



MPowder, naturopathy
and cancer. Your *key*
questions answered.

MPowder®

A WHOLE BODY AND MIND APPROACH TO PART 2.

Naturopathy has a truly holistic view of health.

It relies on science-backed tools such as nutrition, herbal medicine, lifestyle modifications and complementary evidenced-based practices, which can be implemented alongside conventional medicine.

MPowder is a naturopathic-led community dedicated to taking a whole body and mind approach to midlife; of getting to the root causes of symptoms as well as encouraging curiosity in working out what may work for you. Science doesn't stand still. Our bodies are unique. And we are likely to need many new tools to navigate Part 2.

Menopause following a diagnosis of cancer can be incredibly tough. And too often the solutions talked about most are less straightforward for us. Our hope is that by sharing our perspective, signposting to trusted sources and collaborating with the growing community Menopause & Cancer, you can find the support you deserve.

With love Rebekah & The MPowder Team.

88%

Of women did not receive adequate support about menopause following cancer treatment. (source: *Menopause & Cancer*)

48%

Reported that their nurse did not discuss menopause. (source: *Trekstock*)

73%

Of people recovering from cancer use complementary medicine. (source: *Menopause & Cancer*)

SUPPLEMENTATION AND CANCER.

When considering supplementation, it is critical that you speak to a trusted health provider. There are also a number of sources, shared here, that document the latest research into herbs and botanicals.

Then, there are a few simple steps we recommend you take to work out what products may be right for you:

1. Check potential interactions: some supplements may interact with medications used in breast cancer treatment. Make sure you check against your prescriptions and treatment plan.

2. Hormonal effects: although research is evolving all the time, supplements containing phytoestrogens may have oestrogenic effects in the body that could be of concern for individuals with hormone-sensitive breast cancer.

3. Quality and safety: choosing reputable brands and discussing supplements with your healthcare provider first can help ensure that you are using high-quality and safe products.

4. Individual variability: everyone is different and responses to supplements can vary too. What may be safe for one person may not be safe for you. Health conditions, allergies, and individual tolerances should always be considered.



MPOWDER NATUROPATHIC FORMULATIONS AND CANCER.



Our products pack a powerful punch. Which means it is critical to speak to your specialist before introducing any of our blends into your daily routine. To help the conversation, below is a summary of the existing research into the key components in our blends.

Please note each product summary is designed to aid evaluation only and not designed to act as medical advice.

PERI-BOOST FOUNDATION.

A unique multi-award winning foundational powder for perimenopause



Peri-Boost foundation

Peri-Boost contains *soya isoflavones* in the form of an extract, at approximately 37 mg per daily serving. Although this represents a moderate daily amount of isoflavones and is consistent with that of a traditional Japanese diet of 25 - 50 mg daily isoflavones, experts recommend that if individuals choose to safely include soya in their diet after breast cancer, it should be in the form of wholefood as opposed to processed forms such as extracts.

Flaxseed, which is a source of another class of phytoestrogens called lignans is present in this formulation too. A daily scoop provides approximately 1.7g of flaxseed in the form of wholefood per daily serving. And although the research on flaxseed in breast cancer is limited when compared to soya, a clinical trial has shown that 25g per day of dietary flaxseed has the potential to reduce tumour growth in postmenopausal breast cancer patients. The general recommendation seems to be that moderate amounts of ground flaxseeds (up to two tablespoons per day at most - which significantly more than the amount present in Peri-Boost) through diet in the form of wholefood is considered safe.



Peri-Boost also contains ginger, which means that if you have a bleeding disorder or are taking blood-thinning medication (e.g. aspirin) you should talk to your doctor first.

MENO-BOOST FOUNDATION.

A comprehensive daily foundational powder for menopause and postmenopause



Meno-Boost foundation

Meno-Boost contains red clover in the form of an extract with a content of *isoflavones* at approximately 6.4 mg per daily serving. This is a significantly lower amount of isoflavones compared to the typical 25-50 mg daily intake in a traditional Japanese diet. In addition, a 3-year randomised double-blind controlled pilot trial with 401 women with a family history of breast cancer, demonstrated that 40 mg of red clover daily in the form of a supplement appears to be safe and well tolerated. Compared with the placebo group, there was not an increased risk of breast cancer, endometrial thickness, or hormonal changes.

However, because the research on red clover's safety in breast cancer is still limited and due to its content of isoflavones, experts recommend that women with a history of oestrogen receptor-positive breast cancer should avoid red clover as a supplement.

Meno-Boost also contains maca, a herb with adaptogenic properties. Although maca doesn't seem to contain phytoestrogens, some studies have shown its potential to alter sex hormone levels, possibly through the Hypothalamus-Pituitary-Ovarian axis. Therefore, caution should be taken, particularly in women with a history of oestrogen receptor-positive breast cancer.



<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3614644/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23674976/>

MOOD-FOOD.

Our first powdered capsule targeting brain fog, mood and sleep.



Mood-Food

There are no known contraindications with the ingredients present in Mood-Food and breast cancer. However, if you are undergoing treatment for breast cancer that includes tamoxifen or chemotherapy, Mood-Food may be contraindicated due to the presence of *turmeric* extract.

There is some clinical research showing that curcumin, the active ingredient in turmeric, can reduce tamoxifen concentration, although this study used a concentration of curcumin significantly higher than those seen in supplements. In regards to turmeric and chemotherapy drugs, the data so far is inconclusive as some studies show a potential negative interaction while others actually suggest that curcumin can increase effectiveness of chemotherapy by reducing toxic effects. It should also be noted that the current evidence has been largely obtained from breast cancer preclinical models, therefore the clinical significance is not yet known.



Although the data so far is not conclusive, if undergoing treatment for breast cancer it is advisable to check with your healthcare provider before taking turmeric in the form of a supplement.

GUT-INSTINCT.

A prebiotic blend of carminatives, bitters and more to keep your gut fit.



Gut-Instinct

There are no known contraindications in regards to the ingredients present in Gut-Instinct and breast cancer, including for those still undergoing treatment for breast cancer.

We advise a 2 hour break between taking any oral cancer medication and Gut Instinct capsules. This is because Gut-Instinct contains *marshmallow root*, a mucilaginous herb. Although the amount of marshmallow root is low, mucilaginous herbs have a “coating” effect on the digestive tract and can potentially make medications harder to absorb.



Gut-Instinct also contains *ginger*. If you have a bleeding disorder or are on blood thinning medication (e.g. aspirin) please seek medical advice. This formulation should also not be used if you have bile duct obstruction, gallstones, or severe liver or kidney disease, due to the presence of artichoke leaf extract.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BOTANICALS IN OUR BLENDS.

1. Is Ashwagandha safe after breast cancer?

Ashwagandha is a well-researched herb that has been shown to reduce fatigue, relieve anxiety, and improve cognitive function. Clinical trials also demonstrate that it significantly improves sleep quality, promotes sexual function and reduces stress-related cravings.

And although the evidence supporting the use of ashwagandha in cancer care is limited, the data so far is promising. An open-label study with 100 breast cancer patients showed that ashwagandha significantly alleviated chemotherapy-induced fatigue and improved quality of life. Ashwagandha has also been shown to prevent chemotherapy-induced neutropenia in a murine model, as well as to enhance effects of the drug oxaliplatin in cancer cells in the lab. *“There is limited scientific evidence to date regarding the use and safety of ashwagandha in individuals with breast cancer. We also could not find any contraindications in the literature in regards to safety after breast cancer.”*

Research links:

<https://www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/integrative-medicine/herbs/ashwagandha>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23142798/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11480235/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25444914/>

2. Are there any contraindications with oestrogen receptor-positive cancer and pea protein?

Green peas contain phytoestrogens, but levels are generally very low. In addition, the extraction process to

produce pea protein is believed to further reduce the content of phytoestrogens. There is limited scientific evidence to date regarding the use and safety of pea protein for individuals with breast cancer.

Research links:

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/17855484/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11177186/>

3. Can I take red clover if I've had oestrogen receptor-positive cancer?

Red clover contains phytoestrogens in the form of isoflavones, therefore experts recommend that women with a history of oestrogen receptor-positive breast cancer should avoid red clover as a supplement, particularly in highly concentrated forms.

However, a 3-year randomised double-blind controlled pilot trial with 401 women with a family history of breast cancer, found that 40 mg of red clover daily in the form of a supplement appears to be safe and well tolerated. Compared with the placebo group, there was not an increased risk of breast cancer, endometrial thickness, or hormonal changes.

But as research is limited, we recommend caution.

Research links:

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16566672/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18380954/>
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24312387/>

THE ROLE OF COMPLEMENTARY PRACTICES IN MANAGING MENOPAUSE SYMPTOMS FOLLOWING CANCER.



Our hormones are impacted by external stressors as well as biochemical changes. And there is a growing body of evidence pointing to the value of complementary practices in managing menopause symptoms. What is exciting about these interventions, is that all can be safely practised alongside medical protocols.

Nutrition.

Nutrition can be extremely helpful in managing every symptom of menopause. The food we put in our bodies has huge potential. And, regardless of which additional tools you may explore, wholefood should be your first focus. Here are just a few examples of what it has the potential to offer you:



Research links.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36270905/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35546996/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32329636/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26239831/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23446906/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29861661/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33235036/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36880051/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32630022/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9379122/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35419113/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/17179478/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37831449/>

<https://www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/patient-education/nutrition-and-breast-making-healthy-diet-decisions>

Support blood sugar balance - hormone changes in menopause increase our risk of fluctuations in blood sugar levels, which can then impact fatigue, mood swings, irritability, hot flashes, brain fog, poor sleep and weight gain. Consuming a diet that helps us to maintain stable blood sugar levels can positively impact these symptoms. Adding protein to every meal, including breakfast, is a great place to start (check out the “PFF” - Protein Fibre Fats - breakfast protocol!). The Mediterranean diet, which emphasises wholefood, healthy fats, and a balanced intake of carbohydrates, has been associated with various health benefits, including potential positive effects on blood sugar and even managing hot flashes.

Support a healthy gut - research shows that a healthy balance of gut beneficial bacteria is key for hormone balance, metabolism, immunity, mood and much more. Equally, we know now that the hormone changes in menopause impact on our microbiota. A Mediterranean diet, plus plenty of probiotic (e.g. sauerkraut and kefir) and prebiotic (e.g. fibre and antioxidants) foods, can make a big difference.

Choose wholefood over ultra-processed foods (UPFs) and be careful with caffeine and alcohol too - UPFs have been linked to a disrupted gut microbiota, poor blood sugar balance, weight gain, type 2 diabetes, depression, anxiety, cardiovascular disease, and even increased cancer risk and mortality. Caffeine and alcohol in excess can also be counterproductive and exacerbate symptoms such as hot flushes, anxiety, and poor sleep.

A healthy body weight - nutrition can help us maintain a healthy weight via a healthy balanced diet, which can also support recovery after cancer and may help prevent recurrence of breast cancer too.

Stave off fatigue and more through hydration - commit to drinking at least 1.5 L of water a day, particularly if you are undergoing chemotherapy. Not drinking enough water will increase the likelihood of fatigue, feeling light headed/dizzy, constipation, headaches and urinary tract infections.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.



Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a talking therapy designed to break a pattern of negative thoughts.

Unlike other talking forms of therapy, it focuses on current concerns rather than on issues from the past, and teaches practical strategies that can be applied in everyday life.

Recent National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) menopause guidelines state that CBT can not only help with low mood and anxiety, but can also reduce hot flushes, night sweats and improve sleep, during menopause. The British Menopause Society (BMS) states that CBT can be an effective option in addition to HRT, or as an alternative for those who choose not to or are unable to take HRT.

King's College London has carried out important research in the field by demonstrating the effectiveness of CBT for menopause tailored to suit breast cancer patients too. Trial results demonstrated that CBT can reduce the impact of hot flushes and night sweats by approximately 50%, both for women in the general population and for breast cancer patients. CBT also significantly improved quality of life, mood and memory.

Learn more.

If you'd like to explore CBT further, we recommend the book, '[Managing Hot Flushes and Night Sweats, A Cognitive Behavioural Self-help Guide to the Menopause](#)'. It's a great self-guide tool.

Research links.

<https://www.nice.org.uk/news/article/nice-draft-updated-guideline-recommends-more-treatment-choices-for-menopause-symptoms>

<https://thebms.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/01-BMS-TfC-CBT-NOV2022-A.pdf>

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/news/spotlight/normalising-the-menopause>

Emotional Freedom Technique.



Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), or ‘Tapping’, is a powerful stress relief technique, which combines principles of ancient Chinese acupuncture with modern psychology. It works by focusing on a particular issue that is generating a negative emotion such as fear, worry or self-criticism, while tapping on specific meridian points in the body, helping the body move away from the “fight-or-flight” response and reduce the release of stress-related hormones such as cortisol.

Although a relatively new technique, EFT is already the topic of interesting research. Several studies, systematic reviews and meta-analyses have demonstrated tapping’s efficacy for both physiological and psychological symptoms, including anxiety, depression, insomnia, emotional eating, and PTSD. One study, a randomised control trial with 83 participants, showed that tapping significantly reduced cortisol levels to a higher extent than talking therapy, and these results were subsequently replicated by another study. Another randomised controlled trial with 88 menopausal women with mild to moderate depression, showed that using tapping for 8 weeks significantly reduced the mean score of depression. There are currently more than 100 studies on tapping published in peer-reviewed journals.

Learn more.

If you’re curious, why not check out the free resources at [“The Tapping Solution”](#) - and for the app, which is packed full of guided sessions.

Research links.

<https://eftuniverse.com/research-studies/>

<https://www.thetappingsolution.com/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22986277/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32162958/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34013673/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27140673/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29370983/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30777453/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32613097/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35476748/>

Yoga.



Yoga is an ancient body-mind practice with roots in Indian philosophy. Although it began as a spiritual practice, increasing research points to its health benefits, including the management of menopausal symptoms.

A meta-analysis of 13 studies with more than 1,300 participants found yoga able to reduce menopausal symptoms, including hot flushes as well as psychological symptoms such as anxiety and low mood.

There is also evidence that yoga can improve quality of life, mental health and cancer-related symptoms in women with breast cancer, by reducing fatigue and sleep disturbances when compared with no therapy, as well as by reducing depression, anxiety and fatigue, when compared with psychosocial/educational interventions.

Research links.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29452777/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28045199/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35398542/>

Acupuncture.



Acupuncture can be an effective tool to manage pain as well as stress and emotional load. There is also a growing body of research exploring acupuncture's impact on menopause, including for individuals with breast cancer. Studies show regular practice can be helpful in:

1. *Reducing hot flashes and night sweats:* some studies have suggested that acupuncture may help reduce the frequency and intensity of hot flashes and night sweats.
2. *Improving sleep quality:* may help improve sleep quality by promoting relaxation and reducing stress and anxiety.
3. *Enhancing mood and reducing stress:* has been shown to improve mood, reduce stress and anxiety, by modulating neurotransmitters and hormones involved in mood regulation.
4. *Alleviating joint pain and muscle aches:* may provide relief by stimulating blood flow and reducing inflammation.
5. *Boosting energy levels:* may help boost energy levels by improving blood circulation and enhancing oxygenation of tissues.

Research links.

<https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/9/1/e023637>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3677642/>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28829776/>

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00520-017-3955-6>

Journaling.



Journaling can be an incredibly beneficial tool for navigating life and the challenges it can throw at us. There is safety in the pages of a book. An opportunity to express and explore feelings without judgement. There is also a practical benefit in tracking emotions, symptoms of menopause, mood and behaviour.

Research also shows that gratitude journaling can help reduce inflammation, improve sleep and reduce exhaustion. And there are several clinical trials demonstrating that journaling-related interventions can decrease depressive symptoms, stress and anxiety. We know from our community that this practice can be particularly valuable post-cancer treatment.

So, how do you get started?

Choose a consistent time to write - it could be in the morning, before bed, or during lunch breaks.

Create a relaxing environment - find a quiet comfortable place to write, and eliminate distractions.

Start with gratitude - consider beginning your journal entry with a few things you're grateful for (this positive start can set the tone for a reflective and uplifting session).

Write freely and express your emotions - don't worry about grammar, structure, or making things perfect, and whether you're happy, sad, frustrated, or excited, let those feelings come through in your writing.

Be patient and persistent - journaling is a skill that develops over time, the more you practise, the more natural it will become.

Review and reflect - periodically review your past entries, by reflecting on your journey, tracking your progress, and celebrating your achievements. This can be a powerful motivator.

Remember, journaling is a personal and flexible practice. Tailor it to suit your preferences, and let it evolve with you over time.

Research links.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6305886/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3759583/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4669193/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6907914/>

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/advances-in-psychiatric-treatment/article/emotional-and-physical-health-benefits-of-expressive-writing/ED2976A61F5DE56B46F07A1CE9EA9F9F>

https://ggsc.berkeley.edu/images/uploads/GGSC-JTF_White_Paper-Gratitude-FINAL.pdf

Forest bathing.



“spending time in nature, while mindfully engaging with the surrounding sights, sounds, and scents”.

Forest bathing started in Japan as “Shinrin-yoku”, which literally translates as ‘spending time in nature, while mindfully engaging with the surrounding sights, sounds, and scents.’ The practice was born out of government studies in the 1980s which showed that mindfully spending time in nature for as little as 2 hours could reduce blood pressure and cortisol and improve memory and concentration. It was introduced as a nationwide health initiative and, since then, several studies have shown its health benefits. *What is fascinating is that the impact of spending time in nature can be found in as little as 15 minutes a day!*

And there is also some interesting research specifically on forest bathing and breast cancer. Two different 2-week small studies of women with breast cancer showed that serum Natural Killer (NK) cells, the immune cells in our bodies known for their ability to fight cancer cells, were significantly increased after 2 weeks of forest bathing, and levels remained elevated for at least 14 days.

Another large-scale study in Japan showed a significant inverse correlation between residential proximity to a forest and breast cancer incidence in women.

To learn more about forest bathing in the UK, check the National Trust website at:

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/nature/trees-plants/a-beginners-guide-to-forest-bathing>

Research links.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31228960/>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1876382015300111>

<https://openpublichealthjournal.com/contents/volumes/V1/TOPHI-1-1/TOPHI-1-1.pdf>

<https://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/doi/abs/10.1289/isee.2013.P-2-17-12>

Meno.Well Masterclasses.



Our Meno.Well Masterclasses are designed to feed your curiosity. Each month our founder, Rebekah Brown, invites a leading expert in their field to share their knowledge, practical actionable tips as well as their own lived experience of menopause, so you can work out what may work for you. To see what is coming up, head to our website mpowder.store, and click on [Event Tickets](#).

Talk to a member of our team.

Our health concierge team is here to support you whenever you need. Simply email us at healthconcierge@mpowder.store to arrange a private call or start an email conversation.

Learn more.

[Menopause and Cancer podcast](#)

[The Daisy Network](#)

[Macmillan](#)

[Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Centre](#)

[British Menopause Society](#)

[Breast Cancer Now](#)

[OWISE](#)

<https://futuresdreams.org.uk/>

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