

## Change of food and drink works wonders

ACHING joints can be a real wake-up call for many women at the menopause but there are ways to help yourself, like changing what you eat and drink.

During the past couple of years I've found out about how "superfoods" can help the menopause. Look out for plants that contain phytoestrogens – these are plant chemicals which are thought to help you through the menopause by balancing the oestrogen in your body. (Oestrogen is the female hormone which drops in level during the menopause). Great "superfoods" include beans, lentils, soya, seeds and some fruits and vegetables.

I now include them in my diet every day. I've even found some delicious lentil recipes that – amazingly – everyone in my family enjoys. Seeds and nuts are today's preferred snack, rather than the chocolate bar of my pre-menopausal days!

Another "eye-opener" was when I discovered that certain foods and drinks made



*When "the change" hit scientist and professional **Heather Fairbairn**, she decided to hit back: with research, planning, and a special support group. Here's what she has to say about some common issues facing menopausal women*

my symptoms worse. Reducing my caffeine consumption was always going to be a challenge – how was I going to start the day without my steaming hot mug of tea? Help was at hand when I discovered Redbush tea, a South African caffeine-free tea which, with a splash of milk, certainly looks like your traditional cup of tea and, after a week or so, I even grew to enjoy the taste as much!

I used the same approach to reduce my alcohol intake.

I finally chose ginger and lime cordial as my substitute. It's really refreshing and, by only enjoying it at the end of the day, I find it as satisfying as the "traditional" glass of

wine of my pre-menopausal days. By reducing your caffeine and alcohol intake, you will be taking good first steps to helping your aching joints but, if you want to know more, then do join one of our Menopause Support courses. We started these in September but plan to roll them out across the country in this coming year.

● *Heather runs Menopause Support, which is starting a new course in Plymouth on January 23-24. Visit [www.menopausesupport.org.uk](http://www.menopausesupport.org.uk). E-mail any questions about the menopause to [woman@westernmorningnews.co.uk](mailto:woman@westernmorningnews.co.uk) with the subject "Ask Heather Fairbairn".*