

Menopause Q & A

It's Shawna Kaminski, female fat loss over forty expert. I get a lot of questions from my clients. Since we all tend to experience similar issues, I thought it would be helpful to address five of the most common questions I get:



Does menopause cause weight gain?

No, menopause can't be blamed *solely* for weight gained at this time. What's often the culprit is the *sedentary* lifestyle that occurs in the decade prior to menopause. Your body is slowing trading muscle for fat. Muscle is metabolically active calorie burning tissue as opposed to fat that is dead weight. So as you lose muscle, you'll get fatter eating less food and this is why many complain that they are eating less and still gaining weight. It just seems to catch up with you and is noticed in our forties.

Does metabolism actually slow down at menopause?

Sedentary men at this age can also experience a similar gain in weight and slow down in metabolism so it's not menopause per se that's the reason for a tanking metabolism. Studies show that for those that are sedentary, there can be a 1-2% loss of lean muscle mass per decade or 10-15 lbs, which is replaced by fat. As I said before, fat doesn't burn calories the same way that muscle does, so having a higher fat to muscle ratio will result in a slower metabolism. This is why it's SO important to remain active through out your 30's so that you don't lose lean muscle mass.

What's happening with hormones that may affect weight gain?

One theory is that the ovaries are producing less estrogen. Fat cells actually produce estrogen, so the body works a little harder to convert calories to fat to generate more estrogen. Also, following a low fat and high carbohydrate diet heavy on refined and processed foods may make your body insulin resistant. When this happens, whenever you eat carbohydrates, your body is more likely to turn those calories into fat as opposed to using those calories for energy.

When a women reaches menopause, is it really harder to lose weight?


It can be harder but it's *always possible* to lose weight at this age. More commitment is needed as we get older. More intensity with exercise is needed and more dedication with proper diet important. I want to point out that it's not necessary to train *longer*, your workouts need to be the same length but more intense.



What's the best way to slow down or reverse this process?

Start resistance training immediately – You'd be surprised to hear that body weight only training is one of the safest and most effective ways to increase and maintain muscle mass in women in this age category. By adding some muscle and maintaining the muscle that you already have, you will preserve and even elevate your metabolism as you age. And don't think for a minute that you'll get that overly developed muscular look-if only adding muscle was that easy. Your hormonal make up is not such that this is even possible. Lift weights and lift as heavy as you can and you'll still only add modest amounts of this good stuff.

There you have it, five of the most common questions that I get asked. If you want to make some positive changes in your physique and minimize the effects that Mother Nature will bestow on you with your sedentary lifestyle, you can contact me. It's not too late to make positive changes in your appearance and feel better.



Shawna Kaminski has always enjoyed an fit lifestyle and was active at an early age. It wasn't long before she was rated a national level competitor in swimming, freestyle skiing and bodybuilding. After years of teaching fitness in schools, Shawna started her own fitness business instructing boot camps and helping people learn how to work fitness into their daily lifestyle.

Today, Shawna is not only a highly respected fitness professional, but also owner and master trainer of *Calgary NW Adventure Boot Camp*, owner and master trainer of *Kaminski Fitness Consulting*, and author of *Female Fat Loss Over Forty*.