

How to Lose Weight While In and After Menopause -689 words

Going through the years leading up to menopause and beyond is tough. Not only do you have to deal with the unpleasantness of hot flashes and disrupted sleep, it seems like all you have to do is look at a plate of food to gain weight.

It's true that 9 out of 10 women in the United States who are in perimenopause and menopause will gain weight. Most women put on about 10 to 20 pounds. Even more disheartening, 95 percent of menopausal women who diet will regain most of the weight they lost within one year. In addition, changes in the levels of the two female sex hormones, estrogen and progesterone, encourage fat re-distribution from the hips and thighs to the belly, a known risk factor for heart disease and other health problems.

Dr. Mache Seibel, an expert in menopause, is not convinced that menopausal women are doomed to be overweight. He contends that the rules for losing weight and keeping it off while in and after menopause are no different from what they were before. He cites data from a recent four year study of menopausal and postmenopausal women to back up his position.

The Study

The study was conducted out of the University of Pittsburg and the results were published in September 2012. Researchers monitored the eating behaviors of 500 overweight and obese women. The women were divided into two groups: One group received a weight loss plan and regular counseling sessions with nutritionists, exercise physiologists and psychologists while the other group, the control, didn't get the assistance. Instead, they were given an opportunity to participate in general health seminars

57 percent of the women in the intervention group maintained at least a five pound weight loss four years later compared to 29 percent of the women in the control group. All of the women who lost weight and kept it off ate less sugar and more fruits and vegetables. They also ate less red meat and cheese.

According to Dr. Seibel, the data suggest that, regardless of where you are in your reproductive life, weight loss and weight maintenance are about eating less and moving more. To lose weight and keep it off, try making the following changes:

1: Change the way you eat

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables is good for weight loss and weight maintenance because these foods have fewer calories overall and fill you up more quickly. Limit foods that are high in fat: choose lean sources of protein such as fish, poultry and soy over red meats and cheeses. Additionally, Dr. Seibel advocates ditching the soda and sugary juices all together in favor of drinks without added sugar. A favorite choice of his is seltzer water with a slice of lemon or lime.

2: Get regular exercise

Research shows that regular exercise is essential to maintaining any weight loss. Moreover, as women age, they lose lean muscle mass, the engine that drives the metabolism. Regular exercise slows the rate at which muscle mass is lost, so that you keep what you've got. Dr. Seibel recommends that his patients work out 30 minutes daily. It doesn't have to be all at once, either. If you can sneak small bursts of activity into your day and at the end you total 30 minutes, it will work.

3: Consult a nutritionist

The women in the study who lost the most weight and kept it off received plenty of professional help, including nutritionists who instructed them on making healthy food choices. The control group received no assistance. Don't be afraid to reach out for help. There is so much bad information available about what's healthy and what's not that it can be a daunting task for anyone to sort out. A nutritionist can help you figure out what's healthy and what's not.

The menopausal years can be a rough ride for many women. It may seem like your body is working against you when it comes to losing weight, but the reality is that the tried and true methods for weight control still work. Eat less and move more, it really is that simple.

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Adaptable and Remarkable: Cat Breeds of the Middle East -1251 words

In the Middle East, people consider cats to be bringers of bad luck. However, the Middle East is the home to several breeds of exotic feline. From the most recently discovered Arabian Mau to the ever-popular Persian, the cats of the Middle East make affectionate and loyal pets.

Arabian Mau

Among one of the oldest natural breeds, the Arabian Mau has existed for more than 1,000 years. It is mostly a feral cat that lives in and around cities in the United Arab Emirates. Its name derives from "mau," the Arab word for cat. The World Cat Association only recently has accepted the Mau as a breed. The German-based breed association made this announcement during a 2005 Dubai cat show.

Coloration and appearance

The Arabian Mau has short fur that is rougher than its European counterparts. It is a medium sized cat with long, high legs and large pointed ears. Its ears are useful in helping it stay cool in the desert heat. Its fur is spotted and comes in many colors, usually a combination of black, brown, gray and white.

Temperament

The Arabian Mau makes an exceptional family pet. It is very adaptable, having lived among humans for so long. It is intelligent, curious and playful. It loves to jump and uses its long, high-set hind legs to propel it into bookshelves and curio cabinets. This active cat needs plenty of playtime and attention. Interestingly, the Mau will only breed with other Maus; it does not breed with other types of cat.

Grooming

Since the Mau is a short-haired breed with no undercoat, it requires minimal grooming. A quick run-through with a brush to remove dead hairs and stimulate its coat once in a while is enough to keep it looking its best. Like all cats, it occasionally needs its nails trimmed.

Persian cat

The Persian has been a popular cat since the late 1870s when it made an appearance at the first cat show, which was held at the Crystal Palace in London. Queen Victoria had two Blue Persians. The breed has been seen in Europe since the 1500s when it was likely brought over by visiting tradesmen. It did not make it over to North America until the 1800s.

Coloration and appearance

The Persian is a broad-bodied, long haired cat breed with a large round head and heavy short-boned legs. Its tail is short relative to its size, and with its large eyes and short, sometimes flat muzzle, features a sweet expression. Its trademark is its long silky coat, which appears to shimmer and comes in 80 different colors. The most popular color is solid silver.

Temperament

The Persian has a sweet, docile disposition. It has often been called "furniture with fur," but in reality is no more inactive than other cats. It is quite playful and affectionate, yet it is never demanding. While it does best in quiet, calm households, it can adapt to a noisier, more active environment with ease.

Grooming

The Persian's long silky coat is prone to matting and requires daily brushing to maintain its appearance. Many Persian owners also trim the hair around the anus to prevent feces from becoming stuck. It is best kept as an indoor cat and it should be conditioned to accept bathing while it is young.

Turkish Van cat

The Turkish Van Cat is native to the Lake Van area of Turkey and the bordering regions of Syria, Iran, Iraq and Russia. It may be the oldest breed of cat; there are depictions of a feline resembling the Van on pottery dating back to 5000 B.C.. There have been Vans in Europe beginning in 1095 when returning soldiers from the Crusades brought them home from Turkey. The cat became recognized as a breed in England in 1969 and 1993 in North America.

Coloration and appearance

The Van has a distinct piebald color pattern -- it has a white body with colored markings restricted to its head and tail. It has a soft, semi-long-haired cashmere-like coat that is water repellent. It is one of the largest breeds of cat, with males weighing 18 pounds and females 8 pounds at maturity. Different colored eyes are common in the Van, a prized trait in its native land.

Temperament

The Van is a very energetic cat that loves to jump. It loves to be up high, where it can survey its surroundings and its people. Because of its love for heights, it is prone to knocking things off high shelves. It is affectionate and bonds closely with one or two people, usually those with whom it has the

most initial contact. The bonds last a lifetime, and are so strong that Vans are not good candidates for second homes. It loves water and will swim if given the chance.

Grooming

Its coat is semi-long but has no undercoat and is not prone to matting. A good brushing once or twice a week is all the Van requires to keep its coat in good condition.

Bahraini Dilmun (Delmun) cat

The Bahraini Dilmun cat is a naturally evolved breed that is native to the island of Bahrain. Its existence is in danger due to cross-breeding with abandoned stray Persian and Siamese cats. Native Bahrainis hold the breed in disdain, while Bahrain's large expatriate community seeks to preserve it.

Coloration and appearance

The Delmun is a sleek, spotted, short-haired breed. It is a spotted cat, with the most common coloration being brown spotted tabby. Red spotted tabby occurs as well. Like the Arabian Mau, the Delmun has large ears, an adaptation to help it keep cool in its hot, desert environment.

Temperament

The Dilmun is a quiet cat that vocalizes mostly at suppertime. It usually bonds with one person and due to its hunter nature, can be taught tricks. Although not affectionate, the Dilmun is a steadfast companion.

Grooming

Since the Dilmun is a short-haired breed, it requires minimal grooming. Like other desert cats, it has no undercoat and sheds minimally.

Turkish Angora

Originating in Turkey, the Turkish Angora takes its name from the city of Angora (present-day Ankara.) In the early 1900s, it nearly disappeared as a separate breed when Persian cat breeders used it to strengthen their lines. At about that time, the Turkish government started a breeding program to preserve it. American breeders used two cats from this program to establish the breed in North America.

Coloration and appearance

Although white remains a common and popular Angora color, the breed can come in other colors, both solid and patterned. It has a delicate appearance that belies its agile strength. The Angora's coat is semi-long and feels soft and silky.

Temperament

The Angora is an ideal pet for families with children. This affectionate cat loves to play and be the center of attention. It is mischievous and if left to its own devices for too long, will find some trouble to get into. It loves to jump and climb up into high places. It gets along with other pets so long as the others recognize it as the alpha animal.

Grooming

While it is classified as a semi-long-haired cat, the Angora doesn't require too much grooming. Its coat doesn't mat easily. All it needs is a good brushing once or twice a week.

Although the people of the Middle East don't like cats much, felines have thrived along-side them for millennia. Adaptable creatures, the cats of the Middle East will doubtless continue to thrive and to worm themselves into human homes and hearts.

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Understanding Post Traumatic Epilepsy -1166 words

Post-traumatic epilepsy is a seizure disorder that develops following a brain injury. The risk of post-traumatic epilepsy rises with the severity of the injury.

While post traumatic seizures are always a risk following a brain injury, not every person who has a seizure following a head trauma will go on to develop post traumatic epilepsy. Severe head injuries, that is, head injuries serious enough to require hospitalization, result in epilepsy in 15 percent of adults and 30 percent of children. In cases of penetrating trauma, such as gunshot wounds, the incidence is even more frequent: 25 to 50 percent of people with these injuries will go on to develop epilepsy. Furthermore, the risk of developing post traumatic epilepsy also depends on when the seizures start.

Early post traumatic seizures are seizures that occur during the first week following the injury. If a person develops early post traumatic seizures, he may not go on to develop post traumatic epilepsy, or recurrent seizures. While having an early seizure will increase the risk of further seizures later on, it is more common that the person will never have another one. About 25 percent of people who have a seizure in the first week will have another one at a later time.

Late post traumatic seizures are seizures that occur one week or more after the injury. They may take years to develop, sometimes occurring for this first time 20 years later. Unlike with early post-traumatic seizures, people who have late post-traumatic seizures are likely to have more seizures. 80 percent of people who have a seizure later than one week after being injured will have more seizures. They are almost always considered to have post traumatic epilepsy and are started on anti-convulsants to prevent future seizures. Doctors believe that late post-traumatic seizures may be the result of the brain repairing itself and establishing new connections.

There are two types of seizures: focal (partial) and general seizures.

Focal seizures

Also called partial seizures, focal seizures occur due to disruptions in the neural activity in one part of the brain. They are usually described in terms of the portion of the brain from which they come. For example, one might be diagnosed with left parietal lobe seizures. There are two types of focal seizures: simple and complex.

In simple focal seizures, the person is conscious but experiences sudden, uncaused and intense shifts in emotions and mood. They may also experience nausea. Additionally, the person may have hallucinations that affect all five senses.

Complex focal seizures are characterized by states of altered consciousness. The person having a complex focal seizure may engage in odd and repetitious behavior, such as walking in a circle, blinking repeatedly or twitching. These behaviors are called automatisms. Sometimes, the behavior may seem purposeful. The person may continue with the task in which they were engaged before the seizure, such as washing the same dish over and over, without actually cleaning it.

Focal seizures don't last very long- they are over in mere seconds. The person may not even be aware that anything happened. Some people with focal seizures experience an "aura" beforehand – a strange sensation that signifies an impending seizure. These auras are merely seizures during which the person stays aware.

General seizures

Generalized seizures result from abnormal nerve cell activity on both sides of the brain. These seizures often result in a loss of consciousness, falls and muscle spasms. They are what most people picture when they hear the word epilepsy. There are two types of general seizures: absence and tonic-clonic.

Absence seizures

Absence seizures are characterized by the affected person staring off into space. He may also have jerking or twitching muscles. Absence seizures are also called petit mal seizures. They are brief, lasting only a few seconds, and the person isn't usually aware of the episode. They are more common in children between the ages of 4 and 12. They usually go away by age 18 and rarely start after age 20. It is extremely rare for people with post traumatic epilepsy to have this type of seizure.

Tonic-clonic seizures

Tonic-clonic seizures are seizures with two phases: the tonic phase and the clonic phase. Tonic-clonic seizures are also known as grand mal seizures. The tonic phase usually occurs first. The muscles of the body contract during this phase, and the person loses consciousness. The back arches, and due to the fact that the chest muscles have contracted, the person has difficulty breathing. The lips and face may turn blue from the diminished oxygen supply. Following the tonic phase comes the clonic phase where the limbs, including the person's neck, start to jerk rapidly. As the seizure winds down, the jerking slows and eventually stops. The person may emit a deep sigh before beginning to breathe normally again. Following the seizure, the person will fall into a deep sleep.

Risks

People with a seizure disorder, whether acquired through an injury or not, are at an increased risk of premature death. This risk arises from two secondary conditions relative to their epilepsy: status epilepticus and sudden unexplained death.

Status epilepticus

Status epilepticus is a life threatening condition in which a person has a seizure that lasts for longer than five minutes, or has more than one seizure in quick succession, and without a recovery period between episodes. Status epilepticus is a medical emergency. Doctors will use different medications to stop the seizures, including paralytics, sedatives and anti-convulsants.

Sudden unexplained death

For reasons that no one knows, people with epilepsy are at risk of dying from no discernible cause. They just die and medical science can't figure out why. While anyone may die suddenly and for no known cause, the risk in people with epilepsy is twice that of the general population.

What to do in case of a seizure

The main thing to do if you see someone having a seizure is to make sure that the person's airway is clear. Roll them on their side so that they don't choke on their own spit or vomit, loosen any tight clothing, especially around the neck, and make sure that they won't hurt themselves by hitting something in the throes of the seizure. Do not attempt to pry open the mouth or place anything inside. There is no danger of the person swallowing their tongue; that's a myth.

If this is the person's first seizure, if you don't know whether or not they've had a seizure before, or if the seizure doesn't stop after five minutes, call 911. Note how long the seizure lasts and what it looked like so that you can tell the doctor or emergency staff about it, if needed. Stay with the person until help arrives.

Post-traumatic epilepsy is common following a severe head injury. It results in repeated seizures caused by disruptions in the neural activity of the brain. It is a life-long condition which can be managed medically. Most people with post-traumatic epilepsy are kept seizure free and lead normal lives.

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Eight Tips for Renting after Foreclosure -810 words

Since the housing crisis began in 2008, approximately 3 million former homeowners have become renters. Economists expect that number to swell by an estimated 3 million more by 2015. If you're facing the loss of your home, you're probably worried about how you will find a landlord willing to rent to you. While renting after a foreclosure can prove to be challenging, it may not be as impossible as you think. Here are some tips to help you find a rental:

Choose smaller apartment complexes and/or homes for rent by the owner

Since the larger, corporate owned apartment complexes will almost always run a credit report as part of the rental application process, focus instead on smaller apartment buildings or homes owned by private landlords. Private landlords are less likely to run a credit report. You can find these listings on Craigslist or in your local newspaper. Another way to get around credit checks is to network with friends and family: Ask if they know anyone who has an apartment or house to rent and is willing to forego a credit check, or who will be willing to rent to you despite your bad credit

Use squatters rent to build a nest egg

Foreclosures, never a quick process, are still taking months to complete. Make good use of that time to save up the money that you would have spent on your mortgage. This practice has come to be called

"squatters rent." While the term sounds derogatory, it really isn't. It's a smart way to make sure that you have the money you'll need to secure your next place.

Be prepared to pay more

Due to the fact that you'll be perceived as a greater risk to rent to, be prepared to pay up to three months rent in advance, plus the security deposit. Have the funds in cash - most landlords will be happy to rent to you if you have cash in hand. If the landlord still appears unsure, offer to pay a larger deposit. This will reassure him or her that renting to you isn't as risky as it may appear.

Get a co-signer

A co-signer is someone who agrees to assume the responsibility for a debt should the primary signer default. If you arrange to have a co-signer with excellent credit sign the lease or rental agreement with you, you are almost certain to have your rental application approved. The reason for this is because the landlord has an extra guarantee that he or she will be paid; if you default, he or she can just collect from your co-signer.

Get references

Ask people who know you well to write you letters of reference. Preferably, your letters of reference should come from those with whom you have a professional, rather than a familiar relationship. A couple of good examples would be references from your employer or the manager of the local bank branch where you do your banking. If there are people willing to vouch for your character, you may become less of a risk in the landlord's eyes.

Keep up with your other bills

While many people going through foreclosure have the kind of devastating financial problems that make it impossible for them to meet their other credit obligations, your troubles may be isolated to a house payment that you can no longer afford. If you are able to, make sure that you pay your other creditors on time. If the only issue on your credit history is the foreclosure, then you're in pretty good shape when it comes to getting approved for a rental.

Never volunteer information

Don't lie, but never volunteer information, either. You're not obligated to give the landlord unsolicited information, or more details than the questions warrant. In fact, doing so could damage your chances at getting the apartment or rental house that you want. For example, don't walk into the landlord's office and present him or her with your reference letter or offer up any long explanations right away. Wait until the landlord asks for them or if he or she appears to be unsure about approving you as a tenant.

Consider other types of housing

If all else fails, consider staying at an extended stay hotel or motel. While they cost more, extended stay motels and hotels don't run credit checks. Speak to the manager; he or she may be willing to give you a deal on the monthly rate if you say that you're going to stay for six months or more.

While going through a foreclosure is never easy, finding a rental afterward doesn't have to be difficult. Since more than 4 million foreclosures have been completed since 2008, the stigma isn't as bad as it has been in the past. If you know where to look, you'll be able to secure a rental in no time.

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