

## Self-Help Techniques

### Bach Flower Remedies

These remedies have no side-effects, you can take more than one at the same time and they can be taken with other forms of treatments including herbs and homeopathy.

- **Rescue Remedy** - This is a mixture of 5 essences to help cope with all stresses and emergencies, from great sorrow to bad news and accidents. If stress is acute increase dose to 2-3 drops in all drink
- **Larch** – lack of confidence
- **Olive** - If you are fatigued, exhausted and drained of energy from the long-term effects of the menopause, which has sapped your vitality
- **Walnut** - is for those experiencing a life change of any kind - puberty, menopause, house move or a job change

### Aromatherapy

- Use a few drops of essential oil on a compress, hanky or on your pillow. Be careful not to apply neat essential oils to the skin (except Lavender or Tea Tree).
- Heat diluted essential oil in an oil burner.
- Inhale as a vapour. Add 3 drops of essential oil to a bowl of steaming water. Lean your head over the bowl; cover your head and the bowl with a towel and inhale deeply.
- Massage - Use 50ml Sweet Almond oil, jojoba oil or evening primrose oil as the base oil and add 10 drops of the essential oil you require (1ml = 20 drops).
- Add a few drops of diluted essential oil (as above) to a warm bath and relax. Spend at least 15 minutes in the bath.

## Helpful essential oils:

Essential Oil	Symptom
Basil, Lemon	Fatigue
Bergamot	Mood enhancing, uplifting
Clary Sage, Rose, Geranium	Depressed mood
Cypress	Strengthens nervous system, restores calm
Geranium, Rose	Heavy periods
Geranium, Sandalwood	Dry skin
Juniper, Lavender	Muscle and joint pain
Lavender, Peppermint	Headaches
Lemongrass, Ylang-ylang	Premenstrual symptoms
Neroli, Lavender, Frankincense	Insomnia
Roman Chamomile	Hot flushes

### Reflexology

Evidenced-based research has shown reflexology to be effective in helping reduce the effects of the menopause and generally improving hormonal balance. A course of treatments can potentially help support you through many aspects including those which can be more emotionally upsetting, i.e., anxiety, panic attacks, depression, insomnia, mood swings, indecisiveness, forgetfulness and fatigue.

Using a specialised system of touch and working on the reflexes of the feet or hands can influence systems and areas of the body, helping maintain balance, calming and aiding relaxation whilst facilitating the body's own innate self-healing capacity.

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## Complementary Health Approaches

for

Dealing with

Hormonal Change

Patient Information

[www.rowanholistichealth.co.uk](http://www.rowanholistichealth.co.uk)

The menopause can prove a challenging time of change. Minimising the impact is important in enabling you to travel through this transitional time with the least disruption as possible. There are many ways in which you can effectively support yourself and this leaflet includes information on some of the complementary approaches that may be considered.

The more gradually you go through this stage, the fewer hormone fluctuations you experience. Maintaining a balanced diet, healthy lifestyle, and reducing stress levels plays an important part in making the transition smoother.

### Supplements

Taking the appropriate supplements and herbs throughout the menopause can make a substantial difference to how you feel physically and emotionally.

#### Vitamins and Minerals

A good multivitamin and mineral supplement designed for women, which includes boron

**Vitamin C** with bioflavonoids (1000mg per day) - beneficial for the immune system, strengthening blood vessels and also for its role as an antioxidant in the body. Bioflavonoids has been shown to help reduce hot flushes. Vitamin C helps to build up collagen which gives skin its elasticity and it is therefore helpful in the prevention and treatment of vaginal dryness (which can cause discomfort when the vagina loses some of its 'stretch'). It can also help retain the elasticity in the urinary tract and so prevent leakage or stress incontinence, which is common at the menopause. Collagen is also important for your bones.

**Vitamin E** (400iu per day) - helps protect against heart disease also clinical studies have shown its effect on reducing hot flushes.

**Calcium** (500mg per day) – essential for bone health  
**B complex** (50mg per day) - good at stressful times, helps reduce anxiety, irritability, depression, tension  
**Magnesium** (300mg per day) - important for your bones at the menopause so it is important that you have enough in your body. Also known as 'nature's tranquilliser', so it will help with symptoms such as anxiety, irritability and other mood changes.

**Calcium citrate** (500mg per day) - good levels required for our bones, teeth, nails and hair, but also for healthy heart rhythm and blood pressure. It is also needed for normal blood clotting, muscle contraction, relaxation and proper functioning of the nervous system

**Zinc** (15mg per day) – good for immune function and calcium absorption, also hair and nails

**Omega 3 oils** (EPA 700mg, DHA 500mg) - can help with many of the symptoms; dry skin, lifeless hair, cracked nails, fatigue, depression, dry eyes, lack of motivation, aching joints, difficulty in losing weight, forgetfulness, breast pain.

**Vitamin D** - required for calcium absorption, but it also plays many other important roles including prevention of cancer, especially breast cancer, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis. Having good levels of vitamin D can help slow down the ageing process and low levels have been implicated in autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus and inflammatory bowel disease.

### Helpful Herbs

**Agnus castus** (Chasteberry) – has a balancing effect on hormones. Good for mood swings, anxiety and tension. Dose: Up to 300-550mg per day

*Caution: not to be used by those taking hormonal medications, including the pill and those who are pregnant.*

**Chamomile** – helpful for restful sleep, used as a tea

**Don Quai** – helpful for hot flushes, night sweats, fatigue and disturbed sleep. Dose: 150-250mg per day

**Ginkgo Biloba** – enhances memory function and concentration. Dose: Up to 120mg per day

**Milk Thistle** (Silymarin marianum) – improves liver function, helping detoxify hormones.

Dose: Up to 130mg per day

**Red clover** – helpful for hot flushes and night sweats.

*Caution: not advised if on blood thinning medication or if a history of breast cancer*

**Sage** (Salvia officianalis) – helpful in controlling hot flushes and night sweats. Traditionally thought to possess the ability to rebalance the sweat-regulating mechanism in the brain. Can be taken as a tea or now available in table form.

**Siberian Ginseng** – good female tonic. Boosts immune system and helps combat stress.

Dose: 100-300mg per day

**Valerian** – for stress, anxiety and aids sleep.

### Note on Histamine

Hot flushes may sometimes be triggered by histamine surges—a chemical produced in response to stress and/or the ingestion of foods or drinks to which you are sensitive. Being mindful of the amounts of tea & coffee consumed along with adjustment of a stressful lifestyle can help reduce high histamine levels. Nettle tincture or tea plus regular doses of vitamin C can both be used as antihistamine remedies.