



NUTRITION IN MENOPAUSAL WOMEN: A NARRATIVE REVIEW

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Menopause is the permanent cessation of menstrual cycles following the loss of ovarian follicular activity. It is associated with increased prevalence of obesity, metabolic syndrome, cardiovascular disease, and osteoporosis. The aim of this narrative review was to discuss the current evidence on the association between dietary patterns and clinical endpoints in postmenopausal women (body composition, bone mass, and risk markers for cardiovascular disease), and thereby providing novel insight into the establishment of optimal dietary guidelines for healthy postmenopausal period. Research shows that: - the changes in weight and fat distribution in women are associated with aging and mainly with the decrease in oestradiol levels during peri- and post-menopause. - calcium, vitamin D, vitamin K, selenium, magnesium, and beta-carotene adequate intake could be linked with better BMD in postmenopausal women. - diet is a major modifiable risk factor for cardiovascular disease and could be a powerful intervention to reduce cardiovascular risks in postmenopausal women. - the Mediterranean diet is composed of healthy foods that have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Authors indicate that future studies evaluating the effects of low-fat, plant-based diets on fat mass in post-menopausal women are needed.

DIET TO REDUCE THE METABOLIC SYNDROME ASSOCIATED WITH MENOPAUSE. THE LOGIC FOR OLIVE OIL

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Metabolic syndrome (MetS) is a group of risk factors that increase the risk of type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The rates of MetS are increasing worldwide. Obesity, particularly central obesity is a major determinant of insulin resistance. It is believed that insulin resistance is the driver for MetS. This is a particular concern for women as central obesity is more likely to occur during the menopause due, in part, to hormonal changes. Physical activity and nutrition have been recommended as the first line of defence against MetS with the Mediterranean diet (MD) being one of the healthiest options. Olive oil (OO) is a main component of the MD and contains certain fats and polyphenols which impact inflammation, oxidative stress and support the gut microbiome. This review provides an overview of these benefits most relevant to menopause-associated MetS. A healthy lifestyle, with nutrition is a vital component. The healthy diet needs to be easy to follow and effective, two conditions successfully met by the MD. OO may prove especially helpful for women, particularly during this life stage. The clinical evidence, however, is limited by the observational nature of most studies.



PROBIOTIC SUPPLEMENTS AND BONE HEALTH IN POSTMENOPAUSAL WOMEN: A META-ANALYSIS OF RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIALS

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Osteoporosis is a disease where bone density is decreased and is often seen in postmenopausal women. Current prescribed treatments are costly and can often have serious side effects and as a result natural treatments are often requested. Probiotics have been shown in previous studies to be of benefit to bones, however no large review of all the available studies has been performed. This systematic review and meta-analysis of current randomised control trials (RCT's) aimed to summarise the effect of probiotics on bone density in postmenopausal women. The results showed that only five RCT's were available on the effect of probiotics on bone density of which there were 497 postmenopausal women. Bone density at the base of the spine was increased in women taking probiotics, however there was no difference seen in bone density of the hip. Bone markers for bone degradation were decreased, however other markers associated with bone density changes were unaffected. It was concluded that probiotics may increase bone density at the base of the spine, however more high-quality studies are needed. This study could be used by healthcare professionals to understand how probiotics may be of benefit to postmenopausal women, however definitive recommendations based on this study may need to be made with caution.



MENOPAUSE-ASSOCIATED LIPID METABOLIC DISORDERS AND FOODS BENEFICIAL FOR POSTMENOPAUSAL WOMEN.

Ko, SH ; Kim, HS
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Menopause is the absence of menstruation due to the loss of ovarian activity with ageing. During this transition period, changes in hormones, primarily the decline in the oestrogen estradiol, give rise to altered lipid metabolism. An unfavourable lipid profile presents a risk for metabolic disorders, such as cardiovascular diseases and type 2 diabetes. Post-menopausal changes also lead to shifts in body fat and fat distribution, resulting in an increased tendency for central fat accumulation and obesity. Obesity is associated with insulin resistance. This susceptibility for weight accumulation is possibly also driven by the age-associated decline in skeletal muscle, which reduces metabolic energy expenditure. This review summarizes the physiology of menopause and postmenopause and the consequential impact on lipid metabolism. In addition, there is a discussion of dietary recommendations, nutritional and plant-derived compounds that could support the management of menopause associated changes in lipid levels, metabolic risk factors and obesity. The recommendations discussed include traditional healthy diets and low-calorie diets, with attention drawn to adequate protein intake. Furthermore, the role of probiotics, nutritional and plant-sourced constituents are considered, including Vitamin D, Omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants like Vitamin A, β -carotene, Vitamin C and E, genistein, resveratrol, flavonoids, indoles and capsaicin. The authors advocate sourcing these compounds from a varied whole-foods diet, which would minimize nutrient interactions and absorption issues that can occur with supplementation. This review may be of interest to those supporting the nutritional needs of menopausal and post-menopausal women, that are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing metabolic disorders.

