



Moonsisters

Reclaim Your Rest
Designed with ADHD in mind



Moonsisters

Calm Through the Chaos
Introduction

A Sleep Guide for Women in Menopause

Your personal toolkit for better nights,
more energy, and a calmer mind.



Moonsisters

Why Sleep Changes in Menopause

If you are lying awake at 3am wondering why sleep feels impossible, you are not imagining it — and it is not your fault. Menopause brings very real, physiological changes that directly disrupt your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep.

What Is Happening in Your Body

Two hormones are central to this story: oestrogen and progesterone. As these decline during perimenopause and menopause, their sleep-protective roles fall away.

Progesterone has a natural sedative quality — it promotes calm and helps you transition into deep sleep. As levels fall, that biological 'off switch' weakens.

Oestrogen regulates body temperature and supports serotonin production. When it drops, your temperature regulation becomes erratic — causing the hot flashes and night sweats that fragment sleep.

Cortisol rhythms shift, meaning your stress hormone may peak at odd hours, waking you in the early hours feeling alert and anxious.

Melatonin production also declines with age, making it harder to feel naturally sleepy at bedtime.

Understanding this is not about having more to worry about — it is about recognising that your sleep challenges are real, hormonal, and manageable with the right approach.



Moonsisters

If You Also Have ADHD

ADHD and menopause create a compounding effect on sleep. ADHD dysregulates dopamine and norepinephrine — the brain chemicals responsible for winding down — making it genuinely harder to 'switch off.'

When this combines with hormonal disruption, sleep can feel almost impossible.

This guide has been written with both in mind.

Nourish Your Way to Better Sleep

What you eat — and when — sends powerful signals to your nervous system. These are not strict rules; they are tools to experiment with.

Foods To Embrace	Why It Helps
Magnesium-rich foods (leafy greens, pumpkin seeds, almonds, dark chocolate)	Magnesium supports GABA, the brain's natural calm-down signal, and is often depleted during menopause.
Tryptophan foods (oats, eggs, turkey, banana, dairy)	Tryptophan converts to serotonin, then melatonin. Pair with a small carbohydrate snack 1–2 hours before bed to help it reach the brain.
Phytoestrogens (flaxseed, edamame, chickpeas, tempeh)	Plant-based oestrogen-like compounds that may gently ease hot flashes and support hormonal balance.
Omega-3 fatty acids (oily fish, walnuts, chia seeds)	Support dopamine regulation and have anti-inflammatory effects on hormonal health.

Foods To Reduce	Why It Hinders
Caffeine — Cut off by 1–2pm.	It has a half-life of 5–7 hours and stays in your system longer than you think.
Alcohol	Feels sedating but suppresses REM sleep and worsens night sweats.
High-sugar or refined carbs in the evening	Cause blood sugar spikes that trigger cortisol release and night waking.
Large meals within 2–3 hours of bed	Raise core body temperature and taxes digestion during sleep

Try this tonight: A small bowl of oats with a sliced banana about 90 minutes before bed — tryptophan plus slow-release carbohydrate, a natural sleep primer.

Movement

Exercise and nervous system work are two of the most evidence-backed, drug-free tools for menopausal sleep.

The key is timing and type.

Exercise raises dopamine — which helps regulate the brain during the day and reduces the restless, racing mind at bedtime.

Aim for morning or early afternoon.

Movement: What, When and Why

Strength or resistance training (2-3x per week)	Improves sleep quality, supports bone density, and regulates blood sugar. Morning or lunchtime is ideal.
Walking in morning light (even 20 minutes)	Anchors your circadian rhythm via the cortisol-melatonin balance. Within one hour of waking is best.
Gentle yoga or stretching	Late afternoon is ideal. Begins the parasympathetic shift and supports body awareness.
Avoid intense cardio within 3 hours of bed	It raises core temperature and delays melatonin onset.

Mindfulness

Rather than thinking of this as meditation, think of it as giving your nervous system clear, consistent signals that it is safe to rest.

4-7-8 Breathing	Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 7, exhale slowly for 8. The long exhale activates the vagus nerve and parasympathetic system. Do 4 rounds in bed.
Body Scan	Lying down, slowly move your attention from your feet to the top of your head, noticing without judgment. Gives the busy brain a task to follow rather than demanding silence.
Worry Dump Journaling	10 minutes before your wind-down, write everything on your mind. This closes the open loops that keep racing thoughts alive at bedtime.
Guided Sleep Meditations	Apps such as Insight Timer or Calm work well. Narrated content gives an active mind something to follow.

Your Personal Wind-Down Ritual

A consistent pre-sleep routine trains your brain that rest is coming.

Think of this as your nightly anchor.

The 90-Minute Wind-Down

Time Before Bed	Activity	Why It works
90 minutes	Dim lights and switch to warm or amber tones. Stop screens or use a blue-light filter.	Blue light suppresses melatonin; warm dim light begins the biological sleep signal.
60 minutes	Take a warm bath or shower.	The subsequent body temperature drop mimics the natural sleep-onset cooling signal.
45minutes	Have a light tryptophan-rich snack if needed (oats, banana, warm milk).	Supports Melatonin production without raising core temperature
30minutes	Do your worry dump journal or read a physical book.	Reading fiction lowers cortisol measurably. Worry dump gets all those buzzing concerns out of your brain and onto a page, signaling to your brain it no longer has to remind you.
15 minutes	Body scan or 4-7-8 breathing in bed	Shifts your nervous system into rest mode

Dealing With Night Waking

- **The 20-minute rule** — If you wake and cannot return to sleep within 20 minutes, get up. Sit in dim light, do a quiet non-stimulating activity, and return to bed only when sleepy. This prevents your brain associating the bed with wakefulness.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)** — Tense and release each muscle group from feet upward. Gives the body something physical and sequential to do while calming the nervous system.
- **Temperature management** — Keep your bedroom at 16–18°C. Use moisture-absorbing bedding and a fan aimed away from the body for air movement without a direct chill.
- **No clock-watching** — Turn clocks away. Watching the time activates anxiety and makes the brain more alert.

Remember: the goal is not a perfect night every night. It is sending your nervous system consistent, clear signals that it is safe to rest. Every small habit is a message.

Your Daily Sleep Checklist

Use this each day to build your sleep habits gradually. Start with two or three and build from there.

Morning

- Get outside in natural light within 1 hour of waking
- Eat a nourishing breakfast with at least 30g of protein to stabilise blood sugar
- Note your sleep score out of 10 — track progress without judgment

During the Day

- Cut caffeine off by 1–2pm
- Move your body — strength work, yoga, or a walk
- Include magnesium and tryptophan-rich foods in your meals
- Keep alcohol low or none, especially on difficult sleep nights

Evening

- Start dimming lights and screens 90 minutes before bed
- Do your 10-minute worry dump journal
- Take a warm shower or bath
- Have a small sleep-supporting snack if needed
- Do your body scan or 4-7-8 breathing in bed
- Keep your bedroom cool (16–18°C) and dark

Just a note...

Sleep struggles during menopause are real, biological, and deeply common — and they are not a sign that something is fundamentally wrong with you. Your body is navigating a significant hormonal transition, and with the right support, rest is absolutely possible again.

Think of every habit in this guide as a small signal — a message to your nervous system that it is safe to slow down.

Stacked together, those signals become the foundation of genuinely restorative sleep.

If you would like personalised coaching support, I would love to hear from you.

You can reach out to me via email at
moonsisters.online@gmail.com

or read some more about what I offer at
www.moonsisters.online

I look forward to hearing from you

Rachael 



Moonsisters

About Rachael

Rachael is a certified menopause coach who supports women through midlife transitions with clarity, compassion and grounded expertise.

Her work focuses on helping women feel steady, confident and connected again — without pushing or pretending.