

The Mid-Life Weight Gain

Are you a woman in your 40s or 50s and notice that you are beginning to put weight on for no apparent reason? Perhaps you are having mood swings or bouts with emotional issues. As you hit your "middle age" years, several life-changing events begin to occur. Your parents may be in need of care, your children may be leaving the home to take off on their own, you may be dealing with financial burdens, and menopause (with all of its dreaded symptoms).

There's good news! Just because you hit middle age doesn't mean you have to look or act middle aged! Many respond to the stresses of middle age by eating, sleeping more, and not being as active. There are several solutions to the middle age blues that will not only make you feel better, but also help you keep your figure.

- Continue to exercise regularly (if you weren't exercising before, begin now!). When you exercise your brain lets off a "feel good" chemical called endorphins. This "feel good" chemical does just that. It lightens your mood and makes you feel better. Your body craves this feeling, so keep exercising!
- Eat well. There is nothing wrong with indulging in your favorite snacks from time to time, but you are better off eating well all the time. Eating healthy foods at regular intervals will keep your blood sugar levels in check and prevent hunger.
- Try to self-monitor your eating habits. Don't eat over emotions (like the cheesecake I devour when I'm upset). Keep a log of when you eat and how you feel and you may see your pattern of eating follows your moods.
- Talk to someone. If you need help and these tips aren't enough, get in touch with a registered dietitian and they may be able to help you handle any emotional or eating issues that surface.