



Menopause & Weight Gain

(The struggle is real)

If you're a woman approaching late middle age, you're probably already familiar with the trials of menopause. For many women, the period during and immediately following menopause is notable for an additional reason: weight gain.

Most of my female clients are wondering why it's hard for them to lose weight when they reach their menopausal stage even when they have a proper exercise routine.

I think this is the best time to explain all the important things that they should know regarding this concern.

Here are the usual questions that I always encounter:

1. What is Menopause?

Menopause is defined as having no menstrual period for one year. The age you can experience it can vary but it typically occurs in your late 40s or early 50s.

2. What causes weight gain in menopause?

Changes in your hormone levels may cause you to gain weight. However, aging can also contribute to weight gain.

Hormonal Causes

- Fluctuating hormones like estrogen, testosterone and progesterone direct your appetite, metabolism and fat storage.
- A drop in estrogen and progesterone levels can increase a woman's appetite and cause her to eat up to 67% more, according to one study.
- An increase in appetite coupled with a slower metabolism with the onset of menopause can cause weight gain in women.
- Testosterone helps a woman's body create lean muscle mass out of the calories consumed. Muscle cells burn more calories than fat cells do, increasing metabolic rate. As testosterone levels drop, fewer calories are transformed into lean muscle mass, thus a woman's metabolism winds down.

Aging Causes

- Muscle mass naturally diminished with age, if not replaced body composition will shift to more fat and less muscle.
- This slows down your metabolism and the rate at which you burn calories.
- If you continue to eat as you always have, you're likely to gain weight.

Metabolic Rate

Naturally begins to slow after the age of 30. It further decreases in the menopausal period that leads to weight gain.

Lifestyle

Menopausal women tend to exercise less than their counterpart as has been revealed in various surveys.

Life Changes

Menopause centers around profound life changes- children leaving or returning home, divorce, death of loved ones, elder care issues which may further increase chances of weight gain due to stress.

3. Is weight gain after menopause risky?

Yes, it is! Maybe you are not aware, but the implications are really serious. Weight gain after menopause increases the risk of:

- High Cholesterol
- High Blood pressure
- Type 2 DM
- Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Various types of cancer

4. How to prevent weight gain after menopause?

There is no magic formula

- **Move more** - Include at least 30 minutes of physical activity in your daily routine and do strength exercises at least 3x a week.
- **Eat Less** - To reduce calories not nutrition, pay attention to what you're eating and drinking. Choose more fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- **Seek Support** - surround yourself with friends and loved ones who'll support your efforts to eat healthy diet and increase your physical activity. Better yet, team up with a fitness expert to help make the lifestyle changes easier and safer.

Remember, successful weight loss at any stage requires permanent changes in diet and exercise habits.

Commit to the changes and enjoy healthier you.

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