



THE PERIMENOPAUSE RESET: 6 STEPS TO FIND YOUR BALANCE AGAIN

**Feel more like yourself — with clear steps
that finally make sense.**

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WELLNESS 
WITH CHERI
TRANSFORMATION INSIDE OUT



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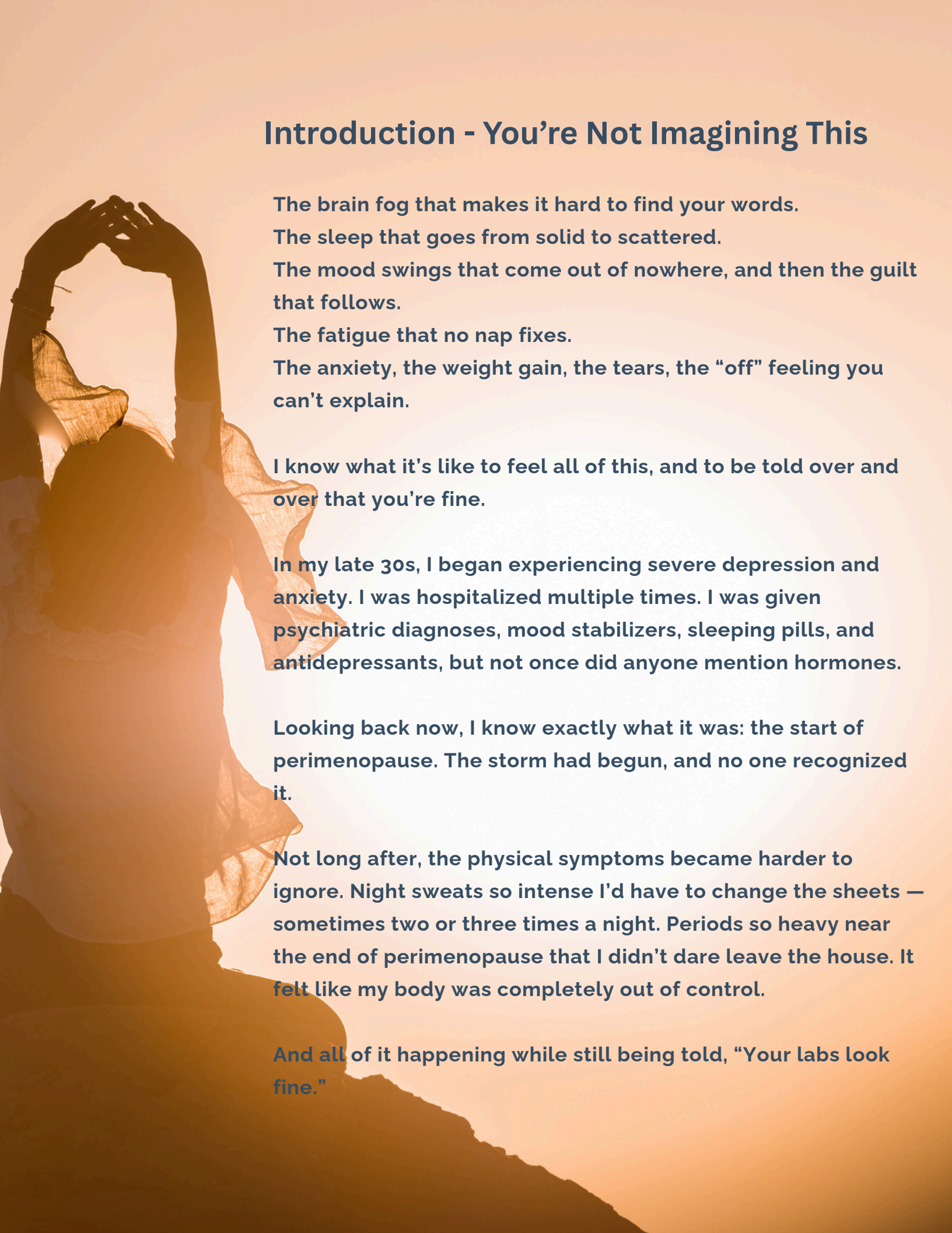
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A silhouette of a person with their arms raised, reaching towards the top of the frame, set against a warm, orange-hued sunset background. The person's head is tilted back, and their arms are spread wide, creating a sense of reaching or stretching. The background is a gradient of orange and yellow, with the sun's glow visible on the left side.

Introduction - You're Not Imagining This

The brain fog that makes it hard to find your words.

The sleep that goes from solid to scattered.

The mood swings that come out of nowhere, and then the guilt that follows.

The fatigue that no nap fixes.

The anxiety, the weight gain, the tears, the "off" feeling you can't explain.

I know what it's like to feel all of this, and to be told over and over that you're fine.

In my late 30s, I began experiencing severe depression and anxiety. I was hospitalized multiple times. I was given psychiatric diagnoses, mood stabilizers, sleeping pills, and antidepressants, but not once did anyone mention hormones.

Looking back now, I know exactly what it was: the start of perimenopause. The storm had begun, and no one recognized it.

Not long after, the physical symptoms became harder to ignore. Night sweats so intense I'd have to change the sheets — sometimes two or three times a night. Periods so heavy near the end of perimenopause that I didn't dare leave the house. It felt like my body was completely out of control.

And all of it happening while still being told, "Your labs look fine."

Eventually, I was diagnosed with eight chronic conditions. My thyroid was struggling. My hormones were all over the place. I was exhausted, in pain, and felt like a shell of the woman I once was. I was trying to hold it all together while losing trust in my own body.

Then came the breaking point: an accidental overdose from the very medications meant to help me. That moment changed everything. It forced me to stop chasing symptom relief and start rebuilding my health with intention.

That's what led me here, not just to reclaim my own wellness, but also to help other women reclaim theirs. I became triple-certified in life, holistic health, and menopause coaching. I studied the patterns, the physiology, the hormone cascades, and the lifestyle shifts that make a real difference.

This guide is part of that mission. It's not a quick fix, and it's not a checklist. It's a roadmap for women like you, who are ready to understand what's really happening in their bodies and find a way through that actually works.

Once you understand what's driving your symptoms, whether it's hormonal imbalance, thyroid dysfunction, or a nervous system that's been on high alert for too long, you stop blaming yourself.

And you start healing.

If you've been feeling off, but no one's giving you real answers, this guide is for you. Let's walk through it together.

What's Actually Going On With Your Hormones — and Why Everything Feels So Up and Down

If your moods, sleep, energy, weight, or periods have felt all over the place lately, you're not broken — you're hormonal.

And not in the eye-rolling, dismissive way most people mean it. In the real, biological, rooted-in-chemistry way.

Perimenopause is a time of transition, not collapse. But when your hormones shift out of their usual rhythm, the ripple effects can touch every system in your body, from your brain to your metabolism to your mood.

Let's walk through what's actually happening:

Progesterone Drops First — and Fast

One of the first big changes in perimenopause is a drop in progesterone — the hormone that helps you feel calm, grounded, and able to sleep at night. Progesterone is only produced after ovulation, so if your ovulation starts to become irregular or disappear altogether (which happens more often than you'd think), progesterone tanks.

The result?

You may feel anxious, wired at night, more emotionally reactive, or as if your nervous system is stuck in overdrive.

You may also notice shorter cycles, heavier bleeding, or PMS that feels more intense than it used to.

I didn't realize it at the time, but that was exactly what was happening in my body. My mood symptoms weren't just "depression," they were a sign of a deeper hormonal shift that no one had explained.

Estrogen Becomes Erratic

While progesterone is quietly disappearing, estrogen starts to fluctuate wildly — sometimes high, sometimes low, and often both in the same month. This is why perimenopause can feel so unpredictable. You're not always low on estrogen — in fact, sometimes you have too much in relation to your plummeting progesterone.

This imbalance is called estrogen dominance, and it can cause:

- Heavy, painful periods
- Breast tenderness
- Bloating
- Weight gain around the hips and belly
- Mood swings
- Headaches
- Trouble sleeping
- Histamine sensitivity

Estrogen dominance doesn't always mean "high estrogen" — it means too much estrogen compared to progesterone. That's why you can feel worse even if your estrogen isn't technically elevated on labs.

FSH Goes Up — Because Your Brain Is Trying to Help

As your ovaries become less responsive, your brain starts sending louder signals to get them to work. That signal is called follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH). High FSH doesn't cause symptoms — it's a result of your ovaries winding down. It's your brain trying to do its job.

Some women get tested and are told, "Your FSH is elevated — you're in menopause." But that number can fluctuate wildly too. One month it's high, the next it's back to "normal." That's why it's not a reliable marker by itself for where you are in the transition.

What This Means in Real Life

All of these hormonal shifts can feel like chaos, but there's a pattern to them.

You may feel completely fine for a while, then suddenly:

- You're crying over a dog food commercial.
- You're waking up drenched in sweat.
- Your period skips a month, and then comes back with a vengeance.
- Your energy crashes by 3 p.m. no matter what you eat.
- Your weight shifts and doesn't respond to your usual routine.

And all the while, you may be told, "It's just stress," or "You're too young for menopause."

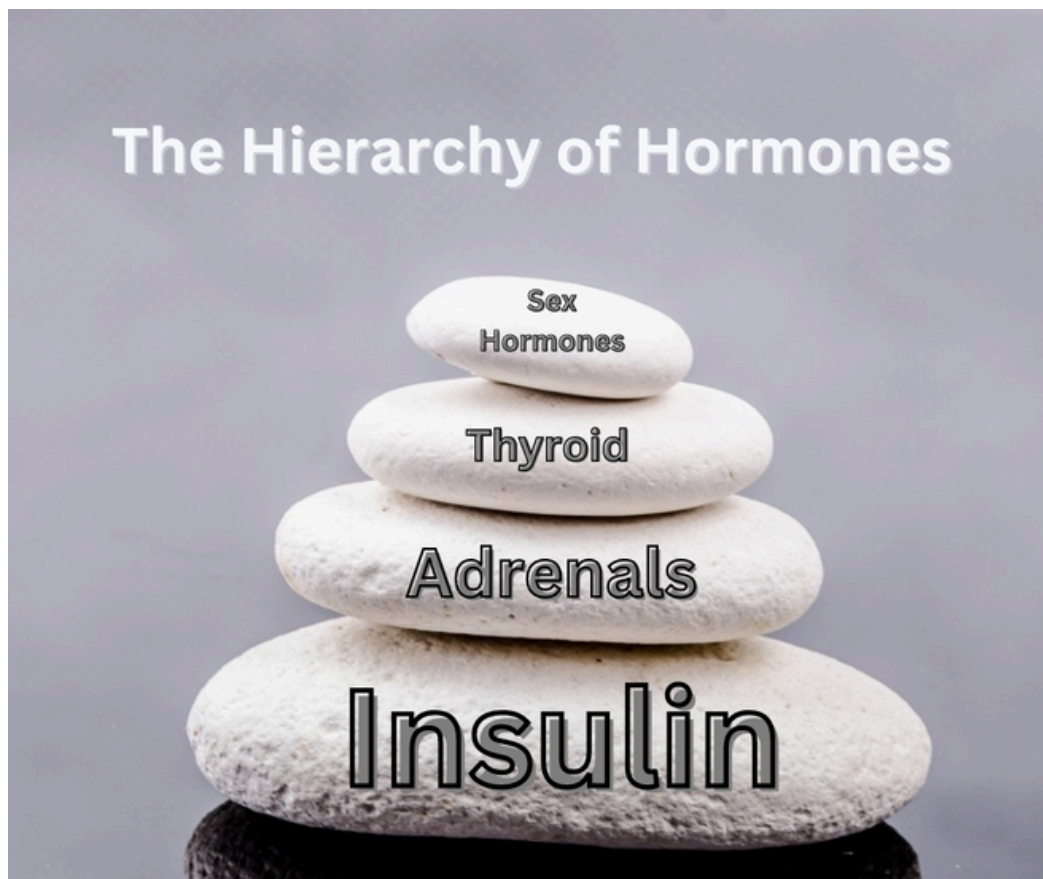
But if you're over 35 and noticing real changes, this is likely perimenopause, and those changes are hormonal.

But It's Not Just Your Sex Hormones

What most women (and providers) miss is that your sex hormones are at the bottom of the hormonal hierarchy. Estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone are downstream, meaning they're affected by what's happening upstream with:

- Cortisol (your stress hormone)
- Insulin (your blood sugar hormone)
- Thyroid hormones (your metabolism, energy, mood, and more)
- Detox pathways (especially your liver)

If you're not addressing these foundational systems, just replacing estrogen or progesterone may not be enough.



That's why some women start hormone therapy and still don't feel better — or even feel worse. It's not because hormone therapy doesn't work.

It's because the foundation wasn't there to support it.

Bottom Line:

You're not failing.

Your body is adapting. but without a roadmap.

The good news? You can build that roadmap.

And that's exactly what we'll begin doing in the next section.



Why You May Be Feeling Worse Now Than Ever Before — and Why It's Not in Your Head

Let's just say it:

Perimenopause can feel like you're being hijacked by your own body.

One day, you're holding everything together.

The next, you're crying in the bathroom and snapping at people you love, and wondering what happened to the woman you used to be.

If you've ever said to yourself:

- "I don't even recognize myself anymore."
- "I'm doing everything I used to do — why is it not working?"
- "Is this just who I am now?"

You're not alone.

And you're not broken.



It's not uncommon for the most intense symptoms of hormonal imbalance to show up during perimenopause — not menopause itself.

In fact, this is often the most challenging part of the entire hormonal transition. Why? Because it's messy. It's inconsistent. It's often completely missed by conventional care.

You're still getting periods (even if irregular), so people assume you're not in perimenopause yet. You may be dismissed, misdiagnosed, or offered treatments that don't get to the root of what's happening.

For me, the worst of it started in my late 30s, long before I had any idea what perimenopause even was. I was in and out of hospitals for depression and anxiety. My sleep was destroyed. My thyroid was off. My cycles were changing, but no one connected the dots. I was put on medications that left me numb, exhausted, and still struggling.

Not once did someone say, "This could be your hormones."

Why You Feel So Dysregulated

Let's put this plainly:

- Your progesterone is likely dropping, leaving you anxious, restless, and sleep-deprived.
- Your estrogen is swinging high and low, creating mood swings, bloating, breast tenderness, and heavier periods.
- Your cortisol may be high from years of stress, which only makes your symptoms worse.

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- Your thyroid may be slowing down, especially if you've already had nutrient deficiencies, autoimmunity issues, or chronic stress.
 - Your nervous system may be constantly activated, making you more sensitive to sound, light, pressure, people, and even yourself.
 - And your doctors may not be listening, which leaves you carrying it all without answers.

The result? You feel like you're unraveling.

But what's really happening is your foundation is trying to get your attention.

This Isn't About Age. It's About the Accumulation

Perimenopause often hits just as life is full.

You might be raising teens, caring for aging parents, managing a career, trying to show up for your relationship, and still be expected to smile and "handle it."

You're carrying stress, responsibility, and probably years of putting yourself last.

And now, your body is saying, "I can't do this without support."

This isn't weakness; it's wisdom. Your body is intelligent, and when hormones shift, it's not a sign that you're falling apart; it's a signal that something deeper needs attention.

And the beautiful part? When you start listening, everything begins to shift.

The Medical Gap — and Why So Many Women Don't Get the Help They Need

If you've ever walked out of a doctor's office feeling confused, dismissed, or even a little ashamed for asking about your symptoms, you're not imagining it.

There's a very real gap in care when it comes to perimenopause.

And it's leaving millions of women without the support they need during one of the most pivotal transitions of their lives.

Here's what often happens:

You go to your provider with symptoms like insomnia, anxiety, mood swings, weight gain, or painful periods.

And instead of asking why this is happening or running a full hormone panel, you're handed:

- An antidepressant
- A sleeping pill
- Birth control
- Or told, "This is just part of getting older"

Meanwhile, the real issue — hormonal imbalance — is never addressed.

The system isn't designed for midlife women.

Most physicians receive little to no training in menopause or hormone therapy.

Perimenopause is rarely taught in depth, and unless you're already in full menopause (no period for 12+ months), your symptoms often aren't even taken seriously.

That's why so many women end up chasing solutions that never quite work.

They're trying to fix insomnia with melatonin, mood issues with anti-anxiety medication, weight gain with restrictive diets, and fatigue with more coffee.

But without treating the root cause: shifting hormone levels, often paired with thyroid dysfunction, cortisol overload, and blood sugar instability, these symptoms won't go away.

My Story Isn't Unique — It's Far Too Common

As I shared earlier, I spent years in the system. I was given multiple psychiatric diagnoses and put on all sorts of medications, but no one said the word perimenopause. No one asked about my thyroid. No one helped me track what was really happening in my cycle or with my hormones.

It wasn't until I stepped outside the traditional model and started studying hormone function, root-cause health, and personalized care, that I began to understand what I really needed.

And now, that's exactly what I help other women do:
Create a new kind of care — one that's built around you.

Here's What You Deserve Instead:

- To be heard and taken seriously
- To understand what's happening inside your body
- To have a real plan that supports you physically, emotionally, and hormonally
- To work with someone who actually sees you

That's why I built *My Menopause Playbook*.

And that's what this guide will walk you toward — one clear step at a time.

Because the medical system may not be giving you the support you need.

But that doesn't mean you can't find your way forward.



The 6 Steps to Reset Your Hormones — A Proven Framework for Perimenopause Relief

After everything I went through — the years of symptoms, the missed diagnoses, the medications that never got to the root — I knew there had to be a better way.

So I created one.

What I share with women comes from a powerful combination of in-depth professional training and real life. I'm certified in life coaching, holistic health, and holistic menopause, and I've lived through the anxiety, mood swings, thyroid dysfunction, and hormone chaos myself. That blend of education and experience has shaped the way I support others now. I know firsthand that no two women experience perimenopause the same way, and that "just take this hormone" is rarely enough on its own.

This is the framework I use inside *My Menopause Playbook*, and it's the one I want to share with you here, so you can stop spinning and start moving forward with clarity.



◆ Step 1: Discover and Understand Your Menopause Type

Not all hormone imbalances look the same, and not all perimenopause plans should either.

Through years of experience, I've identified seven menopause types that help explain why you're feeling what you're feeling. These types take into account your symptom patterns, lifestyle factors, and deeper imbalances like thyroid function, detox capacity, and stress response.

The 7 Types:

1. Estrogen Overload
2. Cortisol Distress
3. Toxin Collector
4. Low Battery
5. Metabolic Stall
6. Smooth Sailing
7. Running on Empty

You might relate to more than one, but most women have one or two dominant types that help guide the most effective strategies for nutrition, movement, supplements, and even bio-identical hormones.

💡 **This is your starting point — and knowing your type changes everything.** ➡ Want to find your type? Go to:
www.mymenopauseplaybook.com

◆ Step 2: Create a Strategy That Matches Your Life and Your Goals

This isn't about doing what worked for someone else; it's about building a roadmap that's right for you.

Once you know where you are (your type), it's time to define where you want to go, and what it will take to get there.

That means:

- Understanding what your symptoms are telling you
- Getting clear on your why — your deeper reason for wanting to feel better
- Creating a vision for how you want to feel and live
- Asking the right questions:
 - “Do I want to go slow and steady or dive in fast?”
 - “Am I ready to do this alone or do I need support?”
 - “What's been holding me back until now?”

Then, you start building your plan — not perfectly, but intentionally.

You track what's working.

You adjust what's not.

You stop reacting and start responding.

This is where the tide begins to turn.

◆ Step 3: Optimize Nutrition, Digestion and Elimination

Before you can balance your hormones, you need to support the systems that build and clear them.

You've probably heard that food can help balance hormones — and it's true. But it's not just what you eat. It's how your body processes it.

In perimenopause, your digestive system becomes even more important. Why? Because if your digestion and elimination aren't working properly, your hormones will stay stuck in a dysfunctional loop, no matter how perfect your diet looks on the surface.

Start with Food That Supports Hormone Balance

This isn't about restriction or cutting out everything you love. It's about giving your body what it actually needs in this phase of life.

Perimenopause is a time when your hormones become more sensitive to the food you eat, and the timing, combinations, and quality of that food matters more than it ever has.

That's why I teach women to build every meal around three essential components:

- Protein
- Fiber
- Healthy Fat

This trio stabilizes blood sugar, supports your nervous system, reduces cravings, and helps your body make and detox hormones properly.

- Protein helps maintain muscle mass, balance blood sugar, and build hormones.
- Fiber feeds your gut microbiome, promotes regular elimination, and helps remove excess estrogen.
- Healthy fats, like avocado, olive oil, nuts, seeds, and fatty fish, support hormone production, brain health, and mood.

Most women need at least 0.8 to 1 gram of protein per pound of ideal body weight, and 25–40 grams of fiber per day — far more than the average woman is getting. Don't let those numbers overwhelm you; we start with small shifts that add up over time.

Syncing Food With Your Cycle

Even if your cycle isn't perfectly regular anymore, many women still feel two distinct phases: the follicular phase (from your period to ovulation) and the luteal phase (from ovulation to the next period). Matching your meals to your hormonal rhythm can make a noticeable difference in your mood, energy, and cravings.



Here's a simple guide:

✨ Follicular Phase (Day 1 to ovulation):

Your body is rebuilding and estrogen is rising. Focus on foods that are light, cleansing, and liver-supportive.

- Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, kale, cauliflower)
- Leafy greens, herbs like parsley and cilantro
- Lean proteins, omega-3-rich fish, legumes
- Fermented foods to support gut health
- Whole grains like quinoa, millet, brown rice

🌙 Luteal Phase (Ovulation to period):

Your body may be inflamed, bloated, and craving comfort. Here, focus on grounding, and blood sugar-stabilizing foods that nourish your nervous system.

- Root vegetables (sweet potatoes, carrots, beets)
- Warming whole grains (oats, brown rice, farro)
- Magnesium-rich foods (dark chocolate, pumpkin seeds, leafy greens)
- Protein-rich meals with calming tryptophan (turkey, chicken, eggs)
- Balanced comfort: soups, stews, warm teas, and slower-paced meals

🦠 What About Digestion?

Even if you're eating all the right foods, if your digestion isn't working, they won't do you much good.

Low estrogen and progesterone can slow digestion and weaken your pelvic floor muscles, leading to:

- Bloating
- Constipation
- Gas
- Reflux
- A sluggish, uncomfortable gut

Constipation is especially problematic in perimenopause. If you're not eliminating daily, the hormones your liver has already processed (especially estrogen) can get reabsorbed and recirculate, making symptoms worse.

I've seen this firsthand, and experienced it myself. It's not just uncomfortable; it amplifies everything else.

Support Elimination — or Hormone Balance Won't Happen

To support daily elimination:

- Drink enough water (start your day with warm lemon water or mineral-rich salt water)
- Add ground flaxseed, chia seeds, and leafy greens
- Get regular movement — even walking helps
- Consider magnesium citrate or other gentle supports if needed
- Identify hidden sources of inflammation (dairy, gluten, and processed foods often cause issues here)

🧠 The Gut-Hormone Connection

A healthy gut also supports:

- Better mood and mental clarity (via the gut-brain axis)
- A more balanced immune system
- Vaginal and urinary health (which often shift in perimenopause)
- Blood sugar stability and metabolic health

Estrogen even helps maintain the right pH in your gut — so when estrogen drops or becomes erratic, gut issues often follow.

This is why I never separate nutrition, digestion, and elimination in my work. They are core to hormone balance.

The takeaway:

You can't supplement your way out of hormone imbalance if your digestion and elimination aren't working. This step lays the foundation for everything else.



◆ Step 4: Optimize Detoxification

Your liver isn't just detoxing your wine and takeout — it's managing your hormones too.

One of the most overlooked causes of hormone-related symptoms in perimenopause is poor detoxification. And I don't mean doing a juice cleanse or taking a harsh supplement. I'm talking about the daily work your liver, gut, skin, kidneys, and lungs do to process and eliminate both external toxins and your internal hormonal byproducts.

When this system isn't working well, or when it's overloaded, symptoms intensify.

That's why supporting your detox pathways isn't optional during perimenopause. It's essential.

🔬 Why Detoxification Matters in Perimenopause

During this transition, your hormones are fluctuating daily. Estrogen in particular needs to be properly processed and excreted after it's used. If your detox pathways (especially the liver and gut) are sluggish, estrogen can be reabsorbed into your system, leading to estrogen dominance and all the uncomfortable symptoms that come with it.



DETOXIFICATION

Think:

- Heavy periods
- Breast tenderness
- Mood swings
- Histamine intolerance
- Bloating
- Headaches
- Fatigue

And it's not just hormones — we're also exposed to hundreds of thousands of toxins every single day. From plastics and pesticides to personal care products and air pollution, many of these are endocrine disruptors, meaning they directly interfere with your hormone balance.

Your liver is doing its best to keep up, but perimenopause adds extra strain. It needs support — not just supplements, but food, lifestyle shifts, and reducing your overall load.

The Liver Does More Than You Think

Your liver performs over 500 functions, including:

- Detoxifying chemicals and excess hormones
- Producing bile to help you digest and eliminate fats and toxins
- Converting fat-soluble toxins into water-soluble compounds for removal
- Regulating blood sugar by storing and releasing glucose
- Producing cholesterol, the building block of all hormones

🍌 2. Use Gentle Detox Support (if needed)

- DIM (Diindolylmethane) can be helpful if you're dealing with high estrogen, but isn't for everyone — especially if you have thyroid issues.
- Glutathione and NAC (N-acetylcysteine) for Phase 2 detox.
- Magnesium, methylated B vitamins, and zinc also help your liver do its job.

If you're not sure what's right for your type, I cover this in more detail inside *My Menopause Playbook*.

☕ 3. Reduce Your Toxic Load

You can't live in a bubble, but you can reduce your daily exposure by being intentional.

Start here:

- Switch to non-toxic skincare, makeup, and cleaning products.
- Stop storing or heating food in plastic.
- Buy organic when possible (especially the Dirty Dozen).
- Filter your water.
- Ditch synthetic air fresheners and candles.
- Watch out for hormone-disrupting chemicals in receipts, canned goods, and conventional meat.



💧 4. Support All Elimination Pathways

Detox isn't just about the liver. Your body removes waste through five main channels:

1. Liver & bile → processed through stool
2. Kidneys → through urine
3. Colon → through regular bowel movements
4. Skin → through sweat
5. Lungs → through breath

To keep things moving:

- Hydrate (half your body weight in ounces of water daily, minimum).
- Move your body to stimulate circulation and lymph flow.
- Sweat regularly (walk, sauna, gentle exercise).
- Practice deep breathing.
- Keep digestion regular (this ties back to Step 3!).

🌿 Detoxing isn't a dramatic 3-day reset; it's a daily process your body already knows how to do. You just need to support it.

And when you do?

Hormone symptoms often lessen before you even add hormone therapy.



◆ Step 5: Target Lifestyle Strategies from All 9 Pillars of Wellness

This is where everything begins to shift, because hormone balance doesn't happen in isolation.

You've likely heard that food, movement, and sleep all matter when it comes to hormone health. And they absolutely do. But they're just part of the picture.

I've worked with hundreds of women — and lived this process myself — and one thing is always true: the women who feel better and stay better are the ones who go beyond just food and supplements.

They make small, doable shifts in every part of their life, and those shifts create the environment where hormone balance is possible.

That's why I created the **9 Pillars of Wellness**, a simple but powerful way to address the real lifestyle factors that either support your hormones or sabotage them.

🌱 The 9 Pillars of Wellness

1. Optimal Nutrition

We covered this in Step 3, but here's the bottom line: food is information for your hormones. Every bite either supports balance or increases the load. Focus on protein, fiber, healthy fat, and anti-inflammatory, whole foods. Eat for your cycle when possible. This is your foundation.

2. Fitness and Frequent Movement

You don't need high-intensity workouts that leave you drained. In fact, over-exercising in perimenopause can make things worse. Instead, think daily movement that matches your energy and hormones: strength training, walking, mobility work, even dancing in your kitchen. Movement is medicine.

3. Sound Sleep

Sleep becomes harder during perimenopause, but it's also more important than ever. Poor sleep raises cortisol, disrupts insulin, and increases inflammation. Start with a consistent wind-down routine, avoid screens late at night, and don't be afraid to support sleep nutritionally or hormonally if needed.

4. Human Connection

We're wired for connection. Women in midlife often feel isolated, and loneliness can be just as damaging to your health as smoking. Whether it's friends, family, support groups, or community, connection regulates your nervous system and supports emotional resilience.

5. Inner Stillness

Stillness doesn't mean doing nothing. It means giving your nervous system a break from being "on" all the time. Practices like breathwork, meditation, prayer, journaling, or simply sitting with a cup of tea in silence help lower cortisol and create inner space for healing.

6. Sync With Nature

We're not meant to live in fluorescent boxes all day. Getting natural light in the morning, stepping outside barefoot, gardening, walking, or even noticing the trees outside your window can help regulate circadian rhythms, improve sleep, and calm your system.

7. Sense of Purpose

Midlife often brings a shift in roles — kids leaving, careers evolving, relationships changing. Reconnecting with what lights you up and gives your life meaning is one of the most underrated health strategies. Purpose creates energy.

8. Managing Stress

Stress isn't just a feeling — it's a physiological cascade that hijacks your hormones. If cortisol is running the show, your body deprioritizes progesterone and thyroid function. Managing stress isn't about bubble baths — it's about creating boundaries, asking for help, and shifting how you carry what's on your plate.

9. Healthy Habits

Change doesn't happen from one giant leap — it happens through small, consistent actions. That's why I guide women in building morning and evening routines that work with their lives, not against them. When your habits align with your goals, the results follow.

💡 This step is where real momentum builds. The more of these pillars you integrate, even imperfectly, the more support your hormones receive.

You don't need to master them all at once. But over time, stacking small lifestyle changes becomes the most powerful therapy there is.



◆ Step 6: Balance Hormones — With or Without Therapy

Now that your foundation is stronger, this step actually works the way it's supposed to.

By the time most women find me, they've either been offered hormone therapy and didn't feel better, or they've been told "you don't need it yet," even though they feel like they're falling apart.

Or they're terrified of it because of outdated studies and confusing headlines.

Here's the truth: hormone therapy can be a powerful tool, but only when it's used in the right body, at the right time, and with the right foundation.

And by reaching this step, you've done the groundwork that makes it most effective.

✚ Why Hormone Therapy Alone Isn't Enough

A lot of women assume that taking progesterone or estrogen will "fix" everything.

And sometimes, it does help — temporarily.

But if you haven't first supported your digestion, your liver, your nervous system, your blood sugar, and your lifestyle, hormone therapy often

can't do what it's supposed to. The message gets lost in a system that isn't ready to receive it.

That's why some women start hormones and still feel bloated, tired, moody, or wired at night. It's not because they're doing it wrong — it's because the body needed more than just hormones.

You've now built that foundation. So, if you decide to try hormone therapy, it has a much greater chance of working the way it's meant to.

The hormones you need, when you need them, depends on where you are in the transition.

Most women arrive at this step feeling frustrated, worn down, and wondering why their body no longer responds to the things that used to work. They've tried eating better, moving more, even experimenting with supplements, but something still feels off.

Often, it's because their hormones have shifted beyond the point where lifestyle alone isn't enough.

This is where the conversation around hormone therapy becomes relevant, but only once the body is ready.



In Perimenopause, Most Women Benefit From:

- **Bio-identical progesterone** — typically the first hormone to decline. Supporting it can dramatically improve sleep, calm anxiety, lighten heavy periods, reduce breast tenderness, and ease mood swings. It's often where we start, and many women feel the difference within days or weeks.
- **Testosterone** — While not always needed, some women benefit from a low dose of bio-identical testosterone during perimenopause, especially if they're noticing a drop in libido, drive, energy, or muscle tone. A little goes a long way and should always be monitored.
- **Estrogen** — In the later stages of perimenopause, estrogen can begin to falter more consistently. When that happens, symptoms like hot flashes, vaginal dryness, and brain fog often worsen. In these cases, low-dose bio-identical estrogen (often transdermal) can be layered in carefully with professional guidance.

Supportive Supplements to Consider

If you're not ready for hormone therapy, or if you want to complement a prescription plan, there are certain herbal and nutritional supports that can help ease the transition:

- **Chasteberry (*Vitex agnus-castus*):** Helps support the brain's signaling to the ovaries and may naturally promote progesterone production. Best used in early perimenopause when cycles are still present.
- **Magnesium (especially glycinate or citrate):** Calms the nervous system, supports sleep, and helps with hormone metabolism and bowel regularity.

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- **Vitamin B6 and B-complex:** Essential for neurotransmitter and hormone synthesis, especially if mood swings or PMS-like symptoms are present.
 - **Omega-3s:** Support hormone production, reduce inflammation, and improve mood.
 - **Adaptogens like ashwagandha or rhodiola:** Help buffer the stress response and protect your adrenals, but not always appropriate for everyone (If you're unsure, I can help guide you.).
 - **DIM or calcium d-glucarate:** For estrogen clearance support, but these should only be used based on your symptoms or type (especially if estrogen is high).

The Goal Is Informed Choice — Not Pressure

You don't have to start hormone therapy, and you're not "failing" if you do.

This is about understanding where you are in the transition, what your body is asking for, and how to make decisions that are grounded, supportive, and aligned with you — not a protocol, trend, or outdated fear.

The right approach is the one that restores your quality of life, and helps you move through midlife feeling like yourself again.

Whether that includes hormones, herbs, lifestyle changes, or a combination — you now have the foundation to make that decision with confidence.

Real Stories: How the 6 Steps Work in Real Life

Before we wrap up, I want to show you what this process actually looks like when it's lived out.

Meet Anne.

Her story isn't dramatic. It's real. It's what so many women go through — quietly struggling and quietly pushing through, until they decide to do things differently.

Anne's Story: From Overwhelmed to Rebalanced

Anne was 46 when she reached out. She was still getting her period, but everything else felt unpredictable. Her cycles had become heavy and painful. Her breasts were tender. She was gaining weight in places she never used to, and her mood swings were becoming harder to manage.

"I feel like I'm doing everything right," she said. "But my body isn't responding."

Anne took the Menopause Type Quiz and identified as *Estrogen Overload*, with a pattern of excess estrogen and low progesterone — a common picture in perimenopause, especially when the liver and digestion are underperforming.

Step 1: Discover Your Type

Understanding that she was an Estrogen Overload type helped Anne make sense of her symptoms. Heavy periods, bloating, mood shifts — they weren't random. They were signs of hormonal buildup that her body was struggling to process.

This gave her clarity. It also gave us direction.

Step 2: Create a Strategy

Anne's "why" was powerful. She wanted to feel steady and strong again, for herself and for her teenage kids. She didn't want to just survive the next few years. She wanted to feel energized, clear-headed, and confident in her body again.

We created a plan that included targeted nutrition, liver support, digestive repair, and the option to explore progesterone therapy once her foundation was stronger.

Step 3: Optimize Nutrition, Digestion and Elimination

Anne began by cleaning up her meals — not by dieting, but by building her plate with protein, fiber, and healthy fats, and learning to eat differently during her follicular and luteal phases. We added cruciferous veggies, flaxseeds, leafy greens, and magnesium-rich foods to support estrogen clearance and regular bowel movements.

She swapped her sugary granola for a blood-sugar-friendly smoothie with spinach, berries, chia seeds, and collagen. She increased her water intake, added probiotics, and focused on a high-fiber lunch, usually a big salad with lentils, turkey, and olive oil.

Step 4: Optimize Detoxification

Anne's liver needed support. We focused on food first, adding dandelion greens, beets, arugula, lemon water, and a salad built with liver-loving ingredients like kale, shredded carrots, sunflower seeds, and apple cider vinegar.

She added DIM and started taking a gentle blend of herbs, including turmeric and milk thistle (with thyroid-safe dosing in mind). These supported her detox pathways without overwhelming her system.

Step 5: Integrate the 9 Pillars of Wellness

This was the game-changer.

Anne began walking daily, strength training twice a week, and doing 10 minutes of meditation each morning. She rebuilt her sleep routine, cut back on social media, and started joining in on weekend hikes with her family again.

She wasn't perfect, but she was consistent, and she started feeling calmer, lighter, and more herself with each passing week.

Step 6: Balance Hormones

After building her foundation, Anne chose to start bio-identical progesterone under the guidance of a qualified provider. Within a few weeks, she was sleeping better, her cycles were less intense, and her mood swings had softened.

It wasn't magic. It was physiology, supported by the right structure and timing.

Anne's words a few months later:

"I finally feel like I'm not fighting my body anymore. I understand what's going on. I have tools. And I feel like me again — maybe even better."

Marianne's Story: When It's More Than Just Hormones

When Marianne reached out, she was 44, exhausted, and completely overwhelmed.

She'd been struggling for years with deep fatigue, brain fog, weight gain, dry skin, constipation, and the kind of anxiety that made her feel like she was crawling out of her skin. Her periods were irregular and intense, and her libido had vanished.

She'd been told, more than once, "Everything looks fine." Her labs were always just inside the normal range. But she knew her body was telling a different story.

Step 1: Discover Your Type

When Marianne took the Menopause Type Quiz, her results pointed clearly toward Low Battery — that unique pattern where the thyroid and adrenals are struggling long before typical menopause symptoms show up.

It explained everything: the exhaustion, the lack of motivation, the stubborn weight gain, the slow digestion, and most of all, it helped her realize that this wasn't about willpower — her body simply didn't have the reserves anymore.

Step 2: Create a Strategy

Marianne's goal wasn't just to fix the fatigue — she wanted to feel present again. She wanted her spark back. And more than anything, she wanted to stop feeling like she was barely hanging on.

We built a plan focused on rest, nourishment, nervous system recovery, and slow, supportive rebuilding. This wasn't a quick-fix strategy. It was a restore-the-foundation strategy.

Step 3: Optimize Nutrition, Digestion and Elimination

Marianne had been under-eating for years without realizing it — too little protein, not enough fiber, skipping meals to “be good,” and pushing through on caffeine.

We rebuilt her meals with protein, fiber, and healthy fat at every sitting. She learned to support her blood sugar with balanced meals, eating more carbs during the luteal phase to soothe her nervous system, and increasing her mineral intake.

Her digestion improved almost immediately when we added fermented foods, magnesium, warm meals, and bitter greens to her daily rhythm.

Step 4: Optimize Detoxification

Because her system was depleted, we skipped aggressive detoxes. Instead, we worked with gentle support: castor oil packs, dry brushing, lemon water, and food-based liver support. We added selenium and zinc-rich foods to support thyroid function, and used light, restorative movement to keep things flowing.

Step 5: Integrate the 9 Pillars of Wellness

This was where the magic happened.

We focused on daily rhythm and routines — consistent bedtimes, morning light, wind-down rituals, slow walks, and time outside. She committed to 10 minutes of silence each morning, short breathwork practices, and journaling before bed.

We also did deeper work around purpose and human connection, and that gave her back something she'd been missing: joy.

Step 6: Balance Hormones

Once her nervous system had a chance to reset and her nutrition was solid, we brought in gentle support: bio-identical progesterone, thyroid medication at a slightly adjusted dose, and a very low dose of DHEA, carefully monitored.

Within two months, her energy was steadier. She wasn't waking up at 3 a.m. Her digestion normalized, and for the first time in years, she said, "I actually want to go out again."

Marianne's message after our work together:

"I thought this was just about my thyroid. Or maybe hormones. But what I got was a new relationship with my body, and the tools to keep feeling better, one small step at a time."

Where You Go From Here

Anne and Marianne didn't have the exact same story, but they shared something important:

They knew something had shifted in their bodies.
They were tired of being dismissed or told to wait it out.
And they were ready to stop guessing and start healing.

If you're still reading, chances are, so are you.

Maybe you haven't felt like yourself in a while.

Maybe you're trying to hold everything together — your home, your job, your body, your mind.

Maybe part of you wonders if it's just aging and another part whispers, "This doesn't feel right."

You don't need another trendy wellness protocol.

You need something real: Something that helps you understand what's happening inside your body, and gives you tools that actually work for this chapter of life.

That's exactly why I created this guide.

If you're ready for more — if this spoke to you in a way other things haven't — there are a few simple ways we can take the next step together: *1:1 Coaching or My Menopause Group Coaching Program.*

If you've made it this far, take a breath and a moment to honour yourself.

You've just walked through the real story of perimenopause, not the simplified, surface-level version, but the layered, honest, whole woman version, one that acknowledges not just your hormones, but your nervous system, your thyroid, your liver, your stress, your relationships, your sleep, your food, and your voice.

If this guide helped things start to click, and if you're thinking, "This actually makes sense now," or you're realizing that you're not alone or losing your mind, that's not a coincidence.

That's your body asking for a new kind of support. It's your inner wisdom recognizing that what you're going through is real, and that it's time to do something about it.

You don't have to have it all figured out today.

Just take what's resonated. Start where you are, and follow the small nudges that feel true.

For now, just know this:

What you're going through is real. And there is a path forward — one that's kinder, clearer, and more aligned with the woman you're becoming. A great place to begin is with My Menopause Type quiz. Go to: www.mymenopauseplaybook.com to learn more.

YOU'VE GOT THIS!



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