# Experiencing Night Sweats? Try These Options to Make Your Sleep More Comfortable

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## Menopause Night Sweats

Menopause is the gift that keeps on giving for some unlucky women, and just one of the many possible symptoms which can cause havoc is menopausal night sweats. Luckily there are some ways to cut down on their severity, if not eradicate them altogether.

If you experience menopause night sweats, there are a few options you can try to minimize symptoms. While we discuss a couple options in this article, always be sure to talk to your doctor about treatment options that are right for you and your individual needs.

### What Causes Menopausal Night Sweats?

Similar to other symptoms experienced with perimenopause and menopause, night sweats are triggered by changes in hormones. These hormones, which affect fertility, also help regulate body temperature.

Most people have heard of hot flashes, and night sweats are basically extended periods of sweating related to these hot flashes at night. Some women say their night sweats are far more debilitating than daytime hot flashes.

They can be so intense that they wake those experiencing them up and leave clothing and bedclothes soaked through.

### When Do Menopausal Night Sweats Start?

Menopausal night sweats can, like other symptoms, start months or even years before periods become erratic during perimenopause and stop altogether. When periods have stopped for 12 months you are officially in menopause.

Perimenopause can start as early as in your 30s or as late as your early 60s. Night sweats can persist long after menopause, especially in African-American women. This is according to a number of studies including one published in JAMA Internal Medicine in 2015, which found that black women’s vasomoter symptoms lasted longer (up to 14 years) than women from other ethnic groups.

### Treatment Options: How to Stop Night Sweats

A Mayo Clinic study published in the Journal of the North American Menopause Society revealed that women on Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) generally experienced fewer and less intense night sweats. It was noted that this is not surprising given the hormonal link to night sweats.

Therefore, it follows that an effective treatment for night sweats would be Hormone Replacement Therapy which can be taken in oral form, delivered by skin patches or trans-vaginally using pessaries.

However, most women only use HRT for two to six years. However, it's believed that HRT can be taken long term, and can have some health benefits as well as helping to limit distressing symptoms.

There are some simple ways to minimize the impact of night sweats, including diet and lifestyle changes.

**Diet Changes to Minimize Night Sweats**

It's well documented that making a few changes to what you eat and when can impact the severity and frequency of both hot flashes and night sweats.

You might love a hot curry or a Cajun dish, but spicy food is one big trigger for night sweating. If you must indulge, consider enjoying your spice at lunch or well before bedtime at least. If you make your own dishes you could dial down the spice a bit, so you get some heat but not so much that it keeps you awake all night.

Caffeine is another trigger but cutting down your coffee intake will not necessarily fix the problem. Avoid green or black tea, iced tea, Kombucha tea, caffeinated beverages like colas and energy drinks, and even hot chocolate.

Even so-called decaffeinated coffees or tea have some caffeine in them, as does chocolate. It doesn't take long for your caffeine intake to ramp up, even just by enjoying a green tea with a slice of chocolate cake.

Go for caffeine-free choices like Rooibos teas which you can get flavored with caramel or vanilla, and fruit teas. If you aren't sure which ones don't contain caffeine, check the packaging and choose products that state they are caffeine free.

If you enjoy sodas, choose non-caffeinated fizzy drinks like lemonade, orangeade, or look for sodas that advertise themselves as caffeine-free. Many of our favorite sodas make caffeine-free versions of the original drink.

Alcohol is not your friend either when it comes to combating night sweats. Skip that hot toddy or nightcap, and hopefully your sleep will be undisturbed.

**Other Ways to Combat Menopausal Night Sweats**

It sounds obvious but take a look at your nightwear and bed clothing. Are they made from natural fabrics? Always choose loose cotton-rich clothing and sheets to avoid exacerbating night sweats.

Think about layering. Put a lower lighter duvet on the bed and add a cozy comforter or a beautiful crochet blanket. When the heat hits you can just throw off a layer or two.

Turn down the heating a notch or turn up the air conditioner and allow some fresh air into the room if possible. The ideal temperature for sleeping is a relatively cool 60–65 °F (or 16–18 °C).

Both smoking and inhaling second-hand smoke can increase the severity and frequency of menopausal night sweats. Luckily smoking in all enclosed public spaces is now illegal, but if you still smoke at home, make this the reason to stop. If it's someone close to you smoking, ask them nicely to smoke outside so you don't inhale any second-hand smoke.

Lastly, stress can trigger both hot flashes and night sweats so make sure you are looking after yourself and try to reduce stress wherever and however possible.

Try a gentle stroll before bed (but avoid getting overheated), yoga, reading a book, or watching your favorite show on TV.

And if all else fails, keep a damp flannel and a change of nightclothes near your bed so you can quickly cool down and back to sleep.