



Nutritious Foods

Women over 40 Need to Eat

I have many clients in their forties, and they all seem to be struggling with the same issues when they come to me for advice. They tell me that their clothing does not fit the way it used to and that they have lost the energy they once had in their twenties and thirties. They don't understand why these things are happening when they haven't changed their diet and exercise routines. But that, in fact, is the problem. Once you hit your forties, loss of muscle and hormonal changes cause you to burn fewer calories at rest. Due to the decrease in metabolism, your body can change rapidly if you don't make adjustments to your lifestyle.

Here are the four nutrients you should stock up on when updating your current diet. (Hint: they are all plant-heavy.) In order to get the nutrients that are most essential to you at this age while also maintaining a healthy weight, you might want to consider adopting a vegetarian diet. It may help to minimize or stave off weight gain caused by a decrease in metabolism.

This type of diet will also ensure plenty of calcium to combat the increased risk of osteoporosis. Here, the powerful nutrients every 40-year-old woman needs most:

1. Calcium/Vitamin D

Due to changes in your hormones, vitamin D levels tank around age 40 and absorption of calcium decreases. That's why it's so important to make sure you're taking vitamin D along with your calcium. Proper levels of vitamin D will ensure the best absorption of calcium. The best sources of calcium include sardines (you'll get omega 3s through the fish and calcium through the bones), spinach, broccoli, kale, tofu, calcium-fortified cereals and animal-based sources such as low-fat milk, Greek yogurt and buttermilk. Most experts believe that the amount of vitamin D absorbed through food is inadequate and that supplements are really your best way to go. However, it's important to discuss vitamin D supplementation with your physician to find out the right amount for you.

2. Omega-3s

Now more than ever, you'll want to protect your heart. Eating foods high in fatty acids is a great way to do this. Most of us know that salmon and other marine animals provide a great source of fatty acids, but we can also consume plenty of plant-based omega-3-rich

(continued next page)



foods as well. A few of my favorites: hemp seeds, walnuts, cabbage, chia and tofu. You can also consume omega-3 fortified foods such as eggs or lean meats. If you can't work enough fatty acids into your diet, consider supplementing with DHA.

3. Low-Fat and High-Fiber

Metabolic rate significantly decreases when you hit your forties, and weight may creep up without warning even though your overall eating and exercise habits have not changed. Think plants! Grains such as quinoa, farro, spelt, buckwheat, oats, millet, amaranth and Freekeh are high in fiber and protein and lower in carbohydrates. Also consume plenty of fruits and veggies, especially raspberries, split peas and artichokes as well as legumes such as nuts, beans and lentils.

4. Zinc

Finally, you may want to determine if you're getting enough Zinc in your diet as well. Zinc has been found in several studies to protect immune function in aging. Zinc can be found in oysters, baked beans, cashews, fortified breakfast cereals (go for 100% whole grain cereals), low-fat yogurt, lean meat, poultry, eggs and legumes.

Remember to fill your kitchen with these highly nutritious foods so that they're there when you need them. Then go out and enjoy being active!

By: Kristin Kirkpatrick, MS, RD, LD



Reduce your risk of breast cancer with smart steps for whittling your middle.

While maintaining a healthy weight helps to protect against breast cancer, watching your waistline specifically may be one of the best ways to reduce your risk. Women who went up a skirt size between their twenties and age 50 were 33 percent more likely to get breast cancer after menopause than those whose waists didn't expand, according to a large study. Smart strategies that counteract the underlying problem, a condition called insulin resistance, can help you whittle your waist.

Go for slow food: "Shift your diet in the direction of high-fiber and protein-rich foods that you absorb more slowly," says Roxanne B. Sukol, MD, medical director of Cleveland Clinic Wellness. Get your carbohydrates in the form of vegetables, intact grains, legumes and fruit; avoid carbs that have been stripped of their fiber and nutrients (e.g., white breads and sugar); and include protein and nutritious fat at every meal.

Muscle up: Cardio-focused exercise is essential for overall weight loss, but resistance training is critical for insulin resistance. Start with two or three times a week.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors



Night moves!

Get your body and mind ready for sleep with this relaxing yoga pose.

Donning pj's, brushing teeth, and dimming lights are a good start. But to really get your relaxation on before bed, turn upside down. Legs Up the Wall pose — exactly what it sounds like — is a gentle inversion that calms the nervous system. "By actively disengaging the body mechanics required for forward motion, you signal to your body and mind that it's time to rest and relax," says Cleveland Clinic yoga therapist Judi Bar.

1. Sit on the floor with your left side against the wall. If you have any lower-back discomfort or general stiffness, place a folded blanket or firm bolster between your left hip and the wall.
2. Gently turn your body to the left, bringing your back to the floor and your legs up onto the wall. If you're using a blanket or bolster, adjust it so that it supports your lower back. Rest your head and shoulders on the floor. Use your hands for balance as you shift your weight from side to side, and scoot your bottom close to the wall.
3. Let your arms rest open at your sides, palms up. Encourage your hips and buttocks to relax, allowing the lower back to disengage. Close your eyes. Hold for 5 to 10 minutes, breathing deeply.
4. To release, slowly push yourself away from the wall and slide your legs down to the right side. Stay here for a moment, and then, moving slowly, use your hands to press yourself back up into a seated position.

By: Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors

Healthy Recipe: Minestrone with Farro

This recipe takes a classic Minestrone soup and turns it into a scrumptious one-dish wonder! We love this recipe's addition of delicious farro for its heartiness and nutty flavor. But even better is the mighty combination of cabbage, kidney beans, carrots, onion and tomatoes! That's a whole lot of cancer-fighting, cholesterol-lowering, energy-boosting ingredients packed into one super tasty meal. Serve it for dinner (it's a satisfying main dish) and watch how quickly everyone asks you to make it again!

By: Sara Quessenberry for Cleveland Clinic Wellness



Ingredients:

- 1 large yellow onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- 4 ribs celery
- 4 large carrots, peeled
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 15-ounce can whole tomatoes
- 6 cups water
- ½ cup farro
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- ½ of a head of savoy cabbage
- 15-ounce can (no-salt) kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- ¼ cup chopped fresh flat leaf parsley
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan

Instructions:

1. Chop the onion and garlic. Slice the celery in half lengthwise, then slice crosswise into small pieces. Do the same with the carrots. (You may have to quarter them lengthwise if the carrots are especially fat).
2. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until softened, 5 to 6 minutes. Add the garlic, celery, and carrots and cook, stirring often, until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes.
3. Stir in the tomato paste and let cook for 1 minute. Then add the tomatoes (break them up with your spoon as they cook), water, farro, thyme, salt, black pepper, and red pepper. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and let the soup simmer until the farro is tender, about 30 minutes.
4. Split the cabbage in half and remove the core. Then slice one-half of the cabbage head into ½-inch wide strips (about 4 cups). Add the cabbage and beans to the soup and simmer until the cabbage is tender, about 15 minutes. Stir in the parsley and serve topped with grated Parmesan.

Nutrition Info Per Serving:

(1 cup): 330 calories, 9 g protein, 52 g total carbohydrates, 9 g fiber, 18 g sugars, 0 mg cholesterol, 10 g total fat, 1.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 390 mg sodium

Yield: 4 servings