



You asked: “How can I ease my menopausal side-effects naturally?”



GEMMA HURDITCH ANSWERS: “Take regular weight-bearing exercise and manage stress. Follow an anti-inflammatory diet, and go organic for beneficial plant chemicals and fewer toxic residues. Eat a small handful of raw nuts and two tablespoons of freshly ground flaxseeds daily. Reduce red meat intake, choosing grass-fed lean meats only, and increase small oily fish. Switch all white flour products for wholegrain, and increase consumption of green leafy vegetables. Limit sugar and alcohol. Add cold-pressed olive oil to meals at the table and do not cook with vegetable oils. Adopt water cooking methods such as steaming, poaching and sautéing.

A heavily plant-based diet can support an easier transition through menopause. Traditionally prepared non-GMO soy may also ease symptoms. If choosing soy, use only foods prepared with soy beans or soy flour such as tofu and tempeh. Highly processed soy and soy supplements (eg., soy protein isolate) should be avoided. Herbs can help. Sage tea is popular for hot flushes. Black cohosh is recommended and, when combined with St John’s Wort, may be even more effective, but see your herbalist. Maca is useful for menopausal symptoms with sexual dysfunction. Choose products which include ‘standardised extract’ for their active compounds. Coconut oil can be a vaginal lubricant.”

■ **Naturopath Gemma Hurditch lectures for CNM (College of Naturopathic Medicine). CNM offers training in a range of natural health therapies. Visit www.naturopathy-uk.com**