

Nutrition Tips for Busy Women 40+

1. Boost Protein Intake — Especially at Breakfast & Lunch

Protein needs increase to help maintain muscle and manage weight.

Chia pudding is a great start, but:

- **Add a scoop of protein powder** (whey or plant-based) to the chia mix.
- **Top with nuts/seeds** (like almonds, pumpkin seeds) for extra protein, healthy fats, and crunch.

Lunch needs a slight upgrade:

- 4 rice crackers and salmon is light. Here are some simple ways to build a more balanced meal:
 - Add **veggies**: cucumber, tomato, spinach, capsicum
 - Add **healthy fats**: avocado, olive oil, nuts
 - Increase the **protein portion**: e.g., more salmon or add boiled eggs or cottage cheese
 - Consider swapping rice crackers for **a small wrap, salad bowl, or high-protein toast**

2. Include Protein-Rich Snacks

Between lunch and dinner, many women experience energy dips or cravings.

- Snack options could include:
 - Boiled eggs + veggie sticks
 - Cottage cheese + berries or cucumber slices
 - Greek yogurt + chia seeds or walnuts
 - Protein smoothie or mini protein bar (check sugar content)
 - Hummus + carrots

3. Evening Meal — Build a Balanced Plate

Quick guide to balanced dinners:

- 1/2 plate **non-starchy veg** (see below for more detailed list)
- 1/4 plate **lean protein** (chicken, tofu, beef, legumes)
- 1/4 plate **slow carbs** (sweet potato, brown rice, quinoa)
- Plus a drizzle of **healthy fats** (olive oil, avocado)

4. Watch Blood Sugar Swings

Avoid high-carb, low-protein meals which spike and crash blood sugar. This is especially important during for peri/post menopause. How:

- Regular meals every 3–4 hours
- Balanced macros (protein + fibre + healthy fats)

5. Hydration & Sleep Matter Too

- Aim for 1.5–2L water daily
- Magnesium-rich foods (leafy greens, seeds) or a supplement at night may help with sleep quality - which affects hunger hormones and fat storage

6. Mindset Reminder

Weight loss may be slower during peri/post menopause. Focus on **body composition** (think cms), energy levels, sleep, and strength over the scale.

✔ **Non-Starchy Veggies (great for volume, fibre, nutrients & fullness)**

These should make up *half of your plate* at lunch and dinner:

- **Leafy greens** – spinach, kale, rocket, lettuce, silverbeet
- **Cruciferous veg** – broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts
- **Cucumber**
- **Capsicum (bell peppers)**
- **Zucchini**
- **Tomatoes**
- **Green beans**
- **Asparagus**
- **Celery**
- **Mushrooms**
- **Eggplant**
- **Radish**
- **Spring onions / red onion**
- **Herbs** – parsley, coriander, basil (great for flavour without calories)

Think roast, stir-fry, steam, or enjoy raw in salads, mixing 2–3 colours for variety and antioxidants, and drizzle with olive oil, lemon juice, or vinegar for flavour.

Mediterranean are a great example of this.

Quick Balanced Day Example

Breakfast:

- Overnight chia pudding + berries + scoop of protein powder + almonds

Lunch:

- Salmon or chicken on a bed of spinach, cucumber, capsicum, tomatoes, avocado, olive oil
- Side: a wrap, brown rice, or quinoa for complex carbs

Snack:

- Greek yogurt with seeds and cinnamon
or
- Boiled eggs + veggie sticks (carrot, cucumber, celery)

Dinner:

- Grilled chicken / tofu / beef stir-fry
- With broccoli, zucchini, mushrooms, beans
- Served with a small portion of sweet potato or quinoa
- Plus olive oil or tahini dressing