

THE KEY CONNECTION

Declining estrogen during menopause significantly increases your risk of insulin resistance—the first step toward type 2 diabetes. Estrogen helps muscles use glucose for fuel and regulates liver glucose production. Without it, we become vulnerable to high blood sugar and insulin resistance—independent of age.

Good news: Insulin resistance is reversible at this stage through lifestyle changes.

ARE YOU AT RISK?

- ✓ Age 45+ or early menopause
- ✓ Family history of diabetes
- ✓ Abdominal obesity (waist >80cm)
 - ✓ Physically inactive
- ✓ High blood pressure/cholesterol
- ✓ PCOS, sleep apnoea, fatty liver

Get tested:

Ask your GP for:
fasting glucose, HbA1c,
fasting insulin, and HOMA-IR score.
Standard blood tests can miss early insulin resistance.

1. NUTRITION EAT MORE:

Low GI foods: Vegetables, berries, wholegrains (brown rice, oats), nuts, beans, lean protein

Fibre: 25-40g daily (beans, broccoli, berries, avocado, chia seeds)

Protein + fibre at every meal to prevent blood sugar spikes

EAT LESS:

White bread, pasta, rice
Sugary drinks, fruit juices, alcohol
Processed foods, cakes, biscuits

SMART HABITS:

Start day with protein (eggs, Greek yoghurt) not cereal

Walk after meals to lower glucose

Add nuts to fruit, egg to avocado toast

Drink water, not soft drinks

EXERCISE (Non-Negotiable!)

RESISTANCE TRAINING 2-3x/week MOST IMPORTANT!

Builds muscle = better insulin sensitivity even at rest

Every 10% increase in muscle = 11% reduced insulin resistance risk

Use dumbbells, bands, body weight or gym equipment

Start with 10-15 minutes and build up

Don't worry—you won't "bulk up"

AEROBIC EXERCISE: 30 minutes daily (walking is perfect!)

Research shows: Just 30-60 minutes of strength training per week = 10-20% lower risk of death from all causes.

LIFESTYLE ESSENTIALS

Maintain healthy weight (waist <80cm)

Sleep 7-9 hours (sleep deprivation → sugar cravings → insulin resistance)

Manage stress (high cortisol worsens insulin resistance)

Post-meal walks (even 10 minutes helps)

HORMONE THERAPY

MHT may reduce type 2 diabetes risk by 20%

Estrogen therapy shows protective effect against insulin resistance

Should always be combined with lifestyle strategies

Consider transdermal forms (patches/gels)

WHY THIS MATTERS

Untreated insulin resistance leads to:

Prediabetes → Type 2 diabetes

Heart disease, stroke

Alzheimer's disease ("Type 3 diabetes")

Kidney and eye disease

But at the insulin resistance stage—it's reversible!

THE BOTTOM LINE

Muscle is your metabolic ally. The more muscle you have, the better your insulin sensitivity. Combined with smart nutrition and hormone support, you have powerful tools to protect your metabolic health for decades to come.