

GUIDE FOR WOMEN AGE 40 AND OVER (40 TO 55)

Mid-life crisis, the big 4-0, whatever you call it, many people see their 40th birthday as a major turning point in their lives. But why all the fuss? Is it about saying goodbye to their youth? What is really going on? According to researchers in the U.S., this phenomenon occurs between the ages of 37 and 48, in both women and men.

For women, turning 40 means they only have a few years left before menopause. They hear the clock ticking and this creates a sense of urgency, a feeling that they have to act before it's too late. It's as though their 40th birthday sets off an alarm, leading some women to decide to take charge of their lives or to achieve goals they've been putting off for a long time.

But how to maintain a balanced lifestyle? This guide covers everything from nutrition and exercise to routine medical exams and body care to help you stay zen and full of energy through your forties!

TABLE of Contents

WEIGHT GAIN, HEALTHY WEIGHT, NUTRITION,	
EXERCISE—KEEPING IT SIMPLE.	4
TIP: STAY ACTIVEI	8
MY SKIN, HAIR, NAILS—THEY'RE ALL STARTING TO CHANGE!	12
STAYING YOUNG AND, ABOVE ALL, HEALTHY!	21
HORMONE THERAPY IN ALL ITS FORMS	30
CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE: STAY ALERT, STAY HEALTHY!	34
BREAST CANCER: EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST MEANS OF CONTROL!	36
OSTEOPOROSIS: AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CUREI	42
STAYING YOUNG AND AT YOUR BEST!	44

WEIGHT LOSS, HEALTHY WEIGHT, NUTRITION, EXERCISE—

Keeping it simple

First, it's good to keep in mind that our bodies change throughout our lives. However, it's true that a woman's body changes more during certain periods. You've probably noticed that your figure changes to a greater extent during adolescence and around perimenopause (age 40 to 50 for most women).

Yes, but my body is changing shape now...

As each year passes, there are changes in the way a woman's body stores fat. Before menopause, fat mainly builds up around the hips. After menopause, fat is more likely to settle around the abdomen. You may gain five to nine pounds (two to three kilos) during this period.

Note!

The buildup of fat in the tummy area can be harmful to health.
So it's important to adopt a healthy lifestyle!

But why do we put on weight as we age?

Many reasons:

> Lower basal metabolic rate

> Hormonal changes

> Stress

> Poor eating habits

> Lack of exercise





WHAT DOES BASAL METABOLIC RATE MEAN?

Basal metabolic rate refers to the calories (energy) your body needs to burn to keep vital organs such as your heart and lungs operating when you're at rest. The **lower** your basal metabolic rate, the **higher** the risk of gaining weight. Men have a higher basal metabolic rate than women because their **muscle mass** is much greater. As we age, our muscle mass and the number of calories we burn at rest decrease.

When a woman enters menopause, the amount of estrogen (female hormone) circulating in the body decreases, which leads to a loss of muscle mass in the lower parts of the body. So if a woman doesn't change her eating habits, she will gain weight, because calories that are not burned are stored in the body as fat.

Ok! So how do I stay at my healthy weight?

First, watch out for "magic" slimming diets. Crash diets do not give lasting results. People who follow this type of diet lose weight fast, but they end up putting it back on and may even exceed their initial weight! Low-carb and high-protein diets can actually lead to nutritional deficiencies and be harmful to health.

It's better to stick to a balanced diet based on *Canada's Food Guide*, in other words a diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables, fish, and whole grains. Minimizing fried foods, deli meats, sweets, and refined grains is a great start! Opt for quality over quantity and pay attention to what your body is telling you—stop eating when you're no longer hungry!

TIP: Stay active!

The more muscle mass you have, the more energy your body uses to maintain it. Remember the notion of basal metabolic rate discussed above. Plus, being physically active reduces stress, another weight-gain factor.

It's no secret that physical exercise is good for people of all ages. Many people think that the only reason for exercising is to lose weight. However, daily exercise brings many more benefits that just improving your physical appearance. In addition to being in better shape and having more energy, you also reduce your risk of developing medical problems such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and osteoporosis. Staying active also affects your mood and can even prevent depression. In short, physical activity can improve your overall quality of life!

Everyone can do some form of exercise. The idea is to avoid setting overambitious goals. Find an activity that you like and set yourself realistic objectives. You don't have to join a fitness center. Find your own way of being active! Draw up a list of physical activities that you enjoy and choose ones that you can do easily.



THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGY RECOMMENDS THAT ADULTS AGE **18 TO 64** SHOULD EXERCISE ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:

- At least 150 minutes of moderate to intense exercise a week, broken up into periods of at least 10 minutes each. That represents 30 minutes a day for five days. Remember that the 30 minutes a day don't have to be done consecutively!
- > Do muscular exercises at least twice a week to strengthen your bones and muscles.

Exercising is all well and good . . . but how do I find the time?

Being over forty means that you're in an active phase of your life, at the peak of your career, and often with a full family life. So it's not easy to find time to exercise. Here are a few tips to increase your level of physical activity without noticing it:

- > Take the stairs instead of the elevator!
- > Park your car farther from your work or the supermarket.
- > Go out for a walk at lunch time, alone or with a co-worker.
- Agree with your partner to set aside one evening for physical activity. Book a babysitter for the entire season if necessary.
- > If you watch a lot of television, exercise during the ads!
- > Are your children involved in sports? Instead of just watching them during their swimming class or soccer practice, put on your running shoes and go for a brisk walk around the neighborhood.
- > Try to find a type of exercise the whole family enjoys. It's a great way to stay fit and spend quality time with the people you love!

Adopting an active lifestyle makes you feel better both physically and mentally and sets a good example for your children. You'll be surprised how quickly you begin to enjoy it, and soon you won't be able to do without it!

5 30 Health and Wellness Challenge

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU STAY ACTIVE:

- > Have you heard about the Health and Wellness Challenge?
 The Health and Wellness Challenge has become a major annual event.
 With over 1.2 million people signed up since its creation in 2005, as well as 525 participating municipalities in 2015 and hundreds of organizations promoting it, the Health and Wellness Challenge has become the biggest healthy lifestyle campaign in Quebec! The Health and Wellness Challenge is six weeks' worth of motivation to eat better, be more active, and establish a more balanced lifestyle . . . alongside thousands of Quebecers!
 healthchallenge.ca.
- > Kino-Québec: The goal of the Kino-Québec program is to help increase the wellbeing of Quebecers by promoting a physically active lifestyle.

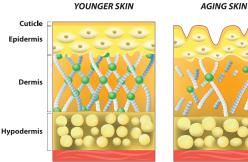
MY SKIN. MY HAIR. MY NAILS . . .

They're all starting to change!

SKIN

Your skin isn't just a barrier between the inside of your body and the outside. It's actually an organ in itself, made up of a number of distinct layers and specialized cells that carry out a multitude of functions. Your skin ages over time-its cells begin to change and no longer carry out their appointed tasks as well as they did before. For example, oil and sweat glands become less efficient, which leads to dry skin. The dermis, composed of three outer skin layers, starts to lose collagen and elasticity,

causing the skin to gradually hecome less firm



Around age 40, wrinkles start appearing in the form of lines on the forehead and crow's feet around the eyes. Wrinkles, age spots, and dry skin are all signs that your skin is aging. The aging process varies from one woman to another, based mainly on genetic disposition and lifestyle.



All this is kind of discouraging! How can I slow down the aging of my skin?

- > Avoid the sun. UVA and UVB rays cause serious damage to the skin and make it age faster.
- > Stop smoking! Women who don't smoke avoid wrinkles longer. Cigarette smoking promotes the development of premature wrinkles. Do you smoke? There are products to help you stop. Feel free to discuss them with your healthcare professional.
- Cleanse and moisturize your face. Cleansing your face twice a day with a mild soap removes residues that can damage the skin. Moisturizing your skin helps it stay supple and retain its elasticity.
- > We can't insist enough—adopt a healthy lifestyle!

 A healthy diet and regular exercise help nourish your skin and increase blood circulation.

Note!

Recommended minimum level of sunscreen: SPF 30. Apply 30 minutes BEFORE going out in the sun, and reapply every 2 hours or after swimming.



Did you know?

8 in 10 Canadians don't know that UVA and UVB rays are the main cause of visible changes to skin on the face, hands, and back.

Fighting wrinkles: What about BOTOX treatments?

To reduce or correct the onset of wrinkles, more and more people are turning to medical or esthetic treatments. You often hear of Botox Cosmetic $^{\text{TM}}$ injections. This product is a protein complex made from the bacteria *Clostridium botulinum*. This is the same bacteria that causes botulism, a serious form of food poisoning.

The procedure consists of injecting low doses of the product into the facial muscles, which become paralyzed and no longer contract! Since the muscles are relaxed, wrinkles are not as apparent. However, the effect doesn't last and the treatment must be repeated every three or four months.

Before deciding to undergo this type of treatment, it's important to be aware of the health risks. For example, injecting Botox Cosmetic[™] incorrectly can cause the following problems:

- > Paralysis of the face/local muscle weakness
- > Pain at the injection sites
- > Head aches

- > Irregular heart beat
- > General feeling of discomfort
- > Allergic reaction or skin rash

Health Canada specifies that "Botox Cosmetic[™] injections should only be given by a qualified healthcare provider, no more frequently than every two months." It's important to check with your healthcare professional before embarking on such an adventure!

Source: Health Canada, Injectable Cosmetic Products

Grey Hair Alert!

It is virtually impossible to know when hair will turn grey and why. The individual hairs are produced by hair follicles filled with cells (melanocytes) containing melanin, which are responsible for your hair's color. Over time, the hair follicles produce less and less melanin, causing the hair to turn grey. In fact, your hair simply loses its color.

Aging is not the only cause of grey hair. Health and heredity are also involved. If your parents had grey hair at a relatively young age, you are likely to as well. Your health can also play an important role. For example, a medical problem can reduce the amount of melanin in your hair.

Hair loss caused by certain medications can also reveal grey hair that had previously been hidden by darker hair. If you're concerned, check with your healthcare professional.



Did you know?

- Melanin is also responsible for skin color.
- > Women's hair start to turn grey around age 35.
- > Smoking tends to speed up the greying process.

Baldness, me? But I'm a woman!

Baldness is a thinning of the hair on the head. Women can in fact experience baldness or female alopecia. Actually, it's quite common. About 40% of women age 50 have this problem. We don't yet know what causes it, but genetics and hormones probably play a role. Hair loss can be a major esthetic problem for women, who tend to be more affected by it emotionally than men.

Depending on the cause, hair loss can be temporary or permanent. However, in the case of female baldness, the hair usually doesn't grow back. There are subscription medications that can slow hair loss or promote regrowth. For more information, ask your healthcare professional!

Did you know?

- > There are about 100,000 hairs on your head.
- > One hair takes about six years to grow before falling out.

Note!

Braids, pony tails, and other hair styles that pull the hair may break it. In the long run, this can lead to secondary hair loss caused by pulling on the scalp (traction alopecia).

I'm changing right down to my fingertips!

As you age, your nails tend to become more brittle, especially in women. Certain health problems such as hypothyroidism can make the nails more fragile. However, before jumping to a conclusion, examine how you treat your nails.

- > Do you regularly apply nail polish?
- > Are your hands and nails often exposed to strong detergents?
- > Do you always have your hands in water?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, simply adopt some preventive measures to improve the situation. Give your nails a rest! Avoid applying nail polish from time to time. Wear rubber gloves when doing housework and remember to moisturize your hands.

STAYING YOUNG ...

and above all, healthy!

It's inevitable, the risk of developing certain illnesses increases with age. What's more, certain stages in a woman's life are important factors contributing to the appearance of certain medical problems. This section will help you understand a number of issues and how to handle them.

Menopause

What is menopause?

Menopause is a normal stage in a woman's life that generally occurs around age 50. The ovaries stop producing eggs and female sex hormones, i.e., estrogen and progesterone. Menstruation stops, marking the end of a woman's reproductive period. A woman is considered to be menopausal once her period has stopped for at least 12 consecutive months.

Note!

Even though your ovaries no longer produce sex hormones, your body continues to produce them. Your adrenal glands and fat reserves release small quantities of estrogen.

What is perimenopause?

Perimenopause is the period **before menopause** and generally lasts **two to seven years**. During this time, the amount of hormones produced by your ovaries fluctuates, causing irregular ovulation and changes to the menstrual cycle. For example, you may get your period more often, you may bleed more or less, or you may skip a few periods.

A number of classic symptoms are caused by lower hormone levels, and they begin during perimenopause.

It's so hot!

When **hot flashes** occur, they often do so in the neck and face. However, they only last a few seconds to a few minutes. Some women have **night sweats**, characterized by heavy sweating over the whole body, making it hard to sleep and sometimes even soaking the sheets. These major discomforts are the main reason women seek medical advice. If necessary, your doctor can prescribe **hormone therapy** to help you control your symptoms. However, certain lifestyle habits, such as lowering the room temperature, using a fan, or cutting down on caffeine, alcohol, and spicy food can improve the situation. It has also been demonstrated that regular exercise reduces hot flashes.

I can't sleep!

The more you age, the more trouble you may have sleeping, both in terms of quality and length of sleep.

Here are a few tips to help you remedy the problem:

- > Exercise regularly, but avoid intense physical activity before going to bed.
- Moderate your consumption of caffeine, alcohol, and tobacco, especially before bedtime. Avoid eating a big meal or spicy food or drinking large amounts of liquids before turning in.
- > Try to relax! Use various relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and massage.
- Make sure that your environment is comfortable and conducive to sleep. Avoid extreme temperatures, loud noise, and light. It is recommended that you use your bedroom only for sleeping and sexual activities.
- Maintain a regular sleep schedule and avoid napping during the day. Sleep long enough to feel fit and alert.
- > If you don't fall asleep within **20 minutes**, leave your bedroom and do something relaxing. Go back to bed only when you feel sleepy.

If your quality of life is being affected by lack of sleep, there are medications that can help. For more information, ask your health professional.

Will all these changes affect my sex life?

Age-related changes to your sex life can appear in your forties. But don't panic! There's no expiry date on female sexuality. Some changes can even be positive. Some women in their forties find that their sex drive or libido increases because they are less constrained by factors like the fear of becoming pregnant, or interruptions by small children! Obviously, each person is different and will experience these changes in their own way. But understanding the how and why can help you handle them better.

Libido problems?

A person's sex drive has both a physical and an emotional component. Testosterone is responsible for triggering sexual desire, in women as well as men. It is quite normal to have less sex drive as you age, but you shouldn't experience any drastic changes in your sexual habits. If your libido wanes, try spicing up your lovemaking a bit! However, keep in mind that certain health problems can affect your sexual activity so don't hesitate to check with your healthcare professional.

Most sexual disorders start with a purely physical problem. Keeping this situation to yourself can lead to psychological problems such as stress, anxiety, and even guilt toward your partner. It's important to talk to a healthcare professional so they can help you find a solution.

Here are two age-related obstacles to sexual activity:

> Medication

Unfortunately, some types of medication can have a negative effect on sex drive or cause vaginal dryness. If you have questions on the subject, take the time to ask your healthcare professional.

> Reduced lubrication

Vaginal lubrication can occur more slowly as menopause and perimenopause reduce the amount of estrogen circulating in a woman's body. This hormone has an important impact on vaginal lubrication and elasticity during sexual relations. The lack of lubrication can cause pain during sex, causing some women to avoid the activity all together.

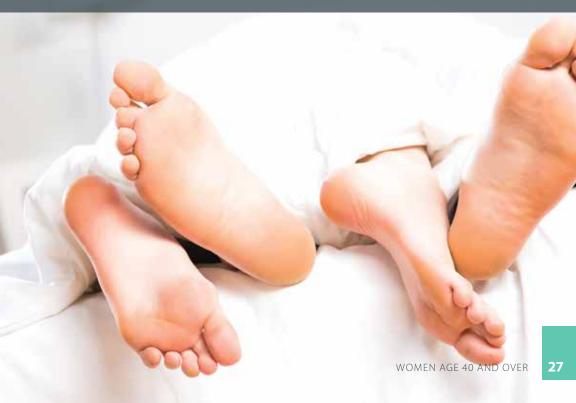


There are solutions for vaginal dryness:

- > **Having an active sex life.** Regular sexual activity with penetration helps maintain vaginal elasticity and lubrication.
- > Emphasizing foreplay. Take more time for the preliminaries, enjoying sexual games and more prolonged caresses. This will give your body time to become excited and receptive.
- > Over-the-counter vaginal lubricants. Lubricants provide rapid, short-term relief and reduce friction and discomfort during sex. They can be applied directly to the penis or in the vagina.
- > Over-the-counter vaginal moisturizers. These products moisturize the vagina for a longer period. They must be applied two or three times a week. They are designed to increase daily comfort, but should not be used during sex. However, they are compatible with vaginal lubricants.
- > Vaginal estrogens (available with a doctor's prescription). This type of product may be recommended to women who are going through perimenopause or menopause. It consists of a vaginal cream containing estrogens. Contact your healthcare professional for more information.

Did you know?

About 1 in 6 women will suffer from vaginal dryness during their lifetime.



Do hormonal changes always cause mood swings?

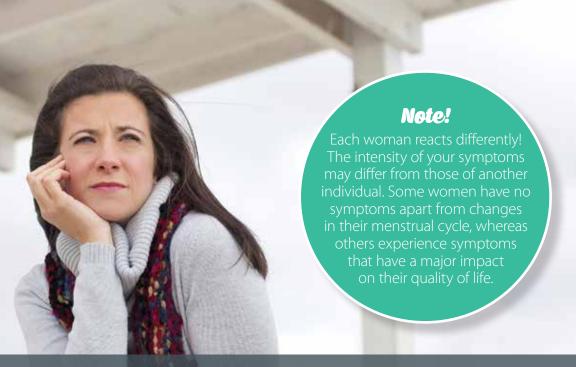
It's true that during perimenopause and menopause women tend to me more emotionally vulnerable. You may be more irritable than usual, cry more easily, be more anxious, have mood swings more frequently, and feel less energetic and motivated. Some women also have symptoms of depression. A doctor may suggest hormone therapy to improve your quality of life and moderate these mood swings.

Do I really need medication?

About 25% of women say that their symptoms affect their quality of life. If this is the case for you, your doctor may suggest pharmaceutical solutions like **hormone therapy** to reduce your symptoms.

What is hormone therapy? How does it work?

Hormone therapy, also known as **hormone replacement therapy**, consists of boosting your body's levels of sex hormones such as estrogen and progesterone, which are produced in smaller amounts during perimenopause and menopause. This treatment rebalances your body's hormone levels and may eliminate some of your troublesome symptoms.



Did you know?

Hormone therapy is the most effective treatment

for vasomotor symptoms, otherwise known as hot flashes!

HORMONE THERAPY

in all its forms

Patches? Tablets? Gels? Injections? How to choose?

Hormones are available in various forms. However, tablets, capsules, patches, gels, and injections are all equally effective. So it's up to you to choose, with your doctor's help, the treatment form you prefer.

Are there any contraindications to hormone therapy?

Before starting hormone therapy, your doctor will assess whether it's safe to prescribe it for you and check whether you have any contraindications:

- > Personal history of breast cancer or endometriosis
- > A history of thrombophlebitis (blood clot in a vein)
- > A history of stroke
- > Some types of migraines
- > Unexplained vaginal bleeding

Note!

Don't worry if you still have symptoms for a few days after starting hormone therapy. It can take several weeks before you notice any significant improvement. However, if your symptoms persist for several weeks, make sure you consult your healthcare professional.

If you have one or more of these contraindications, don't worry, other options are available. Ask your healthcare professional about them!

True or false?

Hormones will make me gain weight.

FALSE! Your body reacts differently as you age and your body fat is redistributed. So it's not the hormones that lead to weight gain, but the aging process itself.

Hormone therapy makes skin age more slowly.

FALSE! Hormone therapy does not prevent aging. Therefore you may still see signs that your skin is aging.

Hormone therapy causes venous thromboembolisms.

What is a venous thromboembolism (VTE)?

It's a blood clot in a vein that impedes blood circulation and may cause pain, redness, and swelling in the affected member. The blood clot generally occurs in a leg, but may also be found in the lungs. In the latter case, it's called a pulmonary embolism.

TRUE! It's true that hormone therapy leads to a higher risk of VTE, but only during the first two years after starting the treatment. The risk then returns to normal. However, age significantly influences this risk. In fact, the risk doubles

every ten years. So women in their sixties are twice as likely to have a VTE, whereas the risk is four times as great in women age 70 to 79. Obesity also doubles the risk.

Hormone therapy causes breast cancer.

FALSE! It has been demonstrated that after four to five years of using a combination of estrogens and progesterone, patients have 0.08 times more chance of developing breast cancer than women who do not take hormones. As you can see, the risk is negligible. So don't worry, the risk of developing breast cancer due to hormone therapy is **very low**.

What about using natural health products for menopause?

A number of natural health products are available and are purported to have positive effects on some menopause symptoms. The most commonly used products are black cohosh, ginseng, and phytoestrogens found mainly in the form of isoflavones in soy and lignans in flax seed.

There are very few studies available on the efficacy, safety, and long-term use of these products. So it's preferable to consume them in moderation and as recommended by your healthcare professional. Only products containing phytoestrogens and black cohosh seem to provide **certain** benefits and therefore may be used to treat **mild symptoms** at the **beginning of menopause**. However, natural health products may interact with prescription medications. So it's always a good idea to check with your healthcare professional before using them. Furthermore, just because these products are natural, it doesn't mean they are free of side effects. Natural health products can cause adverse effects just like medications.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE:

Stay alert. Stay healthy!

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among women in the Western world. That's why you should see your doctor about once a year. The best way to prevent this problem? You guessed it, **a healthy lifestyle!**

What is high blood pressure?

Blood pressure simply refers to the pressure your blood exerts on the walls of your arteries. It is a ratio between two values, systolic pressure (when your heart contracts) and diastolic pressure (when your heart is at rest). The ideal blood pressure ratio is around 120/80 mm Hg. People with higher blood pressure ratios (generally 140/90 mm Hg) are generally considered to have **high blood pressure**. This condition is a risk factor for developing other cardiovascular problems such as heart attacks and strokes. High blood pressure is called a silent disease because it presents no symptoms. The only way to tell if you have this condition is to measure your blood pressure at different times of the day. So it is important to make sure your health professional takes your blood pressure.

What about high blood cholesterol?

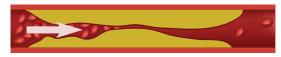
Blood cholesterol is a type of fat your cells and brain need to function properly. However, there is good cholesterol and bad cholesterol. Bad cholesterol causes the formation of plaque that can block your arteries. Too much cholesterol is bad for your health. Like high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels are a major cardiovascular risk factor. If you have too much bad cholesterol in your blood, some of it can stick to the walls of your arteries, resulting in a blockage called **artherosclerosis**. Your doctor can prescribe a blood test to measure cholesterol levels in your blood.

Normal Artery



Normal blood flow

Atherosclerosis Artery



Plaque narrows Artery Obstacle to Blood Flow

BREAST CANCER:

Early detection is the best means of control!

Cancer is one of the main causes of death in Canada. It is estimated that two in five Canadians will develop cancer during their lifetime. Although the most common forms are lung, colon, and rectal cancer, **the most common form in women is breast cancer**. In Quebec, about 6,000 new cases are reported each year.

True or false?

Breast cancer affects only women age 50 to 69.

FALSE! About 30% of cases reported in Canada are diagnosed in women age 70 and over, while 18% are found in women age 49 and under. So it is very important to start monitoring breast health as early as possible.



Did you know?

About 5% to 10% of breast cancer cases are hereditary.



The **Québec Breast Cancer Screening Program (QBCSP)** was set up in the late 1990s and has significantly improved cancer care.

What is the Québec Breast Cancer Screening Program?

The Québec Breast Cancer Screening Program offers women age **50 to 69** the opportunity to have a mammogram every two years to check for breast cancer. The main objective is to detect early, smaller tumors that are not necessarily causing symptoms. This makes it possible to quickly start treatment to prevent tumors from growing and spreading throughout the body, and thus lower death rates. If you are age 50 or over, you have probably received a letter inviting you to participate in the program. The letter is actually a prescription, so you should bring it with you when you go for your mammogram.

What should I do if I haven't turned 50 yet? If you're between age 40 and 49, you are not yet eligible for the QBCSP However, you can choose to have a mammogram, with the agreement of your doctor, who will assess your risk of developing breast cancer and if it is appropriate, give you a prescription.

Since breast cancer can develop over a number of years with no signs or symptoms, monitoring, screening, and prevention are key. Three good health practices are recommended:

1: Breast self-examination

This consists of regularly examining your breasts visually and with your fingers. You and your partner should be alert to any abnormality. The objective is to detect signs of cancer such as lumps, inflammation, redness, heat, changes in skin colour, discharge from the nipple, etc. If you see any changes and they persist, tell your doctor without delay.

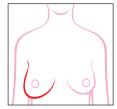
2. Medical breast examination

At your regular checkup, your doctor should check your breasts to detect any changes.

Symptoms to look for:



A palpable lump in the breast



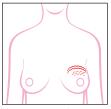
Unusual change in breast size and shape



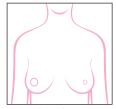
Thickening or other change in skin texture



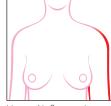
Unusual redness of the skin or more visible veins



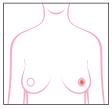
Flattening or indentation of the breast



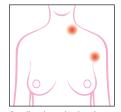
Inverted nipple



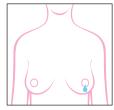
Unusual inflammation (swelling) in the arm



Changes in the skin on the nipple



Swollen lymph glands



Discharge from the nipple

3. Go for a mammogram

What is a mammogram?

A mammogram lasts about a minute. You sit or stand in front of the mammography machine, and a nurse places your breast between two plastic plates to flatten it. You are then asked to remain immobile. Very low-dose X rays are projected through your breast tissue in order to obtain images of its internal structure. These steps are then repeated on your other breast.

The mammograms will be analyzed by a radiologist, who will then send them to both you and your doctor.

True or false?

X rays can cause breast cancer.

FALSE! It has been proven that the amount of radiation received during mammography is insufficient to cause cancer. In fact, it's comparable to three months' exposure to naturally occurring radiation.

OSTEOPOROSIS:

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

Certain nutrients are essential to women's health. These include **calcium and vitamin D**, which are the key to having strong bones.

Estrogens also protect your bones. Menopausal women, who produce less estrogen, are more at risk of losing bone mass and eventually developing osteoporosis.

What is osteoporosis?

Osteoporosis weakens your bone structure, increasing the risk of fractures. Your doctor may have you take a number of tests to assess the strength and quality of your bones. Depending on the results, he or she will advise you on strategies to adopt and may also prescribe medication.

How do I make sure my bones stay strong?

First, make sure you take in enough calcium and vitamin D. Since diet rarely provides enough of these nutrients, you will probably need to take supplement. Starting at age 50, it's recommended that you consume a total of 1,200 mg of calcium and 800 to 2,000 IUs of vitamin D a day.



If you have not already done so, you should start an exercise program and limit your consumption of alcohol (less than two glasses/day) and coffee (less than four cups/day). If you smoke, this is another good reason to stop!

Did you know?

- > Nearly 80% of people in the Western world are deficient in vitamin D!
- > Hormone therapy also **protects** your bones!

STAYING YOUNG ...

and at your best!

Because a picture is worth a thousand words . . .

Here's a summary of the symptoms of menopause and aging you may be observing in your body.

_	
1 Hair	Some grey hair may start appearing, if it has not already done so. Your hair may be getting thinner, and in some cases, hair loss may occur.
2 Eyes	With age, the tear duct system that keeps your eyes moist becomes less efficient, so some women may develop dry eyes.
3 Breasts	Women become more at risk for developing breast cancer as they age, especially after the age of 50. The ligaments that hold the breasts in place also stretch, which can cause them to sag.



4	Heart	Lower estrogen levels put older women at risk for cardiovascular disease. Arteries lose their elasticity and the body usually builds up fat, which also increases the risk of heart disease.
5	Skin	Skin cells do not function as well, so they lose elasticity and firmness. The skin is more likely to develop wrinkles and age spots. Dry skin is also common.
6	Nails	Nails may become more fragile and brittle.
7	Tummy	Your basal metabolic rate decreases with age, which promotes weight gain. Fat may accumulate, especially around the tummy area.
8	Genital area	Lower estrogen levels reduce lubrication of the vagina, sometimes causing vaginal dryness. Women may experience symptoms such as pain during sex and are more likely to develop vaginal or urinary infections.
9	Bones	Lower estrogen levels may also increase bone loss. More fragile bones can lead to osteoarthritis or osteoporosis.



Feeling reassured and more confident about this new phase in your life? Now that you know how to stay zen through your forties, you simply have to put the necessary strategies into action. Remember that adopting a healthy lifestyle is the key to success! It will spare you a lot of problems and enable you to take full advantage of the years ahead.

For more information, ask your healthcare professional.



Sources

 $http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/eating-nutrition/food-guide-aliment/my-guide-mon-guide/mfg_p1-eng.php\\$

http://csep.ca/English/view.asp?x=1

Canadian Dermatology Association

www.familiprix.com/en

www.sexualityandu.ca

SOGC (Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada)

Canadian Cancer Statistics 2014

Quebec Breast Cancer Foundation

Public Health Agency of Canada



IN THIS guide

WEIGHT GAIN, HEALTHY WEIGHT, NUTRITION, EXERCISE—KEEPING IT SIMPLE.
TIP: STAY ACTIVEI
MY SKIN, HAIR, NAILS—THEY'RE ALL STARTING TO CHANGEI
STAYING YOUNG AND, ABOVE ALL, HEALTHYI
HORMONE THERAPY IN ALL ITS FORMS
CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE: STAY ALERT, STAY HEALTHYI
BREAST CANCER: EARLY DETECTION IS THE BEST MEANS OF CONTROLI
OSTEOPOROSIS: AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CUREI
STAYING YOUNG AND AT YOUR BEST!

Only pharmacists are responsible for pharmacy practice. They provide related services only on behalf of a pharmacist/owner and use various tools such as the PSST! (Plan to Stay in Shape Today) program tools.

