

# Metabolic Pathway in Menopause

## Purity Health Patient Information Leaflet

### Understanding Hormones, Weight Gain and Inflammation

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#### Overview

Weight gain in midlife is not simply about calories. It is driven by changes in hormones, metabolism, the brain, and the immune system.

If you do not address these, weight loss becomes difficult and often frustrating.

#### Sex Hormones and Metabolism

Sex hormones play a central role in how your body manages energy:

- **Estrogen** supports insulin sensitivity, fat distribution, brain function, and inflammation control
- **Progesterone** calms the nervous system and helps stabilise immune responses, including mast cells
- **Testosterone** supports muscle mass, energy, and metabolic rate

These hormones work together to maintain balance.

#### What Happens in Perimenopause

As you enter perimenopause:

- Estrogen begins to fluctuate
- Ovulation becomes irregular
- Progesterone levels drop
- Hormonal balance becomes unstable

This is where many symptoms begin.

### Insulin Dysregulation

Estrogen helps your body respond properly to insulin.

When estrogen fluctuates or declines:

- Insulin sensitivity reduces
- Blood sugar becomes unstable
- The body stores more fat, especially around the abdomen

This is a key driver of midlife weight gain.

### Appetite and Hunger Hormones

Hormonal changes affect hunger regulation:

- **Ghrelin** increases → more hunger
- **Leptin** becomes less effective → reduced satiety
- **CCK and PYY** signals reduce → delayed fullness

This leads to:

- Increased cravings
- “Food noise”
- Difficulty controlling portions

### Brain and Sleep Hormones

- **Cortisol** dysregulation → stress and fat storage
- **Melatonin** disruption → poor sleep
- **Serotonin** changes → mood and appetite shifts

Poor sleep and stress amplify metabolic dysfunction.

### Gut Microbiome Changes

Estrogen helps regulate the gut microbiome.

When estrogen declines:

- Gut bacteria change
- Digestion and metabolism are affected
- Inflammation increases

### Inflammation and Weight Gain

Lower estrogen increases inflammatory activity.

This leads to:

- Slower metabolism
- Increased fat storage
- Low energy
- Increased cravings

At the basis of many weight challenges in menopause is **chronic inflammation**.

### Immune System and Histamine Pathway

Women naturally have a more reactive immune system.

Mast cells act as the body's "guard dogs" and release histamine.

- **Estrogen can activate mast cells**
- **Progesterone helps stabilise them**

When ovulation reduces:

- Progesterone drops
- Mast cells become more active
- Histamine increases

This contributes to:

- Inflammation
- Gut symptoms
- Fatigue
- Brain fog
- Skin issues

This is why some women develop symptoms consistent with **MCAS or histamine intolerance** in midlife

## Metabolic Lifestyle Approach

### Intermittent Fasting / Time-Restricted Eating

Supporting metabolism requires giving the body time to reset.

- Start with **16:8 fasting (16 hours fasting, 8-hour eating window)**
- Avoid constant grazing
- Allow insulin levels to fall between meals

This improves:

- Insulin sensitivity
- Fat burning
- Appetite regulation

### The 75% Plate Approach

Structure your meals simply:

- **75% plant-based, water-rich, high-fibre foods**
- **25% protein and healthy fats**

This supports:

- Gut health
- Satiety
- Blood sugar stability

### Low Carbohydrate Approach

Reducing excess carbohydrates helps:

- Lower insulin levels
- Reduce cravings
- Improve metabolic flexibility

Focus on:

- Whole, unprocessed foods
- Minimising sugars and refined carbohydrates

## Simple Nutrition Principle

Follow this:

**Eat food**  
**Mostly plants**  
**Not too much**

Keep it simple, consistent, and sustainable.

## Key Insight

Weight gain in menopause is not just about food.

It is driven by:

- Hormonal imbalance
- Insulin resistance
- Appetite dysregulation
- Gut changes
- Immune activation
- Chronic inflammation

## Clinical Approach

Effective management requires:

- Supporting sex hormone balance
- Addressing insulin resistance
- Regulating appetite hormones
- Restoring gut health
- Reducing inflammation
- Considering the histamine pathway

## Conclusion

Weight management in menopause is not about restriction.

It is about restoring balance.

When hormones, metabolism, and the immune system are supported together, the body begins to respond again.

**Best Wishes**

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 Dr Purity Menopause Reset  
Dr Purity Carr GPs Menopause Doctor, 10:10 Women's  
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**Weight Management and Metabolic Reset**

**Skool:** <https://www.skool.com/menopause-momentum-network-3083/about>