



Thank you again for joining us for the Swedish Women's Wellness Virtual Series on Weight, Exercise and Menopause.

The Swedish Women's Wellness Series promotes our vision of the Women's Wellness and GYN Specialty Services at Swedish. As an extension of Swedish, the program will provide every woman coordinated care that meets her unique needs now, and in the future, with a focus on prevention, menopause, sexual health and healthy aging. We are excited to announce the opening of the clinic will be this December 2021. We will begin to offer our gynecologic specialty services to address menopausal transitions and sexual health.

Our Minimally Invasive Gyn surgery clinic opened in October, and our team of specialists are eager to provide you with referrals and access to services such as cardiology, behavioral health, primary care and surgical services.

We will launch additional services such as wellness and educational programs over time to help address your needs as a woman.

We are grateful to Drs. Dunsmoor-Su, Basilico and Padhya for a candid discussion on how our bodies change as we age. Please find their contact information below and key highlights from the discussion.

Rebecca Dunsmoor-Su, M.D.

Located at Swedish First Hill

Focus: Gynecology, specifically on the vulva vaginal specialties and menopause

**To schedule an appointment:
206-215-6300**

Erica Basilico, M.D.

Located at Swedish First Hill

Focus: Obesity and Weight Loss

**To schedule an appointment:
206-215-2090**

Kunjali Padhya, M.D.

Located at Swedish Ballard

Focus: Gastroenterology

**To schedule an appointment:
206-215-4250**

Why do some women gain weight during menopause?

As women enter menopause, our bodies and metabolisms can change even if our diet and lifestyle do not. A leading factor in weight gain amongst women is lowering levels of estrogen. Dr. Basilico explained that estrogen helps regulate other hormones in the body, such as insulin. As estrogen levels lower, some women may develop insulin resistance, which inhibits their ability to process glucose. In turn, some women may be more prone to weight gain, especially in the stomach.

How can I regulate my weight?

Dr. Basilico shared that there are four pillars that relate to weight maintenance: diet modification, exercise, lifestyle and behavior modification, and medication management. To address weight concerns, it is important to assess your actions and if they are helping or exacerbating menopausal symptoms. For example, talk to your physician about any medication you take that may be causing weight gain. In addition, discuss medications that may help regulate changes in your appetite, depression symptoms or fatigue.

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Why am I bloated? Do I need to change my diet?

The microbiomes in our gut can change during perimenopause and menopause, which in turn can cause stomach bloating. Your physician may prescribe the FODMAPS diet to find and treat the root cause of your bloating. Although there are countless diets marketed towards women, research has shown that a plant-based diet is beneficial in supporting your gut health. If you have concerns about bloating, or want to know the best diet for you, please consult with your physician.

Is diet or exercise more beneficial as women age?

Diet modification is most effective if your goal is weight loss. However, Dr. Basilico explained that weight loss is not always the primary goal, and that as women age their focus should be on their overall wellbeing. In addition

to diet modification, exercise helps regulate common menopausal symptoms that may inhibit sleep, muscle mass growth, bone health and mood. With that, both diet and exercise are critical habits to maintain as you age.

What are the benefits of HRT? How long do I need to use it?

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) can help treat some symptoms of menopause, such as loss of muscle mass, brain fog and sleep problems. Dr. Dunsmoor-Su stressed that HRT is not a cure-all, and that the duration of hormone therapy will depend on your symptoms, family history and personal preferences. Discuss your concerns with your physician to find the best treatment option for you.

The program for Women's Wellness is supported through donations from our community. Contributions will help to create educational programs and materials, build out clinical services and address research needs to provide women with knowledge to navigate their healthcare while providing the highest level of care.

If you are interested in supporting this effort, please contact Lorna Kneeland, lorna.kneeland@swedish.org or 206-215-2217.

To view this webinar, along with others in the series, please visit: <https://swedishfoundation.org/VE/womenswellness>

For additional information and to donate to the Women's Wellness and Gyn Specialty Services, please visit our website at: <https://swedishfoundation.org/women-health#women's-wellness>

If you are interested in supporting the creation of a comprehensive healthcare continuum for all women, please contact Lorna Kneeland, lorna.kneeland@swedish.org or (206) 215-2217.