

## Prevention Can Lower Risk of Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in women. Early detection and treatment can stop it before it spreads. And there are some ways you can lower your risk of getting breast cancer.



**Eat nutrient-rich foods.** A variety of plant foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans can help protect your body against cancer. They're rich in vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants and compounds that are Mother Nature's natural defense system.

**Achieve a healthy weight.** Extra weight after menopause can increase estrogen levels and the risk of breast cancer. If you're overweight, try to lose 5 to 10 percent of your weight.

**Stay active.** Regular physical activity boosts energy and strengthens your immune

system. It also decreases stress and improves sleep. Try to get 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week or 75 minutes of vigorous workouts.

**Manage stress and practice self-care.** The uncertainty of COVID-19 has added new challenges and stressors to life. Ongoing stress is bad for your health. Try to find ways to relax: a bubble bath, a comedy, a book, meditation, yoga, connecting with loved ones, whatever helps you decompress.

**Take care of yourself!** Need more support? Call your

local Florida Blue community specialist at **877-352-5830**.

**Limit alcohol and sugar.** Drinking alcohol can increase estrogen levels and cause damage to your body, so keep it to one drink a day. If you don't drink, don't start. And avoid foods filled with added sugars and solid fats.

**Don't smoke.** Smoking seems to increase the risk of breast cancer in younger women. It can complicate treatment and decrease your survival rate. If you smoke, set a date to quit. Call **877-822-6669** for help.

**Resources:** [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org), [breastcancer.org](https://www.breastcancer.org)

# Menopause Is a Change, NOT a Disease

When a woman enters perimenopause, her hormones begin to decline. Menopause means a woman has not had her menstrual period for a year.

Menopause isn't a disease that requires treatment. It's a natural and normal event in every woman's life. It can interrupt life with hot flashes, night sweats, mood changes and weight gain, among other discomforts. But you might be able to lessen the intensity of your symptoms and improve your quality of life during "the change."

Here are our top picks to help you feel your best.

## • Eat to feel better

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet with whole foods. Foods that support hormonal balance include tofu, tempeh, sesame seeds, apples, carrots and wheat germ.
- Stay hydrated with lots of water—at least half an ounce for every pound you weigh.
- Limit caffeine, alcohol and sugar intake.

## • Move and rest your body

- Get regular exercise with a mix of core training, high-intensity cardio, stretching and weight training.
- Avoid prolonged periods of sitting. Remain upright and active as much as possible.
- Get a good night's sleep—7 to 8 hours.

- Try stress-management techniques such as deep breathing, guided meditation, prayer and yoga.

## • Get help from nature

- Get plenty of vitamin D, which your body produces when you're in the sun. It optimizes over 2,000 genes in your body and helps normalize hormonal function.
- Some essential oils like clary sage, lavender and geranium can ease menopause symptoms. Because some oils irritate the skin, it's best to use these oils by diffusing them into the air.

**Resources:** [webmd.com](http://webmd.com), [mayoclinic.org](http://mayoclinic.org), [medlineplus.gov](http://medlineplus.gov)

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## Sesame Orange Broccoli Serves 4

### Ingredients:

- Kosher salt
- 12 oz. broccoli, cut into florets
- ½ tbsp corn starch
- ¼ cup fresh orange juice
- ¼ tsp orange zest
- 2 tbsps low-sodium soy sauce
- ½ tsp grated ginger
- 1 garlic clove, finely minced
- ½ tsp sesame oil
- 1 scallion, chopped
- ½ tsp sesame seeds
- Red pepper flakes, to taste (optional)

### Directions

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add broccoli and boil for 1 minute. Drain and immediately place broccoli in a large bowl of ice water to stop it from cooking.

In a small bowl add orange juice, soy sauce, orange zest and corn starch, whisking until corn starch is dissolved.

Heat a non-stick wok or large deep skillet over high heat. Add sesame oil, scallions, garlic and ginger, and sauté for 30 seconds. Add the sauce



and broccoli, and sauté 1 to 2 minutes, until broccoli is crisp tender. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and red pepper flakes (if using). Serve immediately.

Recipe courtesy of [skinnytaste.com](http://skinnytaste.com) for nutritional information click [here](#).

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