

START NOW:

*16 things every woman should
be doing by 40*



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WELCOME TO THE “WAIT, NO ONE TOLD ME THIS” ERA...

If you've hit 40 (or are close to it) and suddenly feel like your body's playing by a whole new set of rules—you're not wrong.

Stanford researchers recently confirmed what so many of us have been saying for years: your 40s bring massive, measurable changes to your metabolism, hormones, immune system, and more.

But here's the kicker: no one hands you a guidebook for this season. You're just expected to figure it out while still juggling your life, your people, and your energy (or what's left of it).

That's why I made this guide - 16 things every woman should start doing at 40 - based on science, experience, and the real-life needs of women who want to feel strong, stable, and sane for the next 40+ years.

Some will surprise you. Some will challenge you. But all of them are here to help you work *with* your body, not against it.

Let's get into it.

xo Kelsey

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1. Prioritize muscle over weight loss

Muscle is your metabolism. After 40, we lose 1-2% of muscle mass per year unless we actively strength train. Building (and keeping) muscle is what will protect your metabolism, joints, insulin sensitivity, and bone density.

2. Get serious about protein

Most women aren't eating enough protein to maintain muscle mass, support hormone balance, or recover well. Aim for 25-30g per meal (especially breakfast), or 100 grams per day.

3. Track your cycle (even if it's irregular)

Understanding your hormonal rhythm helps you work with your body, not against it. It helps explain energy dips, mood swings, cravings, and when your workouts or workload should adjust.



4. Build relationships with providers who take perimenopause seriously

A lot of GPs don't. If you feel dismissed, get a second opinion. Look for functional medicine, integrative, or OB/GYNs trained in menopause support. Advocate for yourself.

5. Stabilize blood sugar (& stop skipping meals)

Blood sugar spikes = inflammation, fatigue, cravings, mood crashes. Balance every meal with protein + fat + fiber. Eat earlier in the day, when insulin sensitivity is highest.

6. Audit alcohol intake

What you could tolerate in your 20s and 30s may now be wrecking your sleep, gut, hormones, and mood. No shame—just awareness.

7. Ditch the low-fat, low-calorie mentality

That was diet culture BS. Your body now needs enough food, healthy fats, and a slow-and-steady fueling rhythm to stay resilient.

8. Rethink how you “rest”

Scrolling isn't rest. Neither is collapsing after overdoing everything for everyone. You need true rest: nervous system down-regulation, sleep hygiene, creative play, gentle movement, alone time.



9. Get baseline labs now

Don't wait until something's wrong. Get a full hormone panel, fasting insulin, lipid profile, and inflammatory markers now so you have data to compare against later.

10. Stop doing only cardio

Endless running, cycling, or HIIT can drain your adrenals if done too frequently. You need a mix: strength + walking + mobility + true rest.

11. Start paying attention to your pelvic floor

Even if you haven't had kids—or had them decades ago. Leaks, low back pain, or a “heavy” feeling down there are signs your pelvic floor might need love. A pelvic floor PT can change your life.

12. Check your oral health

Gum disease is linked to heart disease, inflammation, and even cognitive decline—and it becomes more common after 40. Don't skip flossing. It matters the most.

13. Ditch the shame around “needing help.”

You might need support with mood, with nutrition, with movement, with life. That's not a failure—that's smart strategy.

14. Consider sleep a medical priority

Sleep isn't just rest—it's hormone regulation, metabolic repair, memory consolidation, and detoxification. If you're not sleeping well, nothing else will work right. Period.





15. Support your adrenal health before burnout hits

Women in their 40s are often still caretaking, working, and over-functioning. Chronic stress drives cortisol dysregulation, which wreaks havoc on sleep, blood sugar, belly fat, and mood.

16. Book your first (or next) mammogram.

Yep, the “smoosh your boob between two plates” appointment. It’s not fun, but it’s important. Guidelines vary (some say 40, some say 50), but if you have risk factors or just want peace of mind, don’t wait.

And PSA: dense breast tissue is super common in your 40s—so ask about follow-up imaging if needed. Advocate for yourself. You deserve clarity, not shrugs.



STILL GOT QUESTIONS? GOOD. YOU SHOULD.

This list isn't meant to overwhelm you—it's meant to orient you. If one (or ten) of these items sparked something in you—curiosity, clarity, resistance, relief—I'd love to hear about it.

I personally read every email that comes through, so if you've got a question, a story, or just want to say "WTF is happening to my body??" **hit reply to the email you got this guide from and tell me.**

Seriously. I'd love to know what landed, what's still confusing, or what you wish someone had told you sooner.

We may not have gotten a manual for this season of life... But we're writing our own now.

xo Kelsey

