

## AGE RELATED WEIGHT GAIN IN FEMALES:

### How and What women should eat as they age

OK ladies, for many of us our weight has been a constant challenge to maintain. Now throw in aging and all heck breaks loose. But, I'm here to tell you that you can control your weight even as you age, but you have to be willing to make some changes. I can't tell you how many times I've heard statements like, "I used to be able to eat whatever and not gain an ounce, now it seems all I have to do is look at it and I gain weight." I have been know to say it myself. As we get older our nutritional requirements change. We are all pretty familiar with many of the effects of perimenopause and menopause, and we usually accept that change, but not when it comes to our eating. We want to be able to still enjoy our food, but it seems no matter what we do we still put on weight.

As most of you know weight gain is one of the effects of perimenopause and menopause. The weight also distributes more in the abdomen than in the hips or buttocks due to a drop in estrogen. So not only do we put on weight, it is now in places we might not have had an issue before. So why is this happening? Like mentioned previously, we don't require as many calories as we age. As a matter of fact eating more calories than needed not only increases your weight, it can also speed up the aging process. So ladies you have to eat less, but even though your calorie requirements decrease your nutritional needs increase. You want to make sure you are taking in more protein, and calcium since theses requirements increase with age. Also your requirements for B12 and Vitamin D increase. We absorb less B12, and our skin produces less Vitamin D. ([See WebMed](#))

So can we do anything to combat this? The answer is yes! As mentioned before, first step eat less. Besides increasing belly fat, the drop in estrogen also causes your digestion to slow down. This can result in increase, gas, indigestion, and bloating. Try having several smaller meals throughout the day. The smaller meals will be easier to digest, and less likely to make you feel uncomfortable. Make sure each meal has a good source of protein. Also make sure the predominant food is a vegetable source. Starting your day out with a good source of protein helps the system feel energetic without weighing it down. Leafy green vegetables are also a good source of calcium and B12. Fish is all a good source of B12. This doesn't mean you cannot have pasta, pizza, bread etc., it just means you have to be smart about those choices and choose less. ([See article](#)) Second, strength train. As we age we can lose muscle size and strength, this is known as sarcopenia. This loss in muscle mass can affect your metabolism by slowing it down. Eating the same calories with less muscle mass results in increased weight. You can increase your metabolism and your ability to burn calories by incorporating a well rounded strength training routine. Also, you can shape your body through strength training. If nature is going to irritate us by potentially increasing our belly fat with age, then use strength training to help "sculpt" the body you want. Aging is inevitable, but the affects don't have to be, or can at lease be slowed down. So ladies, you can and should Fight Back! It will totally be worth it!

From Jen