

Practical Guidance

Targeted Advice

Diet



- Promote a Mediterranean-style diet rich in plant foods, fibre and polyphenols (i.e. fruits, vegetables, wholegrains, legumes, nuts, seeds, herbs, spices)
- Suggest aiming for 30 plant points each week.
- Encourage incorporating fermented foods (e.g. live yoghurt, kimchi, kombucha). But check the label for specific bacteria names (e.g. *Lactobacillus*) or mention of 'live cultures'.

Fertility: Ensure sufficient intake of vitamin B12, omega-3, vitamin D and folic acid (400mg/ day supplementation recommended 3 pre-conception and the first 12 weeks of pregnancy).

Menopause: Encourage intake of calcium, vitamin D, monounsaturated fatty acids and limiting salt/ saturated fats. Enquire about dietary triggers for hot flushes (e.g. spicy food, caffeine, alcohol, hot drinks).

Exercise



NHS recommends:

- Strengthening activity 2 days per week.
- At least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity a week.

Exercise recommendations should be tailored to patient.

Pregnancy: Physical activity may reduce risk of experiencing complications during later pregnancy and labour. Specific advice can be found on the NHS website [here](#).

Menopause: Weight-bearing/resistance exercises help maintain bone health.

Sleep



- Encourage 7–9 hours good quality sleep each night.
- Promote a consistent bedtime and waketime.
- Suggest trying an eye mask or ear plugs to support better sleep.

Pregnancy/Postpartum: Encourage rest whenever possible and make use of support from partner, friends and family. A body pillow may help to ease some discomfort. Find more information on the NHS website [here](#).

Menopause: Address night sweats with environmental and cooling strategies (e.g. fan in bedroom, take a cold shower before sleeping).

Stress



- Mention relaxation techniques such as mindfulness, breathwork, yoga, walking in nature or journaling.
- Promote social connection and supportive relationships.
- Direct or submit referral to additional professional services (e.g. counselling, CBT, mental health services) if required for patients with high or persistent stress.

Pregnancy/ Postpartum: Consider specialist social support networks/ groups.

Hydration



- Encourage 8+ glasses of liquid (~2L) per day. Acknowledge that adjustment may be needed based on age, climate, illness and activity level.
- Water, tea, coffee, squash, milk and fruit juice all count.
- Suggest carrying a refillable water bottle and sip regularly throughout the day.

Fertility: Limit alcohol and caffeine intake.

Postpartum: Remind breastfeeding patients about the importance of hydration. Encourage them to have a drink beside them when settling to feed: water, low fat milks and low/no sugar drinks are best.

Menopause: Our ability to recognise thirst declines as we age so it's important to keep well hydrated even if not feeling thirsty.