



28-DAY HORMONE BALANCE RESET GUIDE

Candice Schutz

WHOLEISTIC WELLNESS

CANDICE SCHUTZ

28-DAY HORMONE BALANCE RESET GUIDE

NOURISHING RECIPES, INSIGHTS ON TOXINS, HORMONAL
HARMONY, AND A JOURNEY TO VIBRANT HEALTH



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Welcome!

Welcome to the 28-Day Hormone Balance Reset Guide, your roadmap to achieving hormonal harmony and reclaiming vitality. As a seasoned Hormone Health Coach deeply invested in holistic well-being, I've curated this comprehensive guide to address different hormone imbalances through a combination of specialized meal plans, tantalizing recipes, and essential tips for achieving lasting balance.

In the next 28 days, you'll not only gain insights into the intricacies of hormonal health but also discover practical strategies to align your lifestyle with your body's natural rhythm. Get ready to embark on this transformative journey, where the fusion of nutrition, wellness, and practical tips empowers you to reset and rejuvenate your hormonal well-being. Let's embrace the next 28 days as a commitment to your health and vitality!

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WELCOME

My journey into health and wellness began with personal adversity—battling hypothyroidism, and hormonal imbalances, and facing the profound loss of my first husband to cancer. These experiences deeply transformed my understanding of health, teaching me the critical importance of a balanced lifestyle.

Determined to turn my pain into purpose, I embarked on a mission to not only heal myself but to empower others to do the same. I dove deep into the studies of integrative health, becoming a certified Health & Wellness Coach, with a special focus on Hormone Health. These challenges taught me invaluable lessons about resilience, the power of a supportive community, and the transformative impact of a holistic approach to wellness.



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The first wealth is health
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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HORMONE IMBALANCES

SIGNS, SYMPTOMS AND REMEDIES

First and foremost, it's essential to acknowledge that unless you've undergone diagnostic testing, there's a good chance you might be uncertain about the specific nature and extent of your hormone imbalances.

What you likely do know is that something has shifted or doesn't quite feel right within your body, and you're here seeking solutions to alleviate those symptoms that are preventing you from feeling and looking your best.

HIGH CORTISOL

Triggers/Causes:

- Chronic mental, emotional, or physical stress
- Over-exercising, extreme dieting, and eating disorders
- Food allergies or sensitivities such as wheat and other gluten-containing products, dairy, corn, soy, and sugar

Common Symptoms/Conditions Include:

- Feeling tired yet wired
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep
- Oligomenorrhea (infrequent periods)
- Amenorrhea (the absence of menstruation)
- Decreased fertility
- Inability to concentrate, or constantly feeling distracted
- Anxiety or nervousness
- High blood pressure
- High blood sugar

Tailoring The Hormone Balance Reset Plan To Fit Your Needs:

- Lower sugar intake (which triggers cortisol release) by swapping refined flours and packaged baked goods for unrefined-sugar-free options (baking with dates, fruit, honey, maple syrup is good too!)
- Eat more dark chocolate (70% cacao or higher) to help satisfy your sugar cravings while reducing your cortisol levels.
- Work to support fatigued adrenals by developing a nightly sleep routine and consider supplements like 5-HTP or a B-Complex Formula
- Swap intense forms of exercise like cardio or HIIT for more low-impact, relaxing options like yoga or reformer pilates

LOW CORTISOL

Triggers/Causes:

- Long periods of high cortisol output
- Experience of significant trauma
- Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia (a collection of genetic disorders that can affect the adrenal glands)

Common Symptoms/Conditions Include:

- Difficulty staying asleep
- Decreased tolerance for stress
- Feeling depressed or unable to cope
- Low blood pressure
- Difficulty waking in the morning, and/or feeling unrested after getting adequate sleep
- Fatigue, ranging from low-level, but chronic, to crippling fatigue
- Dizziness, especially upon standing up



Tailoring The Hormone Balance Reset Plan To Fit Your Needs:

- Try swapping alcohol or caffeine (which interfere with your sleep cycle) with herbal tea like peppermint or ginger
- Add in more healing, nutrient-rich foods like bone broth, wild-caught fish abundant in omega-3, or probiotic-rich foods like coconut yogurt.
- Work to support fatigued adrenals by developing a nightly sleep routine, and consider supplements like 5-HTP or a B-Complex Formula
- Sneak in relaxing forms of self-care daily: yoga, meditation practice or walking in nature

LOW PROGESTERONE

Triggers/Causes:

- Long-term stress or high cortisol (see above)
- Exposure to synthetic estrogens or xenoestrogens
- Hormonal birth control, most notably the birth control pill
- Lack of ovulation

Common Symptoms/Conditions Include:

- PMS or PMDD
- Menstrual migraines
- A heavier flow during menstruation
- Irregular cycles
- Bloating in the abdomen
- Swollen and/or painful breasts
- Difficulty getting or staying pregnant (infertility)
- Breakthrough bleeding during the second half of the menstrual cycle

Tailoring The Hormone Balance Reset Plan To Fit Your Needs:

- Incorporate more stress management into your daily routine (yoga, breathing, meditation, baths, walks, nature, etc.)
- Eat more foods that support progesterone production, which would be all of the recipes in week #3, the Luteal Phase
- Try taking a magnesium supplement
- Start swapping endocrine-disrupting beauty products for cleaner options

EXCESS PROGESTERONE

Triggers/Causes:

- High cortisol (see above) which lowers progesterone output and blocks progesterone receptors
- Excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages
- Xenoestrogens, like BPA and phthalates, which mimic estrogen in the body
- Being overweight or obese

Common Symptoms/Conditions Include:

- Heavy bleeding
- Breast tenderness or cysts
- PMS or PMDD
- Fibroids
- Endometriosis
- Menstrual migraines
- Moodiness and frequent meltdowns
- Depression or weepiness
- Mid-cycle pain
- Brain fog

Tailoring The Hormone Balance Reset Plan To Fit Your Needs:

- Focus on detoxifying recipes that support your body in eliminating excess estrogen
- Try replacing any endocrine-disrupting plastic containers with glass & and toxic beauty products with cleaner options

LOW ESTROGEN

Triggers/Causes:

- High stress, resulting in high cortisol levels
- Disordered eating
- Nutrient deficiencies due to poor dietary practices or poor absorption
- Over-exercising, especially in conjunction with calorie restriction
- Hormonal birth control, most notably the birth control pill

Common Symptoms/Conditions Include:

- Oligomenorrhea
- Amenorrhea
- Low sex drive
- Hot flashes or night sweats
- Joint pain
- Dry skin and eyes
- Depression
- Poor cognitive function, especially memory
- Menopause/perimenopause

Tailoring The Hormone Balance Reset Plan To Fit Your Needs:

- Consider switching to a non-hormonal form of birth control (if currently on one)
- Eat more nutrient-rich foods that support estrogen production

LOW THYROID

Triggers/Causes:

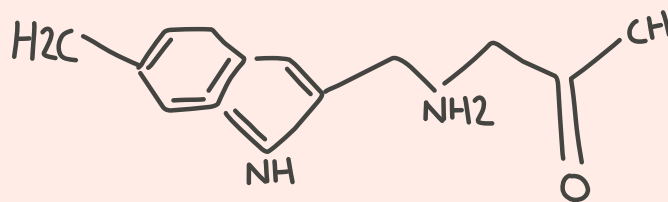
- Inadequate production of thyroid hormone due to excess or insufficient cortisol production
- Endocrine-disrupting chemicals known as xenoestrogens
- Nutrient deficiencies like selenium, iodine, vitamin D, and certain amino acids
- Gut conditions that affect the body's ability to absorb nutrients
- Poor conversion of T4 to the active T3 hormone
- Hashimoto's thyroiditis - an autoimmune condition in which the body attacks the thyroid

Common Symptoms/Conditions Include:

- Dry skin and hair
- Hair loss
- Brittle nails
- Cold hands and feet
- Sensitivity to cold
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Unexplained, rapid weight gain or stubborn fat that is hard to lose
- Heavy periods
- Low sex drive

Tailoring The Hormone Balance Reset Plan To Fit Your Needs:

- Consume foods rich in minerals your thyroid needs to thrive.
- Steer clear of gluten, grains, and legumes and minimize sugar, which can trigger a thyroid autoimmune condition such as Hashimoto's.
- Consider switching to a non-hormonal form of birth control (if on one), as birth control pills deplete the body of crucial nutrients required for the thyroid to work properly
- Try taking a supplement rich in trace minerals that your thyroid depends on to function optimally
- Start swapping endocrine + thyroid disrupting beauty products for cleaner options





TESTING METHODS

FOR A ROOT CAUSE APPROACH

Facing the reality, navigating testing options, and interpreting results can be perplexing. However, it stands as a crucial component in the journey to balance your hormones. This process not only aids in addressing underlying issues but also sheds light on what is essential for your healing and flourishing.

For those grappling with symptoms of hormone imbalance (as outlined in the section above), you can consider the following comprehensive testing options for a more thorough understanding of your hormonal landscape.

DUTCH Urine Test — This cost-effective examination evaluates various metabolites using a single urine sample. It covers a spectrum, including sex and adrenal hormones, estrogen and testosterone metabolites, free cortisol patterns, and more. Moreover, it provides insights into your circadian rhythm, PCOS, and other aspects.

Stress + Sex Hormone Test — A four-point saliva panel examining both sex and stress hormones is crucial for understanding adrenal function. The adrenals, akin to the human body's gas tank, often experience fatigue in our overstimulated world, leading to various hormone imbalances. This test assesses precursor hormones, cortisol, DHEA, and pregnenolone to gauge how your body is producing and managing stress hormones.

Thyroid, Temperature + Pulse Test — A disrupted thyroid function can lead to a cascade of hormone imbalances, hindering ovulation and potentially resulting in infertility or miscarriage. To assess your thyroid, measure your temperature upon waking in the morning, before bedtime, and 20 minutes after each meal. The normal range is approximately 98.6°F or 37°C. For a comprehensive evaluation, undergo a blood test covering TSH, T3, reverse T3, T4, and TPO antibodies.

MTHFR Genetic Mutation Test — Embedded within our bodies is the MTHFR gene, responsible for instructing the production of an enzyme crucial for converting vitamin B9 (folic acid) into a usable form for the brain and nervous system, known as folate. This enzyme plays a pivotal role in a baby's neural tube's growth, metabolism, and formation. Nearly 50% of the population possesses a genetic mutation that hinders the effective conversion of B vitamins, particularly folic acid and vitamin B12. Identifying this mutation is essential, as the inability to convert these vitamins can lead to deficiencies, resulting in depression, detoxification challenges, hormonal imbalances, and multiple miscarriages.

Leaky Gut Test — Unaddressed leaky gut often progresses to autoimmune diseases, significantly impacting hormone balance. The lactulose mannitol test is a common method to assess leaky gut, and there are also reliable blood and saliva tests available for checking intestinal permeability. Recognizing that many thyroid problems originate in the gut, addressing a leaky gut is crucial. While conventional medical practitioners may focus solely on treating the thyroid, the root cause may lie in the gut, making it essential to address this aspect to avoid wasting time, money, and emotional energy.

PH Test — PH, or potential hydrogen, measures the acidity or alkalinity of our body chemistry. It's crucial for a woman's pH to be balanced to support the survival of sperm long enough for fertilization to occur. The Standard American Diet often contributes to an excessively acidic pH in most Americans



CORE PRINCIPLES

OF HORMONE BALANCE

NUTRIENT-DENSE FOOD

Let's get real — nutrition takes the top spot when it comes to your hormones. Your brain constantly communicates with the rest of your body through hormones daily. The energy and nutrients derived from your diet are the building blocks your body requires to produce hormones and effectively fuel itself.

If your diet lacks adequate energy or the necessary "materials" for hormone production, your body prioritizes stress hormone production as essential for survival. This imbalance can lead to erratic hormone levels, triggering various symptoms. The good news is that providing your hormones with a foundation of a high-quality, nutrient-dense diet is the initial (and most critical) step towards achieving natural hormone balance and optimal health.

Action Step:

- **Consume Nutrient-Dense Foods:** Essential for everything from sex hormone production to proper liver function, nutrient-dense foods play a crucial role. A well-rounded, clean diet rich in nutrients is genuinely your best tool for establishing balanced health, including a balanced cycle (all recipes in this plan apply).
- **Balance Blood Sugar:** Optimal gut and liver function, impacting hormones like insulin, cortisol, estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone, hinge on blood sugar balance. To achieve this, every meal and snack should incorporate quality protein, fat, and fiber (all recipes in this plan apply).

- **Eat in a Calm, Relaxed Environment:** Opting for a calm eating environment ensures your body can engage its parasympathetic nervous system (rest and digest mode). This, in turn, enables your body to effectively utilize and absorb the nutrients you work hard to obtain from your food.



OPTIMAL HYDRATION

Proper hydration is crucial for every aspect of vitality and health, and your hormones are no exception. Water assists in transporting nutrients to our cells, lubricating our colon and joints, maintaining circulation, and assisting our liver and kidneys in detoxification.

It's essential for the elimination of harmful toxins and excess hormones that if not properly excreted lead to hormone imbalances.

ACTION STEP — Make sure to drink a minimum of half your body's weight in fluid ounces daily, and seek out filtered options to avoid hormone-disrupting chemicals, chlorine and waste byproducts when possible.



HEALTHY GUT

In the contemporary world, we encounter a myriad of toxins, chemicals, pollutants, processed foods, medications, alcohol, drugs, and stress that disrupt the delicate balance of our gut microbiome, leading to what is known as dysbiosis—an imbalance of gut bacteria.

When this occurs, the absorption of food and nutrients is compromised, allowing larger molecules to cross the gut wall. This phenomenon can result in food sensitivities and an increase in overall body inflammation, potentially eliciting an immune response and triggering autoimmune conditions, particularly affecting hormone regulation, often seen with the thyroid gland.

Action Step: It is crucial to support optimal gut health actively by incorporating a diverse array of nutrient-dense foods abundant in quality protein, fiber, and healthy fats. Consuming these foods in a relaxed environment enhances the effective absorption of nutrients. Additionally, it is essential to avoid triggers that can induce inflammation, which may vary based on individual gut microbiome and hormone balance. For most individuals, these triggers encompass refined sugar, alcohol, gluten, corn, dairy, and processed foods in general—hence, the deliberate exclusion of these items from every recipe in this ebook. The foods and recipes presented in this plan are meticulously crafted to optimize gut health and foster hormone balance.



ELIMINATING TOXINS

Speaking about toxins, while our bodies were originally designed to undergo natural detoxification, the present reality exposes us to a plethora of toxins that didn't even exist in our environment a century ago.

Research indicates that these toxic chemicals are disrupting our hormone health, contributing to an alarming rise in hormone imbalances, with 1 in 2 women reporting such issues, 1 in 7 grappling with infertility, and a 35% increase in women being diagnosed with thyroid disease in the past five years.

The majority of these toxins wreak havoc on the endocrine system, disrupting its normal functioning. Acting as mimics, they enter the body and create confusion by imitating hormones naturally produced. This disrupts the feedback system, compelling the body to cease the production of its natural hormones.

Throughout this hormone reset plan, I encourage you to scrutinize all ingredient labels, not just for food but also for beauty products, cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, etc. You can also use tools like the Think Dirty app to check the toxic rating of each product.

Additionally, these are the top hormone-disrupting toxins to avoid if/when possible for optimal hormone health:

Parabens in Beauty Products:

- Action Step: Opt for beauty products labeled "paraben-free" and explore natural alternatives. Check ingredient lists for methylparaben, ethylparaben, propylparaben, and butylparaben.

Phthalates in Plastics and Fragrances:

- Action Step: Choose products labeled "phthalate-free" and opt for glass or stainless steel containers over plastic. Use fragrance-free products or those scented with essential oils.

Bisphenol-A (BPA) in Plastics:

- Action Step: Use BPA-free plastic containers or, better yet, switch to glass or stainless steel. Minimize the use of plastic in food storage.

Perchlorate in Drinking Water:

- Action Step: Invest in a water filter that specifically targets perchlorates. Stay informed about your local water quality. Reverse Osmosis is great!

Glyphosate in Pesticides:

- Action Step: Choose organic produce to minimize exposure to pesticides, and wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly. Be aware of the environmental impact of herbicides containing glyphosate.

Heavy Metals (Lead, Mercury, Cadmium) in Seafood:

- Action Step: Consume seafood from reputable sources and be mindful of mercury levels in larger fish. Consider incorporating plant-based sources of omega-3 fatty acids.

Triclosan in Antibacterial Products:

- Action Step: Select products without triclosan, especially in soaps and hand sanitizers. Opt for regular soap and water for hand hygiene.

Artificial Fragrances in Cleaning Products:

- Action Step: Choose fragrance-free or naturally scented cleaning products. Explore DIY alternatives using natural ingredients like vinegar and baking soda.

PFCs (Perfluorinated Chemicals) in Non-Stick Cookware:

- Action Step: Use alternatives to non-stick cookware, such as stainless steel or cast iron. Be cautious about the condition of non-stick pans to prevent the release of PFCs.

Organophosphate Pesticides:

- Action Step: Choose organic options for fruits and vegetables, particularly those known to carry higher pesticide residues. Wash the produce thoroughly.

MANAGING STRESS

While a certain level of stress can be beneficial, chronic stress signals the adrenals to consistently release cortisol, placing our bodies in a perpetual state of fight or flight. This chronic cortisol surge affects the pituitary gland, slowing its signaling and leading to a reduction in thyroid hormone levels.

Furthermore, elevated cortisol instructs the ovaries to decrease estrogen and progesterone production, prioritizing the stress response over other bodily functions—potentially contributing to infertility by diverting resources away from ovulation.

Additionally, chronic stress prevents us from activating our parasympathetic nervous system, known as the rest and digest mode. This failure to engage the parasympathetic nervous system hampers proper nutrient absorption from our food, a vital component of hormonal balance and overall health. The body, perceiving a constant state of survival, redirects resources away from non-essential functions, contributing to a myriad of hormone imbalances and health issues. Consequently, stress management emerges as a crucial pillar in maintaining hormonal equilibrium.

Action Steps: Incorporating at least one daily de-stressing practice becomes imperative. Tailor these practices to align with your body's needs during different phases of your cycle, utilizing the movement and lifestyle recommendations provided each week:

- Practice deep breathing exercises (utilizing breath is one of the most effective, easy + free ways to de-stress)
- Yoga, especially yin yoga
- Meditation
- Reading
- Creating a grounding morning routine and relaxing bedtime routine
- Quality time with family and friends
- Journaling
- A hot shower or bath, bonus points if using Epsom salt
- Getting outside or in nature

SLEEP

Sleep is a precious asset for our hormones and overall well-being. It serves as the period when our body undergoes essential repairs from the day's wear and tear, acting as a critical time for the removal of toxins, essentially taking out the trash, particularly from our brain. The significance of restorative sleep cannot be overstated, as its absence contributes to a myriad of health challenges.

Insufficient restorative sleep has been linked to a surge in insulin resistance, escalating blood sugar imbalances by up to 33% after just one poor night's sleep. This imbalance propels an increase in the hunger hormone ghrelin, fostering cravings for carbohydrates and sweets, leading to weight gain (with research indicating an additional 3 pounds for every hour less than 8 hours of sleep). Furthermore, inadequate sleep fuels inflammation and places substantial stress on the adrenal glands, inducing chaos in hormonal regulation.

Action Step: The quality of sleep is often influenced by daytime activities, emphasizing the importance of nutrient-dense foods, hydration, movement, and other hormone-balancing practices throughout the day. However, it is highly recommended to initiate a bedtime winddown routine or ritual as part of this plan. This includes establishing a consistent bedtime, disconnecting from electronic devices at least 1-2 hours before sleep, concluding meals 2 hours before bedtime, and incorporating calming practices such as reading, essential oils, a hot bath or shower, and a soothing tea like chamomile, kava, or valerian root.





MENSTRUAL CYCLE

AND WHY DOES IT MATTER

Do you often perceive your menstrual period as a source of discomfort, inconvenience, or something to anticipate with dread each month? While this mindset is prevalent, it tends to place us in a victimized state, implying that it's something happening to us with little control. In reality, we possess more control than we might think.

Understanding the hormonal dynamics throughout each phase of our menstrual cycle empowers us to adopt habits that alleviate symptoms and even leverage them—such as recognizing peak confidence to plan important presentations or negotiate for a raise.

What a Healthy Menstrual Cycle Should Look Like:

An optimal cycle typically spans 25 to 35 days. If exceeding 35 days, it might indicate conditions like polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) or issues where ovulation occurs later than ideal. Conversely, cycles shorter than 25 days may suggest premature ovulation.

The follicular phase, ideally a minimum of 11 days, is crucial for fertility. Following menstruation, cervical fluid becomes wetter, especially nearing ovulation, indicating a healthy cycle.

Ovulation generally transpires between day 12 and day 17, challenging the persistent day 14 myth. The key is the wetter quality of cervical fluid as ovulation approaches, not a fixed calendar date.

A fertile cycle encompasses a **luteal phase** lasting 12–16 days, contributing to overall fertility when fitting within this range. Understanding these menstrual cycle dynamics gives women the tools to manage their well-being and reproductive health actively.

MENSTRUAL CYCLE

01

FOLLICULAR
PHASE



02

OVULATION
PHASE



03

LUTEAL
PHASE



04

MENSTRUAL
PHASE





HOW TO BALANCE

YOUR HORMONES NATURALLY

CORE PLAN GUIDELINES

Before delving into the core content, there are a few key points to familiarize yourself with, to ensure optimal results from this plan:

1 Flexibility in Starting

- Commence this plan at any time, tailoring the weeks to align with your menstrual cycle. For instance, if you're aware of ovulation, begin at week #2, the ovulatory phase. If experiencing PMS, start at week #3, the luteal phase. If your cycle is uncertain, backtrack from your last period to determine the week to start. If you're not on a cycle (due to birth control, menopause, amenorrhea, etc.), begin at week #1. Even without a current cycle, these weekly practices can help your body naturally align.

2 Recipe and Meal Optimization

- Every recipe, snack, and meal in this guide is crafted to support the various phases of your cycle, promote endocrine system health, and naturally balance hormones. However, you know your body best. Adjust the recipes to suit your preferences and needs. If certain foods trigger inflammation or if there are specific foods you dislike, feel free to substitute for equally nutrient-rich alternatives. Each recipe provides simple swaps and tips, but adapt them based on what works best for you.

3 Not a Diet or Weight Loss Plan:

- This is not a diet or weight loss plan. It's a guide to harmonize hormones and optimize overall health, well-being, and various aspects of life. Think of it as a means to nourish, inspire, and find joy in consuming foods that enhance hormones and promote well-being. While weight-related benefits may occur, the primary focus is on providing essential nutrients for thriving hormones rather than restricting food.

4 Personalized Application:

- The guide is not prescriptive; it's designed to offer ideas and a flexible structure. Apply it to their lives in a way that suits their preferences and needs.

5 Nutrition Priority:

- Stress the importance of nutrition as the foundation for hormonal balance. The energy and nutrients derived from the diet serve as the raw materials necessary for hormone production and overall body fueling. Prioritizing smart eating over restriction is vital for hormone health.

6 Blood Sugar Balance:

- Maintaining optimal blood sugar levels is critical for supporting gut and liver function, both of which have a profound impact on key hormones such as insulin, cortisol, estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. Each recipe in this plan is meticulously crafted to promote and sustain optimal blood sugar balance.

7 Nutrient-Dense Foods:

- Embracing nutrient-dense foods that encompass a harmonious mix of protein, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats is indispensable. This balanced, clean diet serves as your most potent tool for cultivating overall health and ensuring a balanced menstrual cycle.

WEEK #1 – FOLLICULAR PHASE

SPRING

WHAT IT IS

The follicular phase commences with the onset of your menstrual period and typically spans 10 to 12 days. Picture it as the "spring" phase of your menstrual cycle, where your ovaries diligently prepare and nurture an egg.

During this phase, the pituitary gland releases follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), which prompts the maturation of follicles housing a woman's eggs in one of the ovaries. Subsequently, the pituitary gland initiates the release of luteinizing hormone (LH), a key player in the ovulation process. Normally, only one of these follicles will reach maturity.

At the follicular phase's outset, estrogen and testosterone levels are typically low, gradually ascending as the phase progresses. This hormonal shift brings about increased energy, an uplifted mood, and enhanced cognitive abilities. Confidence surges and a willingness to take risks become more apparent. Testosterone, in particular, sparks libido while instilling a sense of boldness.

As ovulation draws near, the uterine lining thickens in preparation for potential pregnancy. The cervix, initially low and closed, gradually opens and begins producing higher-quality, wetter cervical fluid.



OPTIMAL NUTRITION FOR THIS PHASE

This period is pivotal for incorporating foods that support the burgeoning estrogen production. Choices like pumpkin and flax seeds contribute to estrogen synthesis, along with pomegranates and sprouted beans.

Crucial healthy fats from sources like avocado, coconut oil, nuts, seeds, and grass-fed ghee or butter play a vital role. They aid in regulating leptin levels, your satiation hormone, crucial for sustaining the menstrual cycle and providing ample energy for follicle development and release.

Given the heightened oxidative stress before ovulation, a vibrant, well-rounded diet featuring vitamin C-rich foods such as citrus, grapes, bell peppers, and berries, alongside sulfur-rich vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, bok choy, and cabbage, becomes instrumental. This combination combats free radicals and supports the detoxification process.

Cap off your nutritional regimen with a spectrum of nutrient-rich options. Root veggies, lentils, and gluten-free grains like oats, quinoa, and millet join the ranks alongside salmon, eggs, nuts, seeds, and oysters. This ensemble delivers a bounty of vitamins and minerals essential for priming the egg maturation process and fortifying your uterine lining.

CORE EATING PRINCIPLES

- **Wholesome Choices:** Direct your focus towards whole foods that maintain a steady blood sugar level without drastic spikes.
- **Carbohydrate Switch:** Swap simple carbohydrates for complex counterparts to mitigate blood sugar fluctuations.
- **Balanced Proteins and Fats:** Integrate fats and lighter proteins into each meal to assist your body in sustaining a healthy blood sugar equilibrium.
- **Consistent Meal Schedule:** Regular meals at fixed times contribute to balanced blood sugar levels.
- **Hydration is Key:** Ensure ample water intake—aim for at least half your body weight (in pounds) in ounces daily for optimal hydration and overall well-being.

HERBS + SUPPLEMENTS

- Nettle Tea: Aids in replenishing iron stores post-menstrual cycle, supporting recovery from blood loss.
- Holy Basil Tea: An adaptogen that contributes to blood sugar regulation and boosts immunity.
- Schisandra: An adaptogen with post-menses nourishment for the kidneys, stress hormone reduction, and energy elevation. Available in tincture or powder form.

MOVEMENT

Your energy peaks, so channel it into vigorous activities like HIIT, spin, kickboxing, or CrossFit.

LIFESTYLE

While it might not win popularity points, consider minimizing alcohol consumption during this phase. Alcohol competes with the liver in estrogen detoxification, potentially leading to estrogen dominance and significant PMS symptoms.

Take note that the estrogen surge boosts dopamine levels, making the desire for alcohol more pronounced during this phase. While indulging is natural, excessive intake can disrupt hormones and affect your fertile window.

With confidence-boosting hormones (estrogen/testosterone) on the rise, capitalize on this phase for:

- Initiating new projects at work or home.
- Making crucial business and personal decisions.
- Engaging in brainstorming and problem-solving.
- Strategizing in business or at work.
- Being socially active and connecting with others.
- Participating in strenuous physical exercise.



**RECIPE IDEAS FOR
FOLLICULAR PHASE**

MAPLE ALMOND BUTTER GRANOLA CLUSTERS

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Paleo, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 12

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup raw, organic cashews
- 1 cup raw, organic pecans
- 1 cup raw, organic pumpkin seeds (swap for sunflower seeds beginning week #3)
- 1 cup coconut flakes, unsweetened
- 2 tbsp ground flaxseed powder (swap for sesame seeds beginning week #3)
- 1 tbsp Ceylon cinnamon
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 1 medium overripe banana, mashed
- ⅓ cup creamy almond butter, unsweetened
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- 2 tbsp organic coconut oil, melted
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat your oven to 325 F and line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Add nuts to a food processor and pulse several times to "chop" them into a crumbly texture (make sure not to overmix).
3. Add coconut flakes and pulse a couple more times until well mixed.
4. Transfer pulsed nuts and coconut to a large mixing bowl and stir in the remaining dry ingredients (flax or sesame seed, cinnamon, and sea salt).
5. Whisk the mashed banana and wet ingredients in a separate bowl until smooth. Pour this mixture over the dry ingredients and stir well until thoroughly moistened.
6. Spread the mixture evenly on a parchment-lined baking sheet in a single layer. You want it to clump together to achieve those clusters.
7. Bake for 15 minutes, then remove and gently stir to turn over (the key here is gentle to keep those clusters intact).
8. Bake another 10 minutes, until golden brown.
9. Remove from oven and let cool at room temperature; it will crisp up as it does.
10. Store in a tightly sealed glass jar for 2 weeks in the cupboard.
11. Remember to use flax and pumpkin seeds the first 2 weeks of your cycle and swap for sesame and sunflower the last 2 weeks of your cycle.

MINT CHOCOLATE CHIP SMOOTHIE

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Paleo, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 1

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup unsweetened cashew, hemp or full-fat canned coconut milk (add more for a thinner texture, or less for a thicker, smoothie-bowl option)
- ½ cup frozen spinach or leafy greens
- ½ cup frozen zucchini (can swap for additional greens)
- 1 small frozen banana
- 1 scoop of clean vanilla collagen protein powder
- ¼ of an avocado, pitted and diced
- 1 heaping tbsp coconut butter (can be swapped for another nut butter or oil)
- 2 tbsp cacao nibs
- 1-2 tbsp fresh mint leaves (depends on how minty you want it)
- 1 heaping tbsp flaxseed (week #1-2) or sunflower seed (week #3 - 4)
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- Optional 1-2 dates to sweeten

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all ingredients to a high-speed blender and mix until smooth.

CHICKEN SALAD + APPLE CIDER DRESSING

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Paleo, Sugar-Free

Servings — 2 Cook

Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For The Salad:

- 1 delicata squash, rinsed and dried
- 2 cups fresh arugula
- 1 cup organic rotisserie chicken
- 1 tbsp avocado oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- ½ cup walnuts, chopped
- ¼ cup pomegranate seeds
- sea salt + black pepper to taste
- 1 avocado, peeled and chopped

For The Dressing:

- 1 cup apple cider (look for one with no added sugar)
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 2 tbsp minced shallots
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp sea salt
- black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
2. Slice delicata squash in half lengthwise, scoop out seeds, then cut into small pieces (so that they look like the half-moon shapes pictured above).
3. Toss squash with a tbsp of avocado oil, garlic cloves, sea salt, and pepper (and optional maple syrup) and spread evenly in a large baking pan. Roast at 425 for 20 minutes, then remove, flip, and add the walnut pieces. Place back in the oven and roast for 10 minutes or until golden brown.
4. While squash is roasting, combine the apple cider, apple cider vinegar, and minced shallots in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook for 8 or so minutes, until cider is reduced to approximately one cup. Turn off the heat, and whisk in the remaining dressing ingredients.
5. Place arugula in a large bowl or serving platter and add roasted squash, toasted walnuts, pomegranate seeds, avocado, and chicken. Pour dressing over and toss to combine.

BUILD YOUR OWN BOWL + ROMESCO SAUCE

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Sugar-Free, Paleo + Vegan Option

Servings — Depends

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For The Bowl:

- Base: leafy greens (spinach, arugula, butter lettuce, romaine)
- Veggies: roasted bell peppers or asparagus, artichokes, green beans, peas, eggplant, zucchini, summer squash, fresh cucumber, cabbage, broccoli, Brussels
- Proteins: wild salmon, roasted organic chicken, lamb, quinoa cooked in bone broth
- Fats: nuts and seeds, avocado, extra virgin olive oil, greek or coconut yogurt/kefir

For The Sauce:

- 2 large organic red bell peppers (you can buy in a jar pre-roasted to skip the cooking step if preferred)
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup slivered almonds (no skin)
- ½ cup walnuts
- ½ cup tomato paste
- ¼ cup sherry vinegar
- ¼ cup chopped Italian flat-leaf parsley
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 2 tsp sea salt
- Red chili flakes to taste
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil

DIRECTIONS:

1. If cooking bell peppers at home (vs. buying them pre-roasted in a jar), rinse, slice them in half, de-seed them, and coat them in avocado oil and sea salt. Roast in a pan at 425 for 30 minutes. Remove, let cool, and peel off the skin.
2. Add all remaining ingredients except olive oil to the food processor. Mix, slowly adding olive oil while the motor is running. Mix until combined; the sauce should still have a thick, slightly chunky texture.
3. Keeps well in the fridge for 2-3 weeks.

SEED CYCLE BLISS BALLS

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Paleo, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 15-20 balls, depending on size

Cook Time — 10 minutes + 1 hour to chill

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup pumpkin seeds (week #1 + #2) or sunflower seeds (week #3 + #4)
- ¼ cup flax seeds (week #1 + #2) or sesame seeds (week #3 + #4)
- 1 cup pitted + coarsely chopped Medjool dates
- ¼ cup creamy cashew or almond butter
- ¼ cup coconut oil, melted
- ¼ cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- 2 tbsp coconut flour
- ½ tsp sea salt
- Optional -- 2 tbsp cacao powder to add a chocolatey taste or 2 tbsp coconut shreds

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all of the nuts and seeds together in a food processor and mix until a flour-like mixture has formed. Remove and set aside.
2. Pulse the dates in the food processor until a sticky ball has formed. Add nut butter and melted coconut oil and continue to pulse until creamy.
3. Add back in the ground nut/seed flour and remaining ingredients, processing until well mixed.
4. Remove dough and roll it into balls. Option to coat in cacao powder or coconut shreds (I like to do half and half).
5. Store them in the fridge for 2 weeks or in the freezer for up to 2 months.

WEEK #2 – OVULATION PHASE

SUMMER

WHAT IT IS

Ovulation typically happens between days 12-17 of your cycle, known as the "summer" phase. This brief period, lasting about two to three days, involves a surge of luteinizing hormone (LH), prompting the dominant follicle to burst open, releasing the egg into the fallopian tube. The egg remains viable for approximately 12-24 hours, disintegrating if not fertilized.

The cervix ascends, optimizing the egg's encounter with sperm, requiring them to traverse a longer distance. Only the most robust sperm endure this journey through the cervix, uterus, and fallopian tubes. Concurrently, the cervix softens and opens, with the cervical fluid considered fertile.

Estrogen and testosterone levels peak during the ovulatory phase, contributing to heightened attractiveness and an increased sex drive. This surge aligns with the body's innate drive to maximize genetic potential, naturally amplifying the desire for intimacy within the fertility window.

OPTIMAL FOODS TO INCORPORATE

As estrogen peaks, incorporating foods that aid liver detoxification of potential excess estrogen is beneficial. Opt for nutrient-rich cruciferous vegetables like Brussels sprouts, kale, cabbage, turnips, cauliflower, bok choy, and broccoli during this phase.

Choose light yet nourishing options, abundant in vitamins and minerals. Quinoa, brown rice, leafy greens, nutrient-packed vegetables, and cold-water fish make excellent choices. This is particularly advantageous as our appetite tends to be suppressed, transitioning from "feeding and foraging" mode to a focus on sexual desire during this hormonal phase.

CORE EATING PRINCIPLES

- Eat lots of fresh but nourishing foods (think SUMMER foods)
- Avoid heavy foods as they can often make you feel a bit lethargic.
- Try to eat regular meals, even if not as hungry, to keep blood sugar balanced
- Add foods high in water content to help with hydration and eliminate bloating

HERBS + SUPPLEMENTS

- Maca — Consider incorporating a teaspoon of gelatinized organic maca powder a few days before, during, and after ovulation to enhance libido and fertility. The Hormone Helper Hot Chocolate is an excellent choice, and it can be easily added to any smoothie.
- Shatavari — This adaptogen is beneficial for boosting LH production and supporting libido during ovulation. If you're aiming to conceive, consume it in either tea or powder form from menstruation up until ovulation begins. Take a break and resume this regimen in the following cycle.
- Red Clover — Embrace this herb to increase cervical mucus and lubricate the vagina. Consume it daily as an infusion or tea to optimize conditions for conception.

MOVEMENT

This phase remains optimal for engaging in intense physical exercise, activities, and sports. As the egg is released and travels down the fallopian tube, you might experience slight stiffness or soreness around the hips, lower abdomen, and lower back, making hip-opening yoga poses potentially beneficial.

LIFESTYLE

With estrogen and testosterone enhancing sexual desire, the shift from "feeding and foraging mode" to procreation mode often results in a more suppressed appetite. Additionally, progesterone levels, which typically boost appetite, are at their lowest, leading to a tendency to eat less or opt for lighter meals. Ensure you receive adequate nourishment through lighter proteins, fresh produce, and healthy fats, as suggested in the recipes above.

Consider continuing to limit alcohol consumption during this phase, given that estrogen is at its peak, necessitating optimal liver support for proper detoxification (foods like beets and sulfur-containing veggies can assist).

As your confidence-boosting hormones (estrogen + testosterone) reach their peak, it's an opportune time for:

- Job interviews or any situation where peak performance is crucial
- Negotiating a raise or engaging in important conversations
- Participating in networking or public speaking events
- Launching a new business or venture
- Planning a date night or expressing romantic interest



RECIPE IDEAS FOR OVULATION PHASE



CREAMY CHOCOLATE MACA BREAKFAST PORRIDGE

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 2-4

Cook Time — 15-20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup uncooked sprouted quinoa (sprouting increases its bioavailability); swap for cauliflower rice if you don't do grains well
- ½ cup riced zucchini or cauliflower, pulsed in a food processor
- 2 cups unsweetened coconut, cashew, or hemp milk
- 2 tbsp cacao powder
- 2-4 tbsp maple syrup
- 2-4 tbsp dark chocolate (70% cacao or higher)
- 1 tbsp gelatinized organic maca root powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp sea salt

DIRECTIONS:

1. Make sure your zucchini or cauliflower is pulsed in a food processor until it resembles a "rice-like" consistency.
2. Add quinoa, nut milk, and sea salt to a medium-sized stovetop pot and boil, then reduce to a simmer, cooking as long as the package instructions recommend, typically 15 or so minutes.
3. Once it's halfway through cooking, stir in the zucchini or cauliflower rice.
4. Once the liquid is mostly absorbed and the mixture is well-cooked, remove from heat and stir in cacao powder, chopped dark chocolate, maca powder, maple syrup, and vanilla extract.
5. Top with creamy nut butter, flaxseeds, banana, coconut flakes, and more dark chocolate if you prefer. Store in a glass container in the fridge for up to 4 days.

BEST GREEN SMOOTHIE EVER

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Paleo, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan-friendly option

Servings — 1

Cook Time — 5 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cups cashew, coconut, hemp, or brazil nut milk (use less to make into a smoothie bowl or more if you like a thinner consistency)
- 1 serving vanilla collagen protein powder
- 1 heaping tbsp flaxseed powder
- ¼ - ½ avocado, pitted and chopped
- 1-2 dates, pitted and chopped
- 2 cups frozen spinach or leafy greens
- 1 small frozen banana or ½ cup frozen berries
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- Optional: 1 handful of organic broccoli sprouts for some extra liver love

DIRECTIONS:

1. Mix all ingredients in a high-speed blender until smooth and creamy.
2. Try topping with the Seed Cycling Maple Almond Butter Granola Clusters for an additional hormone-balancing treat.

ALL HAIL KALE CAESAR SALAD

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free

Servings — 2-4

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For The Salad

- 1 large bundle of organic lacinato kale, de-stemmed, chopped, rinsed and dried
- 1 head romaine lettuce, chopped, rinsed and dried
- Optional 2-4 cups organic shredded rotisserie chicken, wild-smoked salmon, grilled shrimp, or roasted chickpeas for protein
- 1 large avocado, sliced

For the Tahini Miso Dressing

- ¼ heaping cup of fresh lemon juice
- ¼ heaping cup of ground tahini
- ¼ heaping cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 2 heaping tbsp chickpea miso paste
- 2 tsp pure maple syrup
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp sea salt
- Black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Mix all dressing ingredients in a high-speed blender until creamy. Set aside.
2. Assemble salad ingredients by tossing together the rinsed, chopped, and dried kale + romaine, avocado slices, and protein options of choice.
3. Toss in the dressing (you should have some leftovers) and garnish with fresh lemon wedges.

BROCCOLI FALAFEL + TAHINI MISO DRIZZLE

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free

Servings — 4-6 Cook

Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For The Falafels

- ½ head of a large broccoli, chopped into florets
- ½ onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 large handful mixed herbs (such as parsley and mint)
- 1 15 oz. can Eden Organics chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 3 tbsp almond flour
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- 2 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp coriander
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp baking powder

For the Tahini Miso Dressing

- ¼ heaping cup of fresh lemon juice
- ¼ heaping cup of ground tahini
- ¼ heaping cup of extra virgin olive oil
- 2 heaping tbsp chickpea miso paste
- 2 tsp pure maple syrup
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- sea salt and ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 425 F and line a large baking tray with parchment paper.
2. Using a food processor, pulse the broccoli florets for a few seconds until it resembles a "rice-like" texture. Remove the broccoli and repeat the process with the onion, garlic, and herbs.
3. Add the broccoli rice back, along with all remaining ingredients. Pulse until combined (do not overmix; you want the texture to be slightly chunky).
4. Using your hands or an ice cream scooper, roll into balls and place evenly on the parchment-lined pan. Bake for 15 minutes, remove and flip, then bake for 5-10 minutes more until the balls are golden brown.
6. Add all tahini miso drizzle ingredients to a high-speed blender and mix until smooth. Assemble the rest of your toppings to create a bowl or lettuce wraps.
7. Once falafels are done cooking, let cool for a few minutes, then add to bowl and drizzle generously with tahini sauce. Will last in the fridge for 5 days.

HORMONE HELPER HOT CHOCOLATE

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Paleo, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 1 12 oz cup

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 10 oz (about 1 ½ cups) of non-dairy milk like Brazil Nut, cashew, coconut, or hemp
- 1 tbsp coconut oil or butter
- 1-2 squares of clean dark chocolate
- 1-2 dates, pitted and chopped (can swap for 1-2 tsp pure maple syrup)
- 1 heaping tbsp cacao powder
- 1 tsp organic maca root powder
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp Ceylon cinnamon
- Sprinkle of sea salt
- Optional adaptogen boost such as reishi or chaga mushroom powder

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add the coconut oil and dark chocolate squares to a small stovetop pot over medium heat.
2. Once melted, add the remaining ingredients and heat through until steaming (not boiling), stirring frequently.
3. Pour into a high-speed blender and pulse until creamy and frothy.

WEEK #3 – LUTEAL PHASE

SUMMER

WHAT IT IS

This phase, spanning approximately 10-12 days (roughly days 14-24 of your cycle), is commonly referred to as the "fall season" of your menstrual cycle.

To be considered an optimal fertile cycle, the luteal phase must fall within the timeframe of days 14-24. This window allows sufficient time for a fertilized egg to travel from the fallopian tube and implant into the uterine lining, typically taking at least 10 days. Following ovulation, FSH and LH levels sharply decline, remaining low for the remainder of the cycle. While estrogen and testosterone also decrease, estrogen will reappear later in the luteal phase.

Conversely, progesterone levels rise during this phase, stimulating the growth of the uterine lining in anticipation of pregnancy. Additionally, progesterone transforms cervical fluid from stretchy and wet to sticky and dry, making it less fertile and unfavorable for sperm.

Emotionally, the first half of the luteal phase often retains the positive effects from the ovulatory or "summer phase." However, as progesterone production increases, there's a tendency to wind down, and the desire to avoid the social scene that was sought in the first half of the cycle becomes more apparent.

In the second week of the luteal phase, estrogen experiences a slight increase to prepare the uterine lining for potential pregnancy further. If pregnancy does not occur, estrogen and progesterone levels drop, leading to the shedding of the uterine lining during the subsequent bleeding or menstruation phase.

OPTIMAL FOODS TO INCORPORATE

It's crucial to choose foods that support progesterone production during the luteal phase, ensuring a healthy growth of the uterine lining. Opt for foods rich in zinc and magnesium, such as nuts, seeds, oysters, and beans, along with vitamin C sources like citrus, leafy greens, and bell peppers. Additionally, incorporate foods high in vitamin B6, like salmon, bananas, and walnuts, to boost progesterone levels.

Maintaining stable blood sugar is essential during the luteal phase, as progesterone can lead to lower-than-normal blood sugar levels compared to the follicular phase. This dip may contribute to emotional PMS symptoms like moodiness and anxiety. Ensure a consistent intake of nutrient-dense meals balanced with protein, fat, and fiber, as demonstrated by the recipes in this plan, for optimal blood sugar balance.

To address water retention that increases during this phase, causing bloating, stay well-hydrated by drinking at least half of your body weight in ounces of water daily. Include hydrating fruits and vegetables in your diet.

During the luteal phase, the decline in feel-good hormones like serotonin and dopamine may lead to stress, sadness, and cravings for sweets and carbohydrates. Choose treats or carbohydrate-rich options from the recipes provided in your reset plan, ensuring they contain ample nutrients, protein, fat, and fiber to satisfy your sweet cravings without the subsequent sugar crash.

CORE EATING PRINCIPLES

- Ensure to boost your protein and healthy fat intake, along with incorporating warming, nourishing foods to support your body as it prepares for a demanding period.
- Include a diverse range of hydrating fruits and vegetables in your diet, and stay well-hydrated by drinking at least half of your body weight in ounces of water. This helps combat water retention and bloating.
- Aim to reduce alcohol and caffeine consumption during this phase, as they often exacerbate PMS symptoms and deplete the body of essential nutrients needed for the impending bleeding phase.

HERBS + SUPPLEMENTS

- Chaste Tree Berry — aids in extending the luteal phase by boosting progesterone levels, crucial for addressing potential conception challenges. Take in tincture or capsule form daily during this phase.
- Raspberry Leaf — consume as a tea to alleviate cramping during both the luteal and menstruation phases.
- Burdock Root — assists in gently detoxifying the liver, eliminating excess hormones built up in the body. Consume daily as a tea or infusion.
- Triphala — start taking at the end of your luteal phase (a few days before menstruation) to support elimination, relieve constipation, and enhance your body's detoxification capabilities.
- Dandelion Root — incorporate into your daily routine to minimize bloating or edema.
- Ginger — enjoy daily as a tea to warm the body, alleviate gas and bloating, and support digestion and detoxification.

MOVEMENT

Light exercise is encouraged during this phase to help balance mood and hormones. Just be sure to stay away from anything too strenuous as it will deplete the body.

LIFESTYLE

Similar to the transition from summer to fall, you'll naturally observe your body inclining toward a slower pace, and you might feel more introverted. It's crucial to heed these signals and allow yourself sufficient space. Engage in activities such as journaling, massage, meditation, deep breathing exercises, stretching, and yoga.

As your progesterone (the calming and relaxation hormone) levels rise, it's an opportune time for:

- Nesting
- Organizing your home or office
- Attending to personal to-do lists and chores
- Prioritizing excellent self-care practices, like massages and baths
- Embracing gentle exercises, such as yin yoga
- Opting for earlier bedtimes or indulging in extra sleep in the mornings

RECIPE IDEAS FOR LUTEAL PHASE



BANANA BREAD WALNUT OATS

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 2

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups unsweetened coconut, hemp, cashew or almond milk
- 1 cup sprouted, gluten-free rolled oats (substitute for cauliflower rice if you don't digest grains well or have a thyroid condition)
- 1 ripe banana, mashed
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- 2-4 tbsp pure maple syrup
- 1 tbsp creamy nut butter
- 1 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Sprinkle of sea salt
- Optional coconut shreds, flakes or yogurt for topping
- Optional (but recommended) 1 serving collagen protein powder

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a medium-sized stovetop pot, bring milk to a boil.
2. Add in oats and stir well, reducing heat to a simmer for about 5 minutes.
3. Stir in mashed bananas, walnuts, cinnamon, vanilla, and sea salt. Keep cooking until most of the liquid is absorbed (about 2-3 minutes).
4. Remove from heat and stir in maple syrup, creamy nut butter, grass-fed ghee, and optional collagen powder and coconut shavings.

SWEET POTATO TOAST 2 WAYS

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan, Paleo

Servings — 2

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large sweet potato, sliced into ¼-inch thick pieces

For Savory Toppings

- Kale Walnut Pesto
- Sliced avocado
- Hempseeds
- Drizzle of extra virgin olive oil
- Flaky sea salt, pepper, and chili flakes
- Fresh herbs (like basil, dill, or arugula)
- Optional pasture-raised fried eggs

For Sweet Toppings

- 2 tbsp creamy nut butter
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1-2 tbsp 4th and Heart Grass-fed Ghee spread (can substitute for coconut oil or butter)
- Chopped walnuts
- Sprinkle of cinnamon or flaky sea salt
- Optional coconut yogurt or shavings for toppings

DIRECTIONS:

1. To make the toast, add ¼ inch thick pieces of sweet potato to a toaster and toast at least 2-3 times (depending on your toaster, you may have to do this several times) until cooked through. Alternately, if you like the sweet potato softer, you could bake it at 400 for 1 hour (until soft) and layer toppings to make a stuffed sweet potato version.
2. Once cooked, layer with savory or sweet toppings.

SHEET PAN GLAZED GINGER MISO SALMON

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free

Servings — 2

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For The Salmon + Broccoli

- 2 tbsp avocado oil or grass-fed ghee
- 1 large head of broccoli, rinsed, dried and chopped into florets
- 2 wild salmon fillets
- Minced garlic
- Sea salt + black pepper to taste

For The Ginger Miso Sauce

- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- 2 tsp minced ginger
- ¼ cup chickpea miso paste
- ¼ cup hot water
- Chopped walnuts
- Sprinkle of cinnamon or flaky sea salt
- Optional coconut yogurt or shavings for toppings

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F and line it with parchment paper.
2. Spread broccoli florets evenly on parchment paper and coat with 1-2 tbsp avocado oil or melted grass-fed ghee. Coat with garlic, sea salt, and black pepper and roast for 15 minutes.
3. whisk together ginger miso sauce ingredients while baking broccoli and set aside.
4. After 15 minutes, remove the tray from the oven and nestle the wild salmon fillets, skin side down, among the broccoli.
5. Pour miso sauce over broccoli and salmon and sprinkle sea salt and pepper on the salmon.
6. Roast in the oven for 8-10 more minutes, until the fillets are cooked and the broccoli is tender.

GUT-FRIENDLY MAC N' CHEESE

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan-friendly

Servings — 4

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For the Pasta

- 1 box gluten-free, nutrient-rich pasta of choice (chickpea, lentil, quinoa, or brown rice options, especially for week #3)
- 1-2 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- Optional veggies like cooked peas, roasted broccoli, or leafy greens
- Sea salt, chile flakes, and black pepper to taste

For the "Cheese" Sauce

- 1 cup roasted butternut squash (can also swap for yams or carrots)
- 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee, melted
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsweetened and unflavored nut milk, such as cashew or almond
- $\frac{1}{4}$ heaping cup of nutritional yeast
- 2 tbsp chickpea miso paste
- 1 tbsp arrowroot starch
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp sea salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp onion powder
- Black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Follow the cooking instructions for your pasta of choice.
2. While cooking pasta, add cheese sauce ingredients to a high-speed blender and mix until smooth and creamy. Set aside.
3. Once pasta is done cooking, follow instructions to drain and rinse. Place in a bowl and toss with more grass-fed ghee and the cheesy sauce (+ chopped leafy greens like spinach or cooked veggies of choice). Sprinkle with sea salt, black pepper, and red chile flakes.

****Note — depending on how saucy you like, you may have leftover cheesy sauce. Reserve to use on baked, stuffed sweet potatoes if you like.*

PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE CHIP CHICKPEA COOKIE DOUGH

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 8

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can Eden's organic chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- ½ cup organic creamy peanut butter (with no additives or inflammatory oils like palm, sunflower, etc.) I like the Marantha brand.
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ½ cup chopped dark chocolate or chocolate chips (70% cacao or higher)
- Optional - 2-4 tbsp almond or oat flour if you like a thicker, dryer cookie dough consistency

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all ingredients except for chocolate to a food processor or high-speed blender and mix until creamy and smooth.
2. Fold in dark chocolate chunks or chips with a spatula until evenly mixed.
3. Sprinkle with more sea salt if desired. Store in the fridge for up to a week.

WEEK #4 – MENSTRUAL PHASE

WINTER

WHAT IT IS

This stage typically falls between days 24-28, encompassing the final days of your cycle when menstruation or bleeding occurs as the uterine lining sheds. Consider this as the winter season of your cycle – a time when the body rids itself of what's no longer necessary and readies for new growth. For most women, this phase spans about two to seven days.

The onset of the bleeding phase occurs as progesterone levels decline, prompting the breakdown and shedding of the uterine lining. Throughout this week, your energy is at its lowest point in the entire cycle. You might experience feelings of fatigue, withdrawal, and introspection.

OPTIMAL FOODS TO INCORPORATE

It is strongly recommended to incorporate a variety of nutritious comfort foods such as soups, bone broth, stews, and vitamin-packed smoothies to replenish lost iron and mineral stores due to blood loss. Opt for iron-rich foods like liver, grass-fed animal protein, beans, and leafy green vegetables.

Ensure an ample intake of B vitamins, vital for supporting energy levels during this period. Include nuts, seeds, eggs, leafy greens, mushrooms, and dark chocolate in your diet. Boost your vitamin C consumption with citrus fruits, leafy greens, bell peppers, and colorful fruits and vegetables to enhance iron absorption.

Include zinc-rich foods like organic peanut butter and seaweed to remineralize your blood. Finally, incorporate omega fatty acid-rich foods such as avocados, wild-caught fish, cod liver oil, hemp, sesame seeds, and sunflower seeds to reduce inflammation and enhance overall mood.

CORE EATING PRINCIPLES

- Maintain stable blood sugar levels to avoid adding extra stress on the body during the process of releasing the uterine lining.
- Embrace a WINTER mindset by opting for warm, nourishing, and easily digestible foods. Consider reducing caffeine intake if you experience intense cramping.
- Stay well-hydrated by continuing to drink plenty of water, aiming for at least half your body weight in ounces to alleviate bloating and cramping.

HERBS + SUPPLEMENTS

- Red Raspberry Leaf — Continue consuming this tea or infusion throughout the menstrual cycle to alleviate cramping and replenish iron levels in the body.
- Nettle — This tea or infusion is also rich in iron, aiding in the support of blood loss and the remineralization of the body.
- Crampbark — Assists in relieving cramping associated with menstruation. Take it as a tincture or tea on a daily basis.
- Turmeric — A highly anti-inflammatory spice that supports the digestive system and helps alleviate menstrual cramps. Incorporate it into your meals or take it as a daily capsule.
- Chaga Mushroom — This adaptogen, with its earthy taste, is a personal favorite for its immune-supporting and energy-regulating properties. Consume it as a drink or add the powdered form to recipes.
- Magnesium — Consider citrate for aiding elimination and glycinate for supporting sleep and reducing menstrual cramps.
- B-Vitamins — Essential for optimal energy, consider taking an activated B complex supplement.

MOVEMENT

Try avoiding high-impact workouts during this time. Focus on walks, gentle yoga, or light stretching, making sure to avoid doing inversions in yoga because they reverse blood flow.

LIFESTYLE

Your body is exerting considerable effort during this period, leading to fatigue. Ensure you get sufficient sleep – approximately 8-9 hours per night – and engage in restful activities that aren't physically demanding. A pre-menstrual massage can be beneficial for enhancing circulation. It's also crucial to consume warming foods (think winter) and maintain warmth during menstruation.

As all your sex hormones (estrogen, testosterone, and progesterone) are at low levels, now is an opportune time for —

- Granting yourself some downtime for rejuvenation
- Trusting your intuition
- Prioritizing self-care
- Maintaining stable blood sugar levels to avoid additional stress on the body as it undergoes the process of releasing the uterine lining.



**RECIPE IDEAS FOR
MENSTRUAL PHASE**



CHAGA CHOCOLATE FUDGE SMOOTHIE BOWL

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Paleo, Grain-Free

Servings — 1

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup unsweetened hemp, almond, coconut, cashew, or other non-dairy milk (add more if you want a thinner consistency)
- 1 cup frozen spinach
- ½ cup frozen cauliflower or sweet potato (steaming prior is also easier on your digestion)
- ½ frozen banana
- 1 serving of chocolate collagen protein powder
- 1 heaping tbsp cacao powder
- 1 heaping tbsp cacao nibs
- 1 heaping tbsp sunflower seeds
- 1 heaping tbsp peanut butter
- 1 serving of chaga mushroom powder
- 1-2 dates, pitted and chopped
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp sea salt

Optional toppings: shredded coconut, cacao nibs, chopped dark chocolate, peanut butter, coconut yogurt

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all ingredients to a high-speed blender and blend until smooth and creamy.
2. Pour into a bowl and add recommended toppings.

PUMPKIN CHICKEN CHILI

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Paleo, Refined-Sugar-Free

Servings — 4-6

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- 1 sweet onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 ½ lbs organic, pasture-raised boneless skinless chicken thighs, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 heaping tbsp chili powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 bay leaves
- Black pepper to taste
- 2 large carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 1 15 oz can organic pumpkin puree (make sure BPA free)
- 3 cups organic bone broth
- 2 cups leafy greens, chopped
- Cilantro, coconut, or Greek yogurt for topping

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat the grass-fed ghee in a large stovetop pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and cook for 5-10 minutes, until translucent.
2. Add chopped chicken and brown for 3 to 5 minutes, until much liquid is seeping out.
3. Stir in all the seasonings and cook for 1-2 minutes, until fragrant.
4. Stir in carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin puree, and bone broth, cover and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook for 30 minutes, until chili is thick and vegetables are soft.
5. Remove from heat and top with coconut yogurt and fresh cilantro

ITALIAN MEATBALLS + BUTTERNUT SQUASH NOODLES

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Paleo, Refined-Sugar-Free

Servings — 4-6

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For The Italian Meatballs

- 1 lb lean grass-fed ground beef
- 1 large pasture-raised egg
- 3 tbsp almond flour
- 1 tbsp Italian Seasoning
- 1 tbsp fresh minced parsley
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp sea salt
- Black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee, for frying
- 1 large 32 oz jar marinara (I prefer Rao's)

For The "Pasta"

- 1 box of Cece's Butternut Squash Noodles (or you can use zucchini noodles or gluten-free, nutrient-rich pasta noodle of choice)
- 1 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- Sea salt + black pepper to taste
- Fresh parsley, minced

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all meatball ingredients to a mixing bowl and mix well with hands, careful not to overwork the meat.
2. Heat a large skillet or stovetop pan over medium-high heat and add the 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee.
3. Once the ghee is heated and sizzling, begin rolling the meat mixture into balls (about 1.5 inches in diameter) and place each one in the pan, continuing until the mixture is used up.
4. Once the bottoms are browned (about 2-3 minutes) flip each meatball over to brown the other side, careful to brown on all four sides.
5. Once all four sides are browned, add red sauce and bring to a boil. Cover and lower heat to simmer, allowing meatballs to cook through, about 10 minutes.
6. Uncover once cooked through and add butternut squash noodles to the pan, cooking for an extra five minutes.
7. Once done cooking remove from heat and serve immediately.

1 PAN EGG SHAKSHUKA

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Paleo, Refined-Sugar-Free

Servings — 4

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- 1 yellow onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp red pepper flakes
- Black pepper to taste
- 1 large (28 oz can) crushed tomatoes, preferably fire-roasted
- 1 large handful chopped greens (1-2 cups)
- 1 handful fresh chopped cilantro/parsley or mix
- 6 large pasture-raised eggs
- 1 large avocado, chopped
- Quinoa, brown or cauliflower rice, or glutenfree sourdough toast for serving

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F. Warm the grass-fed ghee in a large, oven-safe skillet over medium heat. Once sizzling, add the chopped onion, bell pepper, garlic, and sea salt, cooking for 5-10 minutes, stirring frequently until translucent.
2. Add the tomato paste, cumin, paprika, red pepper flakes, and black pepper, stirring until fragrant, about 1-2 minutes.
3. Pour in the crushed tomatoes, stir, and let the mixture come to a simmer. Simmer for 5 minutes until the mixture is thick and bubbling.
4. Turn off the heat and stir in the herbs and leafy greens.
5. Use the back of a spoon to make indents around the perimeter of the pan. Crack the eggs directly into the indents and gently spoon some of the tomato mixture over the whites to help contain the eggs. Sprinkle sea salt and pepper over the eggs.
6. Carefully transfer the skillet to the oven and bake for 12 minutes. Eggs should be opaque white with creamy and soft yolks (they should still jiggle in the centers when you shimmy the pan).
7. Remove from oven and let cool for a few minutes. Top with sliced avocado and more fresh herbs and serve with quinoa, brown or cauliflower rice, or gluten-free toast if desired.

CBD CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 8

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For the Peanut Butter Mixture

- ½ cup creamy organic peanut butter
- 2 tbsp coconut oil, melted and cooled
- 2 tbsp organic coconut sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

For the Dark Chocolate Mixture

- 1 cup dark chocolate chips (70% cacao or higher)
- ¼ cup coconut sugar
- ¼ cup organic coconut oil
- ¼ cup organic full-fat canned coconut milk
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 30 drops of organic, full-spectrum CBD Hemp
- Oil (8.4 mg per serving)
- Optional: ⅓ cup chopped nuts like almonds, pistachios or cashews

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all dark chocolate mixture ingredients except for CBD oil to a small stovetop pot and melt over low heat, stirring continuously. Once melted, thick, and shiny, remove from heat and let cool for a few minutes.
2. While the dark chocolate mixture is cooling, stir the creamy peanut butter mixture until smooth.
3. Pour dark chocolate mixture in with peanut butter mixture, stirring until creamy and well combined. Add in CBD oil and stir until thoroughly mixed.
4. Pour into an 8x8 parchment-lined baking pan and chill in the freezer for 1 hour or fridge 3 hours before serving. Remove it in the freezer 30 minutes before eating, or leave it in the refrigerator for up to a week.



CANDICE SCHUTZ

Thank you

Wholeistic Wellness is a personal journey back to what truly matters for our wellbeing, one that I am deeply passionate about guiding you through. At Wholeistic Wellness, my mission is to help you rediscover this balance, not through temporary fixes but by fostering a sustainable, fulfilling lifestyle that resonates with who you are at your core.