

The 7-Day Perimenopause Check-In

Notice your body before you try to fix it

Most perimenopause advice tells you what to do. Add this powder. Cut that food. Buy this cream. The check-in you are holding is the opposite of that. Seven days of paying attention. No fixes. No promises. Just a small daily habit of noticing what your body has been trying to tell you while the rest of life keeps moving.

You will not finish this and have a diagnosis. You will not finish it and know what supplement to take. What you will have is a week of your own data, written in your own handwriting, about a body that is changing in ways the women in your life probably did not have language for either. That is the starting point. On Day 7 you sit with what came up and ask one question. Where was the loudest signal. The answer to that question is where to point your attention next.

This check-in comes from the Lauren Walsh desk at The Wellness Rundown. We are not doctors. Anything that lights up red across a week of these pages is a conversation to have with one. Take this slowly. One page a day. Pen on paper if you can.

Day 1 — Gut + digestion

Something shifts in the gut around 38 to 45 that the same yogurt you have eaten for ten years suddenly cannot keep up with. The pattern is not always loud. It can be a slow loss of the predictability you used to count on. Bloating that arrives at 10 a.m. when it never used to. Coffee on an empty stomach turning from a personality trait into a problem. Today is about logging what your gut is actually doing, not what it should be doing.

Today, notice:

- Did you wake up with a flat-feeling abdomen or a tight one?
- Did anything you ate today produce bloating within two hours?
- Did you have a bowel movement today, and was it on the easy end or the strained end?
- Did you feel hungry at meals, or eating because the clock said to?
- Did you finish the day with reflux, gurgling, or a feeling that food sat?

Reflection prompt (write for six lines):

What is one specific moment today when your gut got your attention. Was it after a meal, in the morning, during stress, before bed? Describe it the way you would tell a close friend over the phone. Not clinical. Real. The point is to land the moment in your memory clearly enough that tomorrow you can compare.

What did you notice today that you didn't notice yesterday?

Day 2 — Energy + the post-meal slump

There is a kind of post-40 tired that does not match what you ate or how you slept. It tends to land between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., the hours that used to require a single coffee and now seem to want a nap or a sugar fix. The story underneath is partly about glucose, partly about hormones, partly about how your cells are aging. Today you log the curve.

Today, notice:

- What was your energy like in the first hour after waking?
- Did you crash within ninety minutes of any meal today?
- Was there a specific window (say, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.) where you felt physically heavy?
- Did caffeine actually pull you out of a slump, or just delay it?
- By bedtime, were you tired-tired, or wired-tired?

Reflection prompt (write for six lines):

Plot today's energy as a line. Wake-up, mid-morning, lunch, afternoon, evening. Where were the two lowest points? Where was the one moment you felt the most like yourself? Specifics matter. "After my walk" is more useful than "afternoon." A pattern across seven days is the goal, and a pattern is built from small concrete moments.

What did you notice today that you didn't notice yesterday?

Day 3 — Sleep + 4 a.m. wake-ups

The 4 a.m. wake-up is one of the most common complaints in perimenopause and the one so many women apologize for mentioning. There is nothing to apologize for. Estrogen and progesterone fluctuate at night, cortisol can spike before dawn, and the architecture of your sleep changes whether or not you are doing anything wrong. Today is about logging it accurately, not judging it.

Today, notice:

- What time did you actually fall asleep last night, not what time you got into bed?
- Did you wake up between 2 a.m. and 5 a.m.? How long did you stay awake?
- Were you hot, cold, sweating, or something else when you woke up?
- Did your mind start running, or did you fall back asleep quickly?
- How rested did you feel within twenty minutes of getting up?

Reflection prompt (write for six lines):

If you woke up overnight, what was the first thought that appeared. Money, kids, a deadline, your body, nothing. Try to write it without editing. Naming the thought is half of getting it out of the loop. If you slept through, write what was different about yesterday that might have helped: a walk, an earlier night, an earlier dinner, less caffeine, sex, a hard cry, a long bath.

What did you notice today that you didn't notice yesterday?

Day 4 — Mood + anxiety + the wire-tight feeling

The mood piece of perimenopause is the one many women say they were least prepared for. It can feel like a low thrum of irritability that arrives before your period and does not fully leave. It can feel like waking up at 4 a.m. with a tight chest about something that does not even rank. It can feel like your fuse got shorter while nobody was looking. Today is for tracking the mood weather, not the mood blame.

Today, notice:

- Did you wake up with a baseline tension in your chest or shoulders?
- Was there a specific moment today when you snapped or wanted to?
- Did you cry, or feel close to crying, over something small?
- How was your patience with the people you love most?
- Did anything reliably bring your nervous system down: a walk, a deep breath, a hug, music, water on your face, silence?

Reflection prompt (write for six lines):

Write one sentence about how today felt in your body, and one sentence about how today felt in your head. Notice if those two sentences are the same or different. The body often reports a stress your mind has not caught up to, and naming that gap is genuinely useful. There is no right answer here. There is only honest data.

What did you notice today that you didn't notice yesterday?

Day 5 — Skin + the inflammation tell

Adult acne in your forties is not the same as the breakouts you remember. It tends to be slower, deeper, more stubborn, and concentrated along the jaw and chin where hormonal skin signals tend to land. Add to that drier patches that did not used to be there, redness that flares with red wine or stress, and a general sense that the same face is communicating differently. Today, you read it.

Today, notice:

- Where on your face did you have a flare, redness, or roughness today?
- Did your skin feel oily, dry, or both in different places?
- Did you eat anything yesterday that your skin tends to react to (dairy, sugar, alcohol)?
- Was your skin more reactive after stress today, or after sleep loss?
- How does your skin feel right now, with five minutes of attention to it, versus how you would describe it in passing?

Reflection prompt (write for six lines):

Stand in front of a mirror with reasonable light and look at your face for one minute. Not to find a flaw. To take inventory. What looks different than it did at 32. What looks different than it did last month. What is your skin telling you about what is happening on the inside of you. Skin is a downstream organ. It reports on gut, sleep, stress, and hormones. Listen.

What did you notice today that you didn't notice yesterday?

Day 6 — Hormones (cycle changes, hot flashes, the libido shift)

Today's page is the one most check-ins skip. Cycles get unpredictable in perimenopause years before they stop. Hot flashes can show up at 41 and disappear for a year and come back at 44. Libido changes in ways that are not just psychological, even when the rest of your life is good. None of this means anything is wrong with you. It means your hormones are recalibrating, and the calibration is bumpy on purpose. Today, you write it down without softening it.

Today, notice:

- Where are you in your cycle right now, if you still track one? Has the timing shifted in the last six months?
- Did you have a hot flash, a night sweat, or a sudden warmth today?
- How is your libido this week compared to a year ago? Compared to five years ago?
- Did you have any spotting, cramping, or breast tenderness outside the usual window?
- How does sex feel in your body lately: pleasurable, neutral, painful, distant, complicated?

Reflection prompt (write for six lines):

Pick the part of today's list that was hardest to write down and write more about it. Not for anyone else to read. For you. A lot of what shifts hormonally in this decade goes unspoken because nobody handed us the language. Use this page as the place to find the language. If a question feels embarrassing, that is usually the question worth sitting with for an extra minute.

What did you notice today that you didn't notice yesterday?

Day 7 — Pattern review

Today you do not log new observations. You read back through six days of your own handwriting and look for the loudest signal. Not the most dramatic one. The one that kept showing up. The skin flare on Day 1 that you mentioned again on Day 5. The 2 p.m. crash that turned out to repeat every day. The 4 a.m. wake-up that happened four nights of seven. Patterns hide in plain sight when you write them down, and they are almost invisible when you do not.

Today, notice:

- Which day's notes were hardest to write?
- Which symptom showed up on more than one page?
- Which day surprised you, in either direction?
- If you could only address one thing for the next four weeks, which one would actually buy you the most relief?
- What is one thing you noticed this week that you had been ignoring for months?

Reflection prompt (write for six lines):

Write the answer to a single question. Which domain mattered most this week. Gut. Energy. Sleep. Mood. Skin. Hormones. There is no wrong answer, and the answer can change in three months. The reason this question matters is that perimenopause symptoms cluster, and addressing the loudest one tends to quiet the others a notch. Pick one. Underline it. Date the page.

What did you notice today that you didn't notice yesterday?

What to do with what you noticed

The value of this check-in is not the data. The data is messy, partial, written in different moods on different days, and influenced by a hundred variables you did not control for. The value is that you spent a week paying attention to a body most of us are taught to outsource to specialists or override with caffeine. Attention is the input.

Everything else downstream of that gets easier when the input is good.

If one domain stood out across the week, that is where to point your effort next, not all six at once. Six simultaneous interventions is how women in their forties end up exhausted, broke, and no closer to feeling better. One domain at a time, with a four-to-eight week window for honest evaluation, is the pattern our desk sees over and over in what actually works.

Our Sunday email is a short, research-backed note. The welcome series goes deeper: what the research actually says helps in a given domain, and what tends to just be marketing. Not a sales pitch. A real look at the evidence, so you can weigh it against what you noticed this week. You wrote the data. Now you have language for the conversation it points to.

A last note. Anything in this check-in that lit up red, recurred all seven days, or felt different in a way that worried you is a conversation to have with your doctor, not with this desk. The Wellness Rundown is a wellness publication. We read research and we have opinions. We are not a substitute for medical care, and the body you have lived in for forty-plus years deserves a real clinician when something needs one. Bring this notebook with you. Specific weekly data is the most useful thing a patient can hand a doctor in a fifteen-minute appointment.

You did the noticing. That is the part most people skip.

— *The Lauren Walsh desk*

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