

the
new
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pause
Book Club Kit

An Evidence-Based Guide
to Surviving the
Zone of Chaos and Feeling
Like Yourself Again

Mary Claire Haver, MD

#1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *THE NEW MENOPAUSE*

Letter from the Author

Dear Reader,

Perimenopause can be confusing, isolating, and deeply unsettling. So many women tell me they feel like something is “off,” but can’t quite name it. Or worse, they wonder if it is all in their heads. I wrote this book because I’ve lived it, studied it, and heard the same stories over and over again.

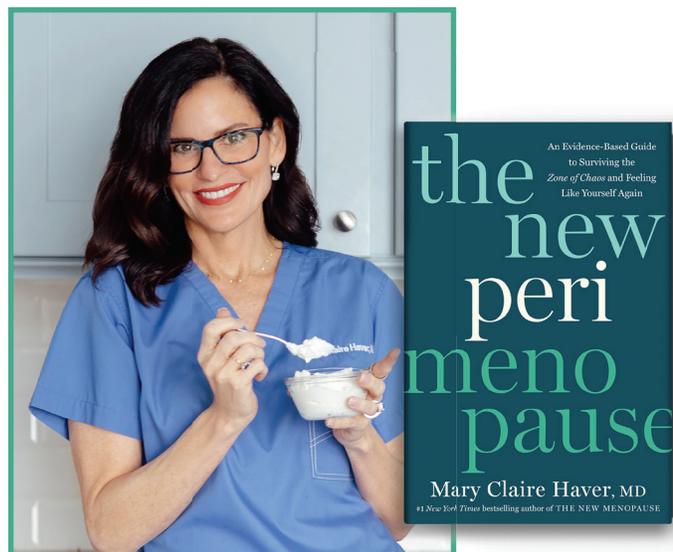
My hope is that as you read together as a book club, you recognize pieces of yourself in these pages. Just as importantly, I hope you recognize how many others are walking this same path alongside you. You are not imagining this. And you are not alone.

Thank you for being willing to have these conversations, share your stories, and listen to one another with compassion. That’s how change begins.

I’m so glad you’re here.

Mary Claire Haver

Mary Claire Haver, MD



Questions

BEFORE READING

1. When did you first sense that something might be changing in your body, mood, or energy, even if you didn't yet know the word perimenopause?
2. How supported or understood have you felt during this stage of life so far?
3. What are you hoping to gain, or simply feel, by reading and discussing this book together?
4. What did you know about perimenopause (or menopause, in general) before you started reading?
5. You may choose to write your responses down and share them anonymously if that feels more comfortable. If you are reading this book solo, try treating these questions as journal prompts.

WHILE READING

1. Dr. Haver describes how perimenopause often begins subtly and unpredictably. What has your own experience been like? Were there early signs you now see more clearly in hindsight?
2. In the sections that explore the wide range of perimenopausal symptoms (physical, emotional, and cognitive), which experiences felt most familiar to you? Were there any symptoms or patterns that surprised you?
3. Consider the chapters that address how women's concerns during perimenopause are often dismissed or minimized. Did any examples or stories resonate with your own experiences? How did it feel to see this acknowledged so directly?
4. *The New Perimenopause* weaves together science and lived experience. Has understanding how perimenopause affects the body and brain helped you feel more validated in your experiences? Have you experienced any symptoms that still feel unexplained by science? Discuss.

5. Did anything in this book help you better understand changes in how you see yourself or relate to others? If not, have any other media (novels, film, television, podcasts) helped in a different way?
6. Throughout the book, Dr. Haver highlights how common these experiences are, even when they feel isolating. How did reading other women's stories affect your sense of connection during this stage of life?

AFTER READING

1. How has reading this book changed the way you think about perimenopause, for yourself or for others?
2. Did this book shift any feelings of self-doubt, confusion, or isolation you may have been carrying? Discuss.
3. What does it mean to you now to know that so many women share these experiences?
4. How do you hope conversations like this one might change how perimenopause is talked about more openly? How do you plan to talk with daughters, nieces, and other younger women in your life about this under-studied phase?
5. What lifestyle changes might you make going forward to ease your symptoms and enhance your quality of life?

The New Menopause Book Club

Refreshment Recommendations for Your Peri-Party!

Food has always been how we take care of each other. We cook when words fall short, when questions are still forming, when we need comfort as much as information. A get-together of friends and family in a book club is exactly that kind of space. We are curious, honest, sometimes vulnerable, and better when we gather around a table.

Perimenopause can feel confusing and personal at the same time. Our bodies are changing, our needs are shifting, and many of us are learning that what once worked no longer does. This season calls for nourishment that helps you feel steady and supported. It also calls for joy, pleasure, and ease. These recipes are here to provide all of that.

This collection was created for hosts who want to welcome others without stress. The dishes are meant to be approachable, flexible, and forgiving. They are designed to be shared, to sit well on a table, and to support conversation rather than steal your attention in the kitchen. Many can be made ahead. All of them prioritize real food that loves you back.

Thank you for opening your home, your table, and this conversation. May these recipes serve as a quiet companion to meaningful discussion, laughter, and the relief that help you feel nourished in every sense of the word.

Thank you for the trust you've placed in me and for all of your support!

XO,

Dr. Mary Claire Haver

The Famous Mary Claire Parfait

Makes 4-8 servings (choose your desired serving size)

The New Perimenopause Book Club wouldn't be complete without a nod to where it all began: the beloved yogurt parfait! Packed with protein, fiber, and fresh fruit, it's as nourishing as it is delicious. Double or triple the recipe to make sure there's plenty to go around for every guest at your book club gathering.

Ingredients

- 2 cups plain full-fat Greek yogurt or dairy-free alternative
- 1 cup sliced fresh strawberries
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 cup chopped walnuts, or nuts of choice
- ¼ cup ground flaxseed
- ¼ cup chia seeds
- ¼ cup hemp hearts
- ¼ cup unsweetened coconut flakes, optional
- 4 small plastic dessert cups (5–9 oz)

Directions

Divide the ingredients into each cup, layering each ingredient on top of the other. This recipe may be made ahead and served chilled.

Ingredient amounts per cup:

- ¼ or ½ cup plain full-fat Greek yogurt or dairy-free alternative
- 2 tbsp up to ¼ cup sliced fresh strawberries
- 2 tbsp up to ¼ cup fresh blueberries
- 2 tbsp up to ¼ chopped walnuts, or nuts of choice
- 1 tsp to 1 tbsp ground flaxseed
- 1 tsp to 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 1 tsp to 1 tbsp hemp hearts
- 1 tsp to 1 tbsp unsweetened coconut flakes, if desired

The New Perimenopause Charcuterie Board

Choose quantities appropriate for your number of guests

A charcuterie board is the ultimate addition to any book club or gathering. Fill it with a vibrant mix of colors, textures, and flavors that will delight every guest!

Here's a little tip: the secret to a balanced board is to include at least three items from each category—think cheeses, cured meats, fruits, nuts, and spreads. There's no wrong way to do it, so let your imagination run wild and have fun creating a board that's as beautiful as it is delicious.

Ingredients

Crackers: seeded crackers such as Mary's Gone Crackers or Flackers, Triscuits, Wasa crisps, or other whole-grain crackers.

Meats: uncured, reduced- or low-sodium, nitrate or nitrite-free. You can ask your butcher for recommendations, or look for brands in your local market that have no added nitrates/nitrites such as Applegate Naturals, some Boar's Head, and some Thumann's.

Cheeses: **soft** (burrata, Brie, mascarpone, cream cheese), **semi-soft** (Havarti, mozzarella, fontina, goat cheese, feta), **firm** (cheddar, Gouda, Gruyère), and **hard** (pecorino, Parmesan).

Spreads/Dips: hummus, baba ganoush (eggplant dip), guacamole, bean dip, homemade Caesar or Ranch dressing, full-fat Greek or non-dairy yogurt flavored with cinnamon or other herbs and spices.

Fruits: grapes, strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, apple or pear slices (spritzed with some lemon juice to prevent browning), peaches, orange or grapefruit wedges.

Vegetables: carrot sticks, celery sticks, cucumber chips, broccoli or cauliflower florets, grape or cherry tomatoes, baby bell peppers or bell pepper strips.

Nuts: walnuts, almonds, pecans, cashews, Brazil nuts, macadamia, pistachios, peanuts.

Beans/Seeds: dried edamame, dried chickpeas, pumpkin seeds.

Accoutrements: a variety of pickles or pickled vegetables, olives or stuffed olives.

Directions

Arrange all the ingredients on a large cutting board or a table covered with butcher paper. Garnish with some seasonal herbs such as thyme sprigs or mint, or include some edible flowers for a bit of a special touch.

Tiramisu Stuffed Dates

Makes 4-8 servings (choose your desired serving size)

Dessert meets real-food simplicity. These espresso-soaked dates are creamy, naturally sweet, and dusted with cocoa for a tiramisu-style bite that feels decadent and nourishing all at once.

Ingredients

8 Medjool dates

1 cup brewed coffee or espresso, black, hot or cold

8 tbsp plain Greek yogurt or non-dairy alternative (1 tbsp for each date)

½-1 scoop 'Pause Nutrition Vanilla or Chocolate 'Pause Protein + Creatine

1 tbsp unsweetened cocoa powder

Directions

Soak the dates: Add the dates to a bowl with coffee (hot or cold) and soak for 2 hours. Drain and pat them dry. If your Medjool dates still have pits, make a shallow slice down the middle of each date (be careful not to slice all the way through) and remove the pit. Gently open each date to make space for the filling.

Stuff the dates: Add the protein powder to the yogurt and mix well. Add a spoonful of vanilla yogurt into the center of each date. Dust with cocoa powder. Enjoy!

Frozen Chocolate-Covered Yogurt Berries (or Nuts)

Makes 4–8 servings (choose your desired serving size)

This frozen treat is a perfect example of a snack that feels like dessert but quietly supports you. Creamy yogurt blended with protein powder adds staying power, berries bring fiber and antioxidants, and a thin shell of dark chocolate makes the whole thing feel special. They are easy to make ahead, live happily in the freezer, and come out just when you want something cool, satisfying, and a little indulgent.

Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh berries (strawberries halved, or whole blueberries or raspberries)
- 1 cup mixed nuts if desired
- 1 cup plain or vanilla Greek yogurt or non-dairy alternative
- 1 scoop 'Pause Nutrition Vanilla or Chocolate Protein + Creatine
- 1–2 tbsp honey or maple syrup, optional
- 1 tsp vanilla extract, optional
- 1 cup dark chocolate chips
- 1 tsp coconut oil or avocado oil

Directions

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a bowl, whisk together the yogurt and protein powder until completely smooth. Stir in the sweetener and vanilla, if using.

Gently fold the berries (and nuts, if using) into the yogurt mixture until coated. Spoon small clusters onto the prepared baking sheet, leaving space between each. Freeze until fully firm, about 1 to 2 hours.

Melt the chocolate and oil together until smooth. Drizzle or spoon the melted chocolate over the frozen yogurt berries.

Return to the freezer for 10 to 15 minutes, until the chocolate sets, and serve as desired.

Lemon Bars

Makes 16 servings

This make-ahead refreshing treat has a creamy, sweet, and tart lemon filling on top of a buttery shortbread crust. They are sure to be the talk of your gathering, and everyone will be asking for the recipe!

Ingredients

SHORTBREAD CRUST

- 2 ½ cups almond flour
- ¼ cup monk fruit
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- ¼ cup coconut oil (or butter, melted)
- 1 large egg (whisked)
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

LEMON FILLING

- ⅓ cup monk fruit
- ¼ cup almond flour
- 4 large eggs
- ¾ cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp lemon zest

Directions

Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a 9×9 inch baking pan with parchment paper. Let it hang over the sides for easy removal.

Make the filling in a medium bowl by stirring together the almond flour and monk fruit. Then whisk in the eggs, lemon juice, and lemon zest until smooth. Set aside.

Make the crust in a large bowl by combining the almond flour, monk fruit, and sea salt. Stir in the melted coconut oil (or butter), then the egg and vanilla extract. It's okay if the dough is crumbly.

Press the dough into the lined baking pan. Bake for 13 to 16 minutes, until the crust is firm and golden.

Remove the crust from the oven, and pour the filling over the crust right away.

Return to the oven for 15 to 18 minutes, until filling is set, but still soft—a little jiggly, like Jell-O.

Cool completely on the counter, without moving, then cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours before slicing. Serve as-is, or with a side of fresh whipped cream (dairy or non-dairy).

SHOPPING LIST

PROTEINS

- 'Pause Nutrition Vanilla or Chocolate Protein + Creatine
- Cured meats for charcuterie board
- Eggs
- Dairy (or non-dairy alternative)
- Greek yogurt or non-dairy yogurt
- Cheeses for charcuterie board

PRODUCE

- Strawberries
- Blueberries/raspberries
- Lemon
- Dried dates
- Guacamole/hummus or other spreads/dips for charcuterie board
- Other fruits and vegetables of your choice for charcuterie board

NUTS/SEEDS

- Walnut halves, mixed nuts or nuts of choice
- Ground flaxseed
- Hemp hearts
- Chia seeds
- Pumpkin seeds

PANTRY

- Crackers
- Roasted edamame/chickpeas
- Almond flour
- Cocoa powder
- Unsweetened coconut flakes
- Dark chocolate chips
- Coffee or espresso
- Coconut or avocado oil
- Honey or maple syrup
- Vanilla extract
- Monk fruit
- Sea salt
- Small clear plastic cups (for parfait)

Use the space below to add any other ingredients you need for your charcuterie board.

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____