

Menopause and Sleep

How Does the Menopausal Transition Affect Sleep?

Anxiety, depression, and stress can contribute to difficulty falling asleep and staying asleep, which in turn can worsen mood and stress resilience.[3]



40% experience poor sleep and increased nighttime awakenings.[5]



2–4 times increased risk in snoring, sleep-disordered breathing and sleep apnea.[6,7]



80% experience hot flashes and night sweats.[4]



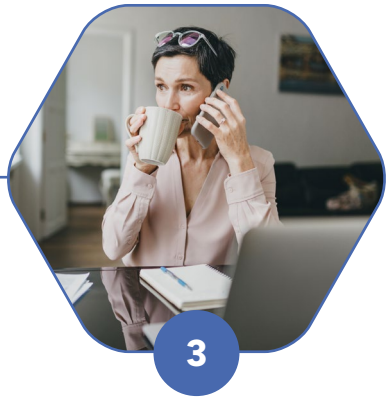
16% experience Restless Leg Syndrome.[4,9]

Ways to Improve Your Sleep During Menopause

Movement, light, and morning eating signal daytime for the brain, while quiet, darkness, and fasting in the evening signal rest.[4]







STAY ON TOP OF EXERCISING

- ✓ **Incorporate movement** into your daily routine.
- ✓ Activities such as **walking, running and gardening** can reduce stress and improve sleep quality.[4]
- ✓ **Stretching or gentle yoga before bed** may help hot flashes, night sweats and sleep.[11]

FOCUS ON NUTRITION

- ✓ **Quality**, quantity and timing of meals can impact sleep.
- ✓ **Foods to include:** Colorful plant foods rich in fiber such as berries, dark leafy greens, lentils and soy (tofu, tempeh).
- ✓ **Foods to limit:** Refined flour and sugar, such as pastries, and high-fat foods such as fried foods and fatty meats.
- ✓ **Make dinner your smallest meal** and aim to eat at least 2–3 hours before bedtime.
- ✓ **Reduce caffeine** (coffee, chocolate and some teas) and consider not having caffeine after noon.

REDUCE OR AVOID ALCOHOL[8]

- ✓ **Worsens snoring** and sleep apnea.
- ✓ **Increases hot flashes** and night sweats.
- ✓ **Irritates the bladder,** increasing the need to go to the bathroom at night.
- ✓ **Causes more frequent awakenings** and less deep sleep.
- ✓ **Causes or worsens reflux** or heartburn.[8]
- ✓ **May cause** weight gain or increased anxiety.



Final Tips for Improving Sleep during Menopause[1]

PARTICIPATE IN CALMING ACTIVITIES

Calming activities such as adding a wind-down routine, taking a bath, journaling or meditation may reduce stress and improve sleep quality.[4]

AVOID SCREENS

Avoid screens (TV, phone and computers) for at least 1–2 hours before bedtime, and keep your bedroom dark, quiet and cool.

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for insomnia, in partnership with a sleep psychologist, can improve getting to sleep and staying asleep for many women. CBT may also improve hot flashes.[12,13]

TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

If you continue to have sleep concerns, talk to your doctor about additional tools and possible referral to a sleep specialist.