

Dear Jacquie

Your queries about natural health answered by **Jacquie Lane** from the College of Naturopathic Medicine

"I'm 50 years old and facing the dreaded menopause. Is HRT the only solution to the problems that may follow?"
SB, Brighton Marina

Please see the start of the menopause as the beginning of freedom! This is how it is viewed in many other countries. Natural therapies such as acupuncture, herbal medicine and homeopathy can be enormously helpful in treating menopausal problems. However, since dietary and lifestyle changes can have such a huge impact on the classic menopause symptoms of hot flashes, night sweats and low moods, I suggest that you start by making some everyday changes to help yourself.

An area to pay particular attention to is your bone health to help prevent osteoporosis. Oestrogen is very protective of bone health and declining levels during and after the menopause can cause the classic symptoms



mentioned above. You can help protect your bones by having a good selection of naturally occurring calcium and vitamin D foods. Good levels of calcium are found in broccoli and green leafy vegetables, sesame seeds, almonds, dairy foods, and tinned salmon with the bones mashed in.

Vitamin D is plentiful in oily fish, eggs and dairy products. And don't forget to get natural daylight every day, even when the sun is absent from Brighton! Vitamin K, boron, zinc, and magnesium are also essential for keeping bones strong. Reducing fizzy drinks, saturated

fats, alcohol, caffeine, sugar and salt would be helpful for bone health, heart health, and to prevent or reduce hot flashes. A group of foods called phytoestrogens are useful for helping the body replace some of its naturally lost oestrogen levels.

Foods containing these include soya, flax seeds, oats, chick peas, lentils, sage and red clover. Weight-bearing exercise is also very protective of bones. Combine this with some regular walking/cardiovascular exercise for heart health.

Adequate soluble fibre found in fruit and vegetables and clear fluids are required for good bowel health, and essential fatty acids found in flax seeds and oily fish are good for joints and heart health.

Our moods can also fall at this time and many women find relief with St. John's Wort. However, as with all medicinal herbs, a health history case-taking consultation would be required to ensure that the herb would be safe and useful for you.

See your health professional for advice.

If you have a general health query that you would like to raise here you can email Jacquie at healthqueriesforWave@naturopathy-uk.com. Please note that Jacquie cannot enter into individual correspondence unless your query is chosen for publication.

CNM COLLEGE OF NATUROPATHIC MEDICINE



Jacquie Lane is a lecturer at the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) and the Director of Studies at CNM in Brighton. Jacquie also runs her own nutrition clinic in Brighton and manages a biological testing lab specialising in digestive issues.

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