy discomfort and hoping it'll go away (it won't—talk about it!)

You deserve comfort. You deserve softness. And you absolutely deserve to feel at home in your own body.







## Section 5: This Guide Is Just the Beginning

If your joints creak, your skin flakes, and intimacy feels like a desert trek, don't worry. You're not falling apart—you're simply adjusting to a new phase of life that needs a **different kind of support**.

My full program, **Thrive by Design**, goes deep into:

- Menopause symptoms like dryness, fatigue, weight changes, and mood shifts
- Sleep, movement, and nutrition strategies that *actually* work
- Hormone-supportive supplement education
- Nervous system and stress relief tools (including mindful art!)
- Affordable self-guided options AND high-touch concierge coaching in Laguna Hills or online

# Rehydrate. Reclaim. Reconnect.

You're not brittle. You're not aging out of vitality. You just need the right hydration—physical, emotional, and hormonal—to feel whole again.

Let's make it happen.

You don't have to tough it out or figure this out on your own.

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# Created by Virginia Crowe

Virginia Crowe is a **certified menopause coaching specialist, personal trainer, wellness and nutrition coach**, and **certified art for healing facilitator**. She supports women navigating the chaos of midlife with humor, science, and soul.

Her signature program, **Thrive by Design**, offers a full spectrum of support for women going through perimenopause and menopause—from affordable, self-guided wellness tracks to personalized concierge coaching (online or in-person in **Laguna Hills, California**).

Virginia also teaches **on-demand mindful art classes** and **hosts paint parties** that support creativity, healing, and nervous system reset. Her book, *Unlocking the Soul*, is a mindful art workbook designed to help women release stress and reconnect with themselves.

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