

Happy Hormones the workbook

Includes...

- Hormone Symptom Tracker
- Morning Routine Checklist
- 10 Gut Friendly Foods
- Evening Routine Checklist
- Daily Basics Checklist for Happy Hormones

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The Facts About Hormones

- All hormones work together
- Puberty can last up to 7 years
- The average age for women to go through the menopause is 52
- The peri-menopause can last for between 7 - 15 years
- Symptoms don't always stop post menopause

The Main Sex Hormones

When you are still having a regular 28 day cycle your hormones fluctuate and all have a different role.

ESTROGEN

- Is the fiery hormone so **a bit** of moodiness is expected when levels are low **BUT** anything beyond that is an indication that something isn't right. As is excessive fatigue and severe stomach pain.

TESTOSTERONE

- Is the hormone of sex and motivation.
- At the beginning your cycle estrogen and testosterone are most dominant so after day 5 of your period you should be starting to think about sex, feel more confident and motivated.

After ovulation around day 14, **Progesterone** becomes more dominant.

PROGESTERONE

- is the anti depressant and sleep supportive hormone.
- If you experience anxiety towards the end of your cycle (around day 23) or your sleep is fragmented then it's a sign that progesterone levels are low.
- Shorter cycles are often a sign that the body is not producing enough progesterone.

HORMONE SYMPTOM TRACKER

Use this key to track your symptoms. Only by paying close attention to yourself and knowing WHAT you feel, HOW you feel and WHEN you feel it can you recognise what your body needs from you and when.

None 0 Mild - Moderate x Severe /

Abdominal PAIN														
Acne														
Anxiety														
Backache														
Bladder PAIN														
Bloating														
Breast Swelling														
Breast Tenderness														
Constipation														
Cramps														
Crying Spells														
Diarrhoea														
Difficulty Concentrating														
Dizziness														
Fatigue														
Flatulence														
Food Cravings														
Headache / Migraine														
Heavy Bleed														
Hot Flushes														
Irritability														
Libido (Decreased)														
Libido (Increased)														
Light Bleed														
Moody														
Muscle Aches / Pain														
Nausea														
Pelvic PAIN														
Sadness														
Sleep (Decreased)														
Sleep (Increased)														
Yeast Infection														



Identify and Manage Your Stress

Not all stress is obvious, there are 3 main types:

Physical Stress

Injury, illness, inflammation, your food choices and over exercising can all activate the stress response, as can hormonal changes.

Emotional Stress

Childhood trauma, busy home or work life, current worries around finances, health, older parents, young children or work can all trigger the stress response, as can the upset around relationship breakdowns or loss.

Environmental Stress

This is probably the most hidden stressor in our lifestyle but we live in a very toxic world. We are surrounded by chemicals in our skincare and beauty products, our cleaning products, our food and plastics. Artificial light and air pollution also cause the stress response.

So many women are dealing with a combination of these stressors, day in, day out and whilst in isolation they are all relatively low-level factors, the continuous build up can, over time, put our body into a state of chronic stress.

This chronic stress not only causes a range of troublesome symptoms but because our bodies will always prioritise survival over reproduction, if the stress hormone cortisol is continually released, the production of the main sex hormones is, in turn, compromised. This triggers more disruption through our entire endocrine system, ultimately creating even more imbalance to our health and wellbeing.

Some symptoms of stress are similar to those associated with declining sex hormones, including; brain fog, memory loss, low libido, anxiety, insomnia and digestive problems or food sensitivities.

Untreated low-level chronic stress can also lead to problems with infertility, heart disease, metabolic and thyroid function, problems regulating the heart rate and much more serious disease (dis-ease in the body).

Symptoms of Stress

- Getting second wind at 10pm
- Waking up at 2am
- Reaching for a large glass of wine each evening
- Grabbing the chocolate mid-afternoon
- Chronic headaches
- Wounds that don't heal
- Difficulty waking up in the morning
- Fatigue or low energy
- Acne or other skin problems
- Low mood or irritability

'Win the morning and you win the day'

How you begin your day can impact your mood, mindset, your hormones and adrenal health. The first 20 - 30 minutes after waking are so important.

Our cortisol levels spike shortly after waking up so if you snooze your alarm (because you are exhausted from a night of poor sleep) and then end up getting out of bed late, rushing about getting ready, throwing a couple of cups of coffee down you to wake you up as you check your social media or emails with one hand, making the lunch with other whilst listening to the news and shovelling a bowl of something down your throat before you fly out of the door, your cortisol levels will go through the roof. Each of these things produce more and more cortisol, raising your levels up and up and up.

A morning routine doesn't need to be long and complicated. It does, however, need to allow the naturally raised cortisol levels the chance to settle before you get caught up into your day and face more of your hidden stressors (situations, activities and emotions). Those situations that cause the stress response in you. Your cortisol may still build up through the day BUT it will build from a low base line rather than on top of an elevated level.

Here are my personal favourite activities for a morning routine, but please know that you don't have to do them all or spend an hour on each one. Simply spending 10 minutes on a couple of these activities (or similar) will be a game changer. Please also note that you don't have to do everything I am about suggest tomorrow. If you are currently waking up exhausted then a). you need to be addressing your sleep which is a whole other story and b). just get up 10 minutes earlier tomorrow and for the next week and do one of the things.

VISUALISATIONS / MEDITATION / BREATHWORK / AFFIRMATIONS

Any of these activities will focus your attention and in turn reduce busy thoughts and chatter in the brain that may be triggering an emotional stress response. You do not have to do all of these and just a few minutes of any will have a positive impact. There are apps such as Calm and Headspace that you download and listen too, though please don't be tempted to 'quickly check your emails or social media' when you go to launch the app, that will not have the same positive impact. If you are comfortable to you can simply set a timer for 3 or 5 minutes and sit in silence focusing just on your breath. If your mind wanders, then just bring it back to your breath. You may need to do that 20 times during your first meditation but with practice your mind will learn to stay quiet.

EXERCISE

All movement is wonderful and our body is designed to move every day. Exercise doesn't need to be a high impact aerobics class, 60-minute gym session or 5k run. A daily 8 -10 minute weights workout, yoga flow or walk around the block are often much more effective, particularly if your adrenals are weary.

READING

As with the visualisations, meditation, breathwork and affirmations activity above, reading will focus your attention to quieten the busyness in the brain. It doesn't matter what you chose to read; personal development, an autobiography or fiction, but please pick up a book every day and a real book with pages if you can.

JOURNALING / WRITING / COLOURING

As with some of the other activities above, each of these encourage you to focus your attention and, if you opt for the journaling or writing, also your thoughts. Journaling helps to organise your thoughts, worries and dreams. There is no right or wrong way to journal. Simply putting all your thoughts onto paper in a list brings you clarity and lightens the load you are carrying in your mind. Once on paper it often easier to realise your next best step or that things are not as big a worry as you thought when they were just in your head. If writing or journaling aren't for you then grab some crayons or pens and spend 10 minutes colouring in or just doodling.

MORNING ROUTINE CHECKLIST

WEEK 1

VISUALISATIONS / MEDITATION / BREATHWORK / AFFIRMATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>						
EXERCISE	<input type="checkbox"/>						
READING	<input type="checkbox"/>						
JOURNALING / WRITING / COLOURING	<input type="checkbox"/>						

WEEK 2

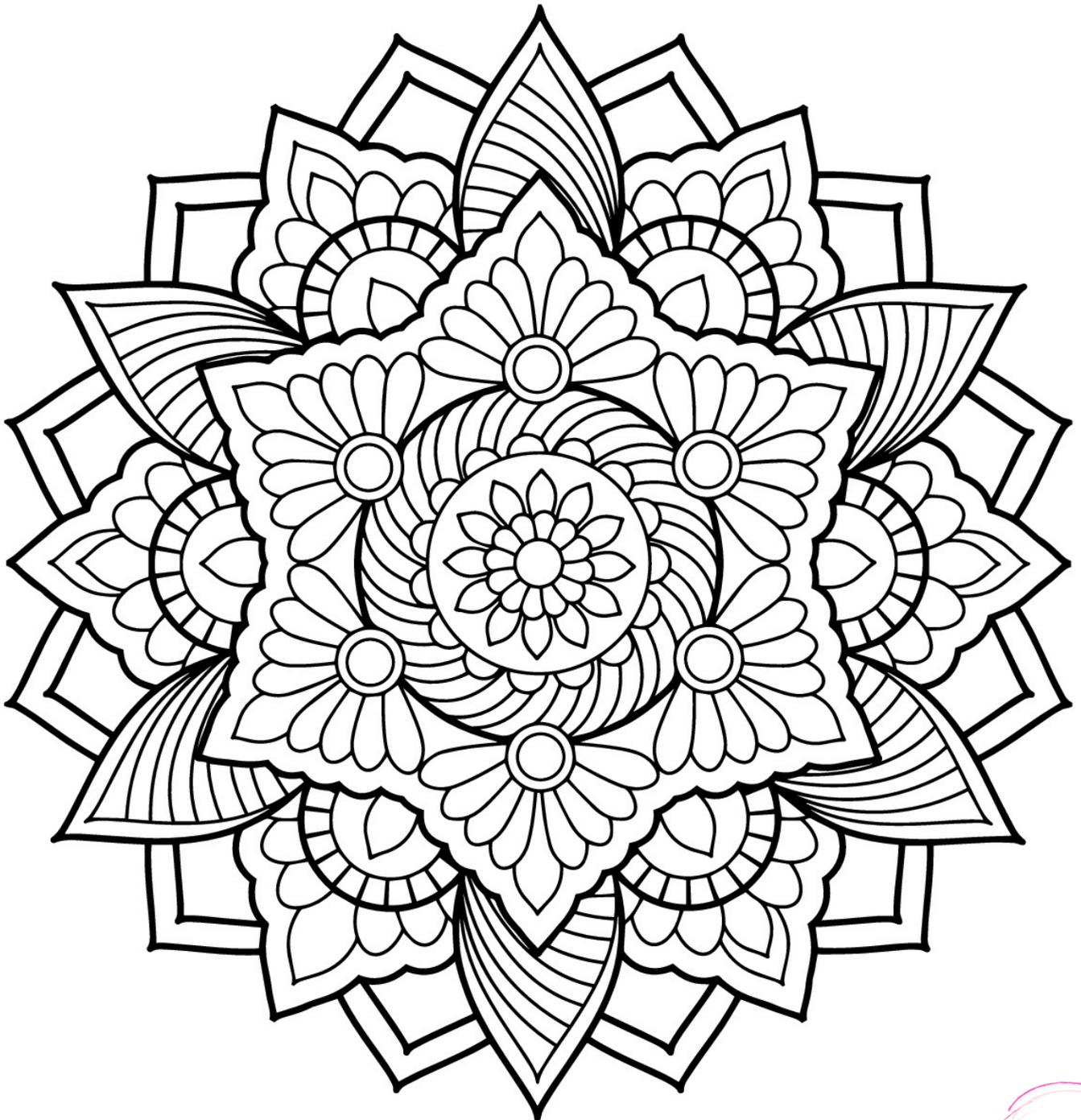
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EXERCISE	<input type="checkbox"/>						
READING	<input type="checkbox"/>						
JOURNALING / WRITING / COLOURING	<input type="checkbox"/>						

WEEK 3

VISUALISATIONS / MEDITATION / BREATHWORK / AFFIRMATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>						
EXERCISE	<input type="checkbox"/>						
READING	<input type="checkbox"/>						
JOURNALING / WRITING / COLOURING	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Actively De-Stress

Studies have shown that most people who try art as a form of stress relief experience significant reductions in their cortisol levels. You don't have to be an artist or know how to draw or paint to reap the benefits of art. When we are chronically stressed the thought of finding time to get creative can seem impossible but just 10 minutes of colouring in can have a huge impact. Colouring in with your non-dominant hand for just 5-10 minutes is as effective as completing a 20-minute deep meditation!



Calm and Nourish Your Gut

Many hormone imbalances are not specifically because of hormones but so often caused or worsened because of Gut Health or Stress. Therefore, the food we eat, or more importantly absorb, nourishes our hormones and so it is the vital start point for hormonal health.

You need to become your own diet detective, particularly as you transition through the peri menopause and menopause as intolerances can develop. Pay attention to how you feel after eating different food sources and after each meal. If you don't feel energised, satisfied and comfortable after you eat then you may need to adjust your choices. Even if you've been eating a particular food source all your life without any reaction, if you're reacting now, reduce or eliminate it.

- Make your fridge your pharmacy
- Cook & Eat REAL Food....most days, most of the time.
- Eat more vegetables than fruit, especially cooked cruciferous veggies - broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, brussel sprouts and kale
- Stay away from anything artificial, diet or low fat and as much as possible, avoid processed foods and excessive refined sugars.
- Add whole foods with lots of vitamins and minerals
- Increase your intake of good fats, quality protein and fibre; aim to eat these sources at every meal.

Good Fat

- Oily Fish; salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines, herring
- Eggs
- Nuts; almond, cashew, hazelnut
- Seeds; sunflower, sesame, pumpkin, flax, chia
- Avocado
- Grass fed butter
- Natural Peanut Butter - keep portions in check with this one (1tbsp for a snack).
- Olive Oil - for dressings
- Coconut Oil - for cooking

Quality Protein

- Oily Fish; salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines, herring
- White Fish; cod, haddock
- Grass Fed Meat / Free Range Chicken
- Cheese; hard cheeses, goats, feta
- Eggs
- Beans
- Nuts and Seeds
- Quinoa
- Organic Soy (if you can tolerate it)
- Lentils and Pulses.
- Dark Green Leafy Vegetables

Fibre

- Wholegrains
- Fruit and Vegetables; asparagus, potatoes, carrots, bananas, avocado, artichokes
- Chickpeas
- Nuts and Seeds
- Beans and Lentils

10 GUT FRIENDLY FOODS

Apple Cider Vinegar

This is a fermented food that is hugely healing. Add to stews, soups or take as a daily shot diluted in hot water, either first thing or last thing at night.

Celery

Celery is packed with nutrients, minerals and mineral salts that help to neutralise stomach acid.

Eggs

Full Fat Greek or Live Yoghurt

Fermented Foods

Fermentation occurs when micro-organisms in food convert starch and sugars in to other compounds. Kimchi, sauerkraut, kefir, pickles and miso are fermented foods.

Nuts

Olive Oil

Olive Oil is one of the healthiest fats you can eat - rich in polyphenols and antioxidants which are beneficial for reducing inflammation.

Oily Fish

Like olive oil, oily fish is full of good fats, the main one being omega 3.

Seaweed

Seaweed is rich in fibre, packed with nutrients and has been shown to increase insulin sensitivity as well as reduce inflammation.

Turmeric

Evidence shows that turmeric has powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties and inhibits the growth of 'bad' bacteria and fungi in the intestines.

Dairy, wheat and sugar can cause sensitivity to the digestive system which as a result can clog rather than cleanse and in turn unbalance hormones and unsettle gut microbiome. You may wish to reduce or eliminate these food sources for up to a month then re-introduce them. Add one per week for 3 days and then remove and notice how your body feels.

Aim to snack on nuts and seeds or add in extra nutrients by drinking a green juice, this is particularly helpful if you suffer from a mid-afternoon energy slump.

Avoid trans fats which are found in processed foods, margarine, sunflower and vegetable oil. Steer clear from oils high in omega-6 fats (safflower, sunflower, corn, cottonseed, canola, soybean and peanut), and load up on rich sources of natural omega-3s instead (wild fish, flaxseed, chia seeds, walnuts and grass-fed animal products).

Realise that every meal/snack is either a move towards or away from hormonal balance and wellness - your nutrition choices have the ability to make or break you.

Support Your Liver

Pay attention to your bowel movement as this will tell you a lot about your liver function. Don't forget the basics to support it:

- Aim to drink 2 – 3 litres of water every day. Tea (unless herbal) and coffee do not count towards your water total and **PLEASE** don't avoid drinking enough water through fear of leakage. Pelvic floor issues are common but not normal, they can be rectified so address them and stay hydrated.
- Eat a nutrient dense diet with plenty of fibre
- Add in extra servings of dark green leafy and cruciferous vegetables
- Sweat through exercise

Prioritise Your Sleep

It is NOT normal to 'not sleep well' (although common) and of course there can be factors for disruptive sleep (night feeds, young children, snoring partners). However, if you wake up every night at 2am with your brain in overdrive or regularly at 4am without reason or you feel wide awake the second your head hits the pillow, despite feeling so tired as you got into bed, then your body is asking for something. It needs your attention in the form of nourishment, movement, stress management or self care.

The 2am wake up is often a sign of adrenal imbalance, caused by...
Elevated stress!

The 4am wake up is usually down to your blood sugar and an imbalance which can be caused by skipping meals, too much sugar or alcohol or a change in your body's metabolism and how it stores and uses insulin.

Creating a bedtime routine to calm the brain and the body help to bring balance to the sympathetic and para-sympatric nervous system, and ultimately actively lower your stress levels and prepare your body for restorative sleep which will in turn allow your body and hormones to repair and rebalance.

There is never a one size fits all with anything regarding your wellbeing but use the following checklist as a guide to find the the best routine for you.

Bear in mind....

As the brain starts to calm the door to the sub-conscious is open so beware of what you listen to / hear in the final 20 minutes before you sleep.

EVENING ROUTINE CHECKLIST

WEEK 1

SWITCH OFF DEVICE BY 8.30PM

EPSOM SALT BATH / FOOT SOAK

BRAIN DUMP / PLAN TOMORROW

JOURNAL / COLOUR / READ

MEDITATE / BREATH PRACTICE

WEEK 2

SWITCH OFF DEVICE BY 8.30PM

EPSOM SALT BATH / FOOT SOAK

BRAIN DUMP / PLAN TOMORROW

JOURNAL / COLOUR / READ

MEDITATE / BREATH PRACTICE

WEEK 3

SWITCH OFF DEVICE BY 8.30PM

EPSOM SALT BATH / FOOT SOAK

BRAIN DUMP / PLAN TOMORROW

JOURNAL / COLOUR / READ

MEDITATE / BREATH PRACTICE

Final Thoughts....

- Hormonal symptoms are common but are **NOT** normal
- They are a sign that your body is lacking something, maybe deeper nourishment, movement or rest.
- Pay attention to worsening symptoms or irregularity but **DO NOT** just accept or normalise them - they are **NOT** 'just YOUR age' or 'just YOUR hormones'
- Add in more nourishment, joy, stress management strategies and supportive movement
- Please do not underestimate the power of the seemingly small activities.
- Achieving your health and wellness goals, hormonal balance, increased energy and improved sleep will not happen by adding in one big strategy, but from adding in a series of little strategies, and repeating them regularly.

Daily Basics for Happy Hormones

MORNING VISUALISATIONS / MEDITATION / BREATHWORK

Because the stress hormone (cortisol) starts to naturally rise when we wake up, taking time first thing to complete a visualisation, mediation or to connect with your breath allows the natural elevation to start to lower, restoring balance internally before you start the day.

EXERCISE

All movement is wonderful and our body is designed to move every day. Exercise doesn't need to be a high impact aerobics class, 60 minute gym session or 5k run. A daily 10 minute weights workout, yoga flow or walk around the block are often more effective. So many people unknowingly over exercise which can have a negative impact on inch loss goals, increase stress and disrupt hormones.

DAYLIGHT EXPOSURE

Daylight exposure is so important for regulating sleep patterns, lowering the stress hormone and for the production of vitamin D.

Vitamin D is a hormone that is vital for so many functions from supporting strong and healthy bones and muscles to maintaining your immune system. Most of us should be able to get sufficient vitamin D from direct sunlight on the skin when outdoors without risking sun damage.

TIARA TIME

This is **YOU** time... Time for the activities and hobbies that feed your soul with joy, that give your mind and body a break from the grind, being busy, looking after others, working, social media, learning. Again this only needs to be 10 minutes yet the difference it will have on you is immeasurable.

DRINK WATER

To function properly, all the cells and organs in the body need water and yet so many of us don't drink enough. We should all be aiming for 8 glasses (2 -3 litres) of pure water each day, herbal teas can count towards that, caffeinated drinks do not.

EAT GREENS

Dark green leafy veg is so important for so many areas of our wellbeing, including boosting our immune health, restoring balance in the gut, strengthening our bones, improving liver detoxification and supporting our hormones. An extra serving of greens a day has a powerful effect.

DAILY BASICS FOR HAPPY HORMONES CHECKLIST

 Morning Visualisation /
Meditation / Breath Practice

 Tiara Time

 Exercise

 Drink Water

 Daylight Exposure

 Eat Greens

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