



# The Menstrual Blueprint

## PHASES AND WHAT THEY MEAN:

A women's body goes through seasons of change with each cycle. The right foods, fitness, and lifestyle strategies can support hormonal shifts and replenish lost nutrients throughout the phases.

# What is Menstrual Cycle Syncing?

The female body is truly remarkable as it undergoes constant changes due to hormonal fluctuations. Each day brings a shift in our hormonal balance, making what was once considered normal one week appear entirely different the next.

By honoring our natural cycle and adjusting our diet, exercise routines, and lifestyle choices to align with our body's needs during each phase, we notice enhancements in energy levels, stress management, weight control, and more.

Throughout the year, women in their childbearing years experience four distinct phases repeatedly:

- **Menstrual Phase** (usually 3-7 days): Women shed the uterine lining prepared for pregnancy, requiring replenishment of nutrients.
- **Follicular Phase** (usually 7-10 days): Post-period but pre-ovulation, the body reconstructs the uterine lining and prepares a mature follicle for egg implantation.
- **Ovulatory Phase** (2 days): Lasting around 24-48 hours, the body releases an egg, with peak cervical mucus aiding sperm towards the egg. Hormonal changes include a drop in estrogen and peaks in luteinizing hormone and follicular stimulating hormones.
- **Luteal Phase** (usually 10-14 days): Hormonal shifts see luteinizing and follicular stimulating hormones diminish while progesterone levels rise.



# MENSTRUAL PHASE



In this phase, women expel the extra lining of the uterus that formed in preparation for pregnancy. This process includes the release of blood and fluid, which necessitates the replenishment of essential nutrients.

## Key Nutrients Needed



**Iron**



**Vitamin C**



**Estrogen Balancing Foods**



**Anti-Oxidants and Anti-Inflammatories**

# Foods To Incorporate: Menstrual Phase

## **Iron (best consumed with vitamin C-rich foods):**

- Spinach, lentils, beans, pumpkin seeds, red meat, shellfish, organ meat, quinoa, turkey, broccoli, fish.

## **Vitamin C:**

- Rosehips, guavas, bell peppers, thyme, parsley, spinach, kale, kiwi, broccoli, brussels sprouts, citrus fruits, persimmons, papaya, berries.

## **Foods to balance estrogen levels:**

- Flaxseed, cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, arugula, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, bok choy, collard greens, kale, turnips, watercress).

## **Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory choices:**

- Berries, dark leafy greens, ginger, turmeric, flaxseed, peppermint tea, green tea.

## **Additional tips:**

Incorporating fermented foods can enhance the microbiome and reduce the risk of yeast infections. Examples include kefir, sauerkraut, kimchi, tempeh, and miso.

# Other Things to Consider

## **Select Easily Digestible Foods:**

- Choose warm meals and cooked vegetables.
- Focus on proteins that are easy to digest, such as eggs, Greek yogurt, and ground turkey or chicken.

## **Minimize Fatty Foods:**

- Avoid fried dishes and excessive use of oils.
- Reduce saturated fats found in red meat and coconut oil.
- Stay away from processed foods.

## **Limit Alcohol and Caffeine:**

- Alcohol and caffeine may exacerbate menstrual cramps and contribute to dehydration.
- Alcohol can lead to inflammation, increased fatigue, and slow down the healing process.

## **Engage in Physical Activity:**

- Listen to your body and take it easy during this time.
- Participate in light resistance training, yoga, and gentle cardio to help regulate energy levels.

# FOLLICULAR PHASE



During the latter part of the follicular phase (following menstruation but before ovulation), your body initiates the reconstruction of the uterine lining to prepare for egg implantation. Estrogen levels are increasing during this time. Furthermore, your body is focused on developing a mature follicle for the release of a healthy egg.

## Key Nutrients Needed



**High Quality Protein**



**Vitamin B12**



**Estrogen Balancing Foods**



**Zinc**



**Water**

# Foods To Incorporate: Follicular Phase

## **High Quality Protein:**

100% grass-fed beef, wild-caught low mercury fish, pasture-raised poultry, pasture-raised eggs, nuts (avoid roasted in oil), seeds, lentils, beans, quinoa, spouted grains, Greek yogurt, tempeh.

## **Vitamin B12:**

100% grass fed-beef, pasture-raised poultry, pasture-raised eggs, yogurt, organ meat, clams, sardines, fortified nutritional yeast, trout, salmon.

## **Estrogen stabilizing foods:**

Flaxseed, coniferous vegetables (broccoli, arugula, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, bok choy, collard greens, kale, turnips, watercress).

## **Zinc:**

Red meat, shellfish, legumes, hemp seeds, flax seeds, pumpkin seeds, pine nuts, peanuts, cashews, almonds, full fat dairy, pasture raised eggs.

## Other Things to Consider

**Fitness:** During this phase, you might notice a surge in energy, making it a great time to challenge your workouts. Engaging in strength training, moderate to high-intensity cardio, and even high-intensity interval training can be particularly advantageous during this period.

**Get Outside:** Vitamin D3 plays a crucial role as a precursor for hormones, and the best source to boost your vitamin D3 levels is through natural sunlight. If you find yourself working indoors or unable to spend much time outside, consider taking a supplement.

**Carbohydrate Intake:** Generally, during this phase, our bodies are more adept at managing blood sugar fluctuations, allowing for better tolerance of carbohydrates, especially among active women.

# OVULATORY PHASE



During this short phase of approximately 24 - 48 hours, your body releases an egg from the matured follicle. You are producing peak cervical mucus to help guide the sperm towards the egg. To stimulate ovulation, estrogen drops while luteinizing hormone and follicular stimulation hormones peak.

## Key Nutrients



**Omega-3  
fatty acids**



**Selenium**



**Folate**



**Beta-carotene**

# Foods To Incorporate: Ovulatory Phase

## **Omega 3:**

Mackerel, wild caught salmon, sardines, anchovies, herring, chia seeds, flax seeds, walnuts, caviar, omega 3 cod liver supplements.

## **Selenium:**

Brazil nuts, oysters, clams, halibut, sardines, shrimp, salmon, crab, pork, grass fed beef liver, turkey, pasture raised chicken, pasture raised eggs, full fat cottage cheese, sunflower seeds, mushrooms, baked beans, spinach, oatmeal, yogurt.

## **Folate:**

Dark green leafy vegetables, beans, sunflower seeds, peanuts, liver, seafood, pasture raised eggs.

## **Beta-carotene**

Sweet potatoes, carrots, dark leafy greens, butternut squash, red bell pepper, cantaloupe, apricot, broccoli, snap peas.

## Other Things to Consider

**Fitness:** During this phase of your cycle, you are likely to feel the most energized. It's an ideal time to engage in strength training, high-intensity cardio, and high-intensity interval training.

**Water:** While it may seem obvious, staying well-hydrated is essential as your activity level increases. Proper hydration supports hormone metabolism and facilitates the elimination of byproducts. Consider adding lemon juice and pink Himalayan salt to your water once or twice a day to replenish electrolytes. Additionally, maintaining adequate water intake is crucial for cervical mucus production if you are trying to conceive.



# LUTEAL PHASE



At this stage, luteinizing hormone and follicular stimulating hormone levels will diminish as progesterone begins to rise. Both progesterone and estrogen will increase until the conclusion of this phase, after which they will decrease once more.

## Key Nutrients



**Progesterone building nutrients**



**Anti-oxidants**



**Magnesium**



**Protein**

# Foods To Incorporate: Luteal Phase

## Foods that Promote Progesterone Production:

- Beans
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Kale
- Nuts
- Pumpkin
- Spinach
- Whole grains

## Foods Rich in Antioxidants:

- Berries
- Dark leafy greens
- Carrots
- Red cabbage
- Avocado
- Spinach
- Artichoke
- Asparagus
- Beetroot
- Kale
- Squash
- Sweet potato

## Sources of Magnesium:

- Sunflower seeds
- Almonds
- Spinach
- Dark leafy green vegetables
- Lentils
- Beans

## High-Quality Protein Sources:

- 100% grass-fed beef
- Wild-caught, low-mercury fish
- Pasture-raised poultry
- Pasture-raised eggs
- Nuts (avoid those roasted in oil)
- Seeds
- Lentils
- Beans
- Quinoa
- Sprouted grains
- Greek yogurt
- Tempeh



## Other Things to Consider

**Fitness:** As progesterone levels increase, you might notice a dip in your energy. Some days, you may feel motivated to intensify your workouts, while on other days, it may be best to take it easy. Pay attention to your body's signals and consider engaging in moderate strength and cardio exercises.

**Mood:** Many women experience feelings of detachment and irritability towards the end of this phase. To help stabilize your mood, think about incorporating magnesium supplements, scheduling time to connect with friends, soaking up natural sunlight, and prioritizing quality sleep.



# What is Seed Cycling?

CONSIDER INTEGRATING  
THIS HEALTHY ROUTINE  
TO PROVIDE YOUR BODY  
WITH THE ESSENTIAL  
BUILDING BLOCKS IT  
REQUIRES.

# SEED CYCLING: HOW TO DO IT

During the follicular phase leading up to ovulation (from the first day of your period until peak cervical mucus), consider adding 1-2 tablespoons of ground flaxseed and ground pumpkin seeds to your diet.

In the luteal phase until menstruation (from ovulation to the first day of your period), aim for 1-2 tablespoons of ground sesame seeds and sunflower seeds.

If you don't follow a specific cycle, you can synchronize with the lunar cycle: Consume flaxseed and pumpkin seeds from the new moon to the full moon, and switch to sesame and sunflower seeds from the full moon back to the new moon. Refer to the lunar calendar for assistance.

Follicular Phase to  
Ovulation  
(First half of your cycle)



Luteal Phase to  
Mensuration  
(Second half of your cycle)

# Key Supplements & Herbs



It is important to consult with a healthcare provider before starting any new supplements.

## B-Vitamins (B6, B12, Folate)

B vitamins, especially B6, support neurotransmitter function and hormone regulation. B6 is particularly helpful in managing PMS symptoms such as mood swings and water retention. Folate (methylated for those with MTHFR variants) is crucial for supporting hormone metabolism and fertility.

## Iron

Iron is essential for replacing the blood lost during menstruation, which can help prevent fatigue and anemia. It's especially important for women with heavy periods or those who feel weak or tired during their cycle. However, since excess iron can lead to oxidative stress, it's crucial to test levels before supplementing to ensure that supplementation is necessary.

## Vitamin D3

Vitamin D plays a crucial role in regulating hormones like estrogen and progesterone, which are essential for a healthy menstrual cycle. It supports mood, bone health, and immune function. Adequate levels of vitamin D can also help improve fertility and reduce symptoms of PMS, making it a key nutrient for overall hormonal balance.

## Magnesium

Magnesium helps regulate cortisol and supports hormone balance by aiding in the production of progesterone and reducing PMS symptoms like mood swings and cramps. It also supports sleep, reducing the impact of stress on the menstrual cycle.

## Omega-3

Omega-3s help reduce inflammation and balance hormones by supporting the production of anti-inflammatory prostaglandins, which can alleviate menstrual cramps and other period-related discomforts.



# Key Supplements & Herbs

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## Vitex (Chaste Tree Berry)

Vitex is known for balancing progesterone and estrogen levels. It can help regulate cycles, ease PMS, and support overall menstrual health, particularly in women with luteal phase defects or low progesterone.

## Zinc

Zinc plays a key role in regulating ovulation and maintaining healthy levels of reproductive hormones like estrogen and progesterone. It's also important for immune health, which can fluctuate with hormone changes during the menstrual cycle.

## DIM (Diindolylmethane)

DIM helps metabolize excess estrogen, supporting estrogen balance. It's particularly helpful for women experiencing symptoms of estrogen dominance, such as heavy periods or breast tenderness. However, DIM isn't suitable for everyone, particularly because some individuals may have difficulty metabolizing it or may experience unwanted side effects.

## Broccoli Sprouts (Sulforaphane)

Broccoli sprouts are rich in sulforaphane, a compound that supports estrogen metabolism, detoxification, and hormonal balance without some of the risks associated with DIM. Sulforaphane activates detox pathways in the liver, helping to eliminate excess estrogen and other toxins, making it a gentler and effective alternative for balancing estrogen, particularly for those with estrogen dominance.

## Calcium-D-Glucarate

This supplement supports the detoxification of estrogen through the liver, helping balance hormones and preventing estrogen dominance, which can lead to issues like PMS, heavy periods, and fibroids.

# Key Supplements & Herbs



## Ashwagandha

An adaptogen that helps balance cortisol levels, ashwagandha supports adrenal health and can help alleviate stress-related hormone imbalances. It's especially beneficial for women dealing with irregular cycles due to stress or fatigue.

## Maca

Maca is an adaptogen that supports the endocrine system by balancing estrogen and progesterone levels. It can enhance libido, reduce hot flashes, and improve overall hormone-related symptoms, especially during perimenopause.

## Nettle

Nettle is a nourishing herb known for its rich iron content, making it excellent for blood building during and after menstruation. It's also packed with minerals like magnesium and calcium, which help reduce cramps and support overall hormonal health.

## Red Raspberry Leaf

Red raspberry leaf is often called the "uterine tonic" due to its ability to strengthen the uterine walls and ease menstrual cramps. It's rich in vitamins and minerals like iron and calcium, supporting reproductive health and reducing PMS symptoms.

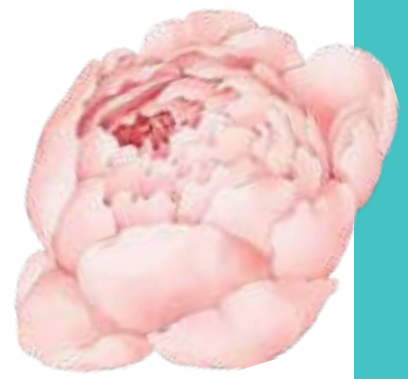
## Lemon Balm

Lemon balm is a gentle herb that helps to soothe stress and anxiety, making it particularly helpful during the luteal and menstrual phases when mood fluctuations may occur. However, it may have mild immune-stimulating properties, so those with autoimmune conditions should consult with a healthcare provider before use to ensure it is safe for their specific situation.

## Shatavari

Shatavari is a traditional adaptogenic herb that supports female reproductive health by balancing estrogen levels. It can be particularly beneficial for women experiencing hormonal imbalances like irregular cycles or perimenopause symptoms.

# Summary



## Phases of the Menstrual Cycle & Recommendations:

### 1. Menstrual Phase (Days 1-5)

- Hormones: Low estrogen and progesterone.
- How women might feel: Low energy, introspective, and potentially more tired.
- Foods to emphasize: Iron-rich foods (spinach, red meat), magnesium-rich foods (dark leafy greens, nuts), warming foods (soups, stews).
- Exercise: Gentle movement like yoga, walking, or stretching. Avoid high-intensity workouts.
- Tasks to avoid: Avoid starting major new projects or tasks that require high energy. Instead, focus on reflection and planning.

### 2. Follicular Phase (Days 6-14)

- Hormones: Rising estrogen, low progesterone.
- How women might feel: Increasing energy, optimism, creativity, and social inclination.
- Foods to emphasize: Light, fresh foods like leafy greens, sprouts, and fruits to support estrogen production.
- Exercise: Higher energy allows for more intense workouts such as cardio, strength training, or trying new fitness routines.
- Tasks to focus on: Ideal time for brainstorming, starting new projects, and social activities.

### 3. Ovulatory Phase (Days 14-16)

- Hormones: Peak estrogen, surge of luteinizing hormone (LH).
- How women might feel: High energy, social, and mentally sharp.
- Foods to emphasize: Antioxidant-rich foods like berries, and omega-3s to reduce potential inflammation. Include fiber to help with detoxing excess estrogen.
- Exercise: Intense workouts like HIIT, running, or strength training are ideal.
- Tasks to focus on: Best time for public speaking, networking, and high-energy tasks.

### 4. Luteal Phase (Days 17-28)

- Hormones: Rising progesterone, declining estrogen.
- How women might feel: Tired, introspective, and possibly experiencing PMS.
- Foods to emphasize: Complex carbs (quinoa, sweet potatoes), magnesium-rich foods, and hormone-balancing foods like broccoli sprouts.
- Exercise: Moderate-intensity exercise like yoga, walking, or light strength training. Avoid overexertion.
- Tasks to avoid: Avoid high-pressure or social tasks if feeling overwhelmed. Focus on completing ongoing projects rather than starting new ones.





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