

Hi, I'm Donna Parker, LAc, CFMP

I'm thrilled to be supporting you on your health journey to melt your middle. I will share with

you all I have learned over the 20+ years of being a health practitioner.

Hippocrates stated that "all disease begins within the gut." That means you are on the right path to improving your overall health and well-being.

I am a Classical Five Element Acupuncturist, Certified Functional Medicine Practitioner, as well as a trained Wellness Coach, Certified Health Coach, and a Certified Nutrition Advisor. I have been supporting my patients to live healthier lives for over 20 years. I empower my patients to take charge of their health and well-being. Your longevity and health depend on the right combination of nutrition, supplementation and exercise. My years of study in the fields of integrative nutrition, functional medicine, and Chinese medicine enable me to help you create healthier lifelong habits.

This eBook is filled with useful information, which when put into practice, can have a dramatic effect on how you feel; mind, body, and spirit.

I look forward to connecting with you and sharing additional tools on your journey to a healthier you.

Wishing you a lifetime of great health + boundless joy.

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# Disclaimer

This book is intended to be educational and is designed to supplement, not replace, the advice of your doctor or health professional. The authors of this book disclaim any liability that may incur as a result of applying information from this book. If you suspect that you may have a health problem we recommend that you consult your physician. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission of the author. I know first hand what it's like to suffer through menopausal symptoms as well as struggle with unwanted weight gain. What I'm going to share with you is the system that I have used to help myself as well as my patients go through menopause with ease and grace. And, a lot less weight gain!

During peri-menopause, your body begins to change, sometimes quite suddenly. You may feel as though you're living inside of a very different body than the one you're used to. You may have less energy and be a bit more cranky than usual. These experiences can be deeply distressing. They sure were for me!

I found the best way to approach these changes and this "new" body is to accept that I need to make changes that support myself rather than struggling against it and wishing for things to go back to the way they were. They're not going back and, honestly, that's a good thing. As a menopausal woman, you will be able to step into your power and live fully in joy. I do not mean to diminish your negative feelings in the least. You may need to grieve the loss of your former body. It's important to acknowledge the sadness and reality of this loss. And, know, this book will offer solutions that can nourish your mind, body and spirit as you move forward into this sacred transition.

I work with a lot of menopausal women and the number ONE biggest complaint is weight gain, especially around the middle. This middle expansion is really an increase in belly fat and bloat resulting from hormonal changes. Your body uses fat to produce estrogen. So some softening around the middle is needed, but if it's more than 32inches, then you've entered into the danger zone (visceral belly fat). More on that later. In this book, I will lay out exactly what you can do to reduce your middle and shed some of that dangerous visceral fat and feel fabulous in your body again.

Congratulations on taking the first step to balancing your hormones and melting that menopausal middle. To make this happen, it's important to reduce belly bloat, burn stored fat, and eliminate weight-gaining inflammation.

Your menopausal middle is made up of a combination of belly fat and bloat. Hormonal changes during peri-menopause cause weight to accumulate around your belly, thighs, hips, and butt. These fluctuating hormones also increase water retention, intestinal gas, and bloating. Your metabolism also slows down causing you to burn fat more slowly. It's not about calories in, calories out. It's more about how to move your body and only adding nutrient dense, hormone friendly foods.

What I will focus on are the most important things to naturally balance your hormones:

hormone-friendly foods nutrients exercise simple lifestyle changes

Remember I mentioned dangerous fat? Well, I want to take a minute to explain what that really is. It's called visceral fat and it's the deep fat that surrounds your organs. This is not a good thing. Have you ever heard of fatty liver? Well, that's just one example of visceral fat. This visceral fat happens because of poor diet choices. Liver toxicity and stress are also huge contributing factors. The fat around your middle contains way more cortisol, that's the stress hormone, than other cells in your body. So stress adds to your belly fat. The other thing that makes visceral fat dangerous is it causes inflammation. When you twist your ankle and it swells, that's acute inflammation. That's a good thing. What you don't want is chronic inflammation. That is not good for your body. When you have chronic inflammation, your body sends out cortisol, which then increases insulin, which tells your body to store more fat around your middle. This is often referred to as insulin resistance. And it's precisely why your belly fat does not budge.

Because everything--even balancing hormones--begins and ends in the gut, my plan focuses on optimizing digestion, elimination, and absorption, allowing you to melt your middle.

When you follow my plan, you will reduce inflammation and insulin resistance. Those are exactly what you need to do to melt your middle. My plan may mean you will need to make some changes in your regular dietary habits, but trust me, they will be worth it. I ask that you commit to this plan for the full 14 days so you can get the best results possible from your efforts.

Now, let's start with your gut.

The following is a list of foods that tax your liver and can result in estrogen dominance causing visceral fat.

refined and processed foods sugar bad fats, like vegetable and canola oils, as well as fried foods non organic meats and dairy are filled with hormone and antibiotic non organic veggies are filled with dangerous chemicals GMOs (genetically modified foods) artificial additives, sweeteners and preservatives excess alcohol unfiltered water coffee (especially nonorganic) pesticides and herbicides plastics nonstick cookware household cleaners mattresses many personal care products prescription and OTC

Your liver is your largest internal organ. Did you know that the primary cause of high cholesterol is a poor functioning liver? Yep. Think about its amazing detoxifying role and that if it works efficiently, it will help you reduce belly fat. The liver either burns fat or creates it, depending on how you support it. When the liver is running efficiently it burns fat and balances hormones. When your liver doesn't function well, hormones don't get processed, cholesterol increases, metabolism slows down and fat gets stored.

Estrogen builds up in your system when your liver is not optimally functioning. This is called estrogen dominance. When this happens, you get weight gain, bloated, and cellulite. The excess estrogen communicates to your liver to start storing fat. Remember, you will have some squishiness in menopause because the fat is needed to balance your estrogen, but you don't want to be estrogen dominant.

In the supplements chapter, I'll cover the nutritional supplements that will support your liver function.

In Chinese medicine, the liver connects to the emotions of anger and frustration. It may sound strange, but your emotions can get stuck in your body. That's why it's so important to move your body, every day, in some way that brings joy. If you can get a little sweat going as well, that's a good thing too. If you have access to a sauna, take time to have a regular sweat as that's another great way to detox your liver and all your organs.

Chronic, toxic thoughts will actually change your body chemistry. Cleansing your body means also cleansing your thoughts. I suggest 5-10 minutes of daily meditation and try a loving mantra such as "I love myself and accept me just as I am." It may seem silly, but those sort of mind tricks really do work. When I catch myself in a negative thought loop, I actually tell myself "STOP" and then I choose a better feeling thought. I might take a few deep, cleansing breaths or take a short walk or do something to shift my energy. Maybe it's just taking a moment to pet my cat or dog. Then, magically, the negativity is released. Find what works best for you and start doing it. Remember to be kind and loving to yourself as this is a journey, not a quick fix.

So how does our liver get filled with toxins? Life. There are toxins in your environment, in your home, in your bath and body products so it's inevitable that you will be exposed to them. Additionally, when you consume processed foods, soft drinks, sugar and other unhealthy foods, your toxic burden will be even more increased. Toxins store in your fat cells because the body doesn't know what to do with them. So the better your gut, liver and hydration are, the less toxins you'll be storing.

To Achieve optimal health and wellbeing, your gut, liver and adrenals all need to be working well. We've talked about your gut and liver so let's take a closer look at your adrenals. The way you support your adrenals is by reducing your stress therefore reducing your cortisol levels. When you are less stressed you will also have better balance in your hormones as well as insulin response and reduce inflammation. So you can see how important your adrenal support can be.

Avoiding toxic foods, eating nourishing foods, staying hydrated, getting good sleep, meditation, and daily exercise all help de stress your body. I want to talk a bit about meditation. It can be as simple as taking a few deep breaths or lying in bed before you get up in the morning to take stock of your day and have a moment of gratitude. There are so many ways to meditate and so many options in apps I would encourage you to try them and see what works best for you. Once you've found your sweet spot, take time when you first wake up and before you fall asleep to do your meditation. It doesn't have to be long amounts of time, but what science has shown is the benefits happen over time. So being consistent is the key to your success.

So what are your adrenals? Well, they are tiny, walnut sized glands that sit on top of your kidneys. They are responsible for producing several different hormones such as sex and stress hormones as well as helping balance blood sugar levels and regulating blood pressure. When you just keeping going and going in your life without really resting, your adrenals get taxed. They work really hard until they just get exhausted and don't have anything more to give. At that point, your cortisol levels will be all out of whack and the sheer level of fatigue can throw your life out the window. I do not want you to get to that place, so that's why you need to support them and nourish them.

What causes adrenal fatigue? Poor diet. Think about not only processed and poor quality foods, but also too much caffeine and alcohol. Dieting. Consuming too few calories can mess up your hormones causing a decrease in estrogen. Remember healthy fats are good for your hormones. If you drop your calorie intake too you're your body will hold onto fat for survival. Stress. Remember the connection between stress and cortisol and fat storage? That hormone imbalance depletes your adrenals as well. Too Much Exercise. Too many days of high intensity and too long of duration can deplete you. You should feel energized after exercise, not exhausted. Sleep. Not enough and poor quality will leave you exhausted. This throws off your hormones which causes weight gain. Less than 5 hours of sleep per night can cause a 32% increase probability of gaining visceral fat. What helps repair adrenal fatigue?

Follow my plan of healthy, clean eating and include protein with every meal Move your body daily, but not too much Go to bed before 10pm Eat good, healthy fats Reduce your stress with daily meditation and breathing exercises Take high quality nutritional supplements Limit caffeine intake If you don't currently exercise, then start slowly. I suggest to my patients to start with just 5-10 minutes per day. Choose something that brings you joy and happiness. Walking in nature is an excellent choice as nature itself also increases serotonin. There are several options on YouTube that you may enjoy. I love the BeFit channel and Yoga with Adrienne. Try a variety and switch it up to keep your body fit.

I find the best time to exercise is first thing in the morning. That way it's sets me for the day and I feel energized. Exercise too late in the evening can inhibit your ability to fall asleep easily. The first thing I do when I get out of bed is put on my workout clothes. That way I'm dressed and ready to go. If you schedule it, you will do it. Look at your schedule and see where you can fit it in. If you can't do 30 minutes all at one time, then break it into 2 sessions of 15 minutes each.

Remember, it's progress NOT perfection.

Water is essential. And the better hydrated you are, the less bloated you'll be. Yes, that's true. You need to aim for about ½ your body weight in ounces. So if you're 100lbs, then drink 50oz of water per day. You can count herbal tea but no more than 2 glasses per day. You really need to consume straight up, clean, filtered water. Do your best not to drink out of plastic water bottles, as they are full of toxins that can be found in the water which contain hormone disrupters. Additionally, they harmful to the environment and most never get recycled.

I like to keep a pitcher on my counter with fresh mint or lemons and limes, or even slicked fresh ginger. You can infuse your water to give is a subtle flavor that you will want to drink all day. If you drink caffeine, then you need 2 glasses of water to make up for 1 cup of coffee or black tea. That's because those things dehydrate you. If you're just not up for drinking all that water per day, then start easily. I suggest drink 4oz of water every 30 minutes. This will get you hydrated and allow your cells to absorb the water, which will cause less frequent urination. If you're not hydrated, your body will think you are in danger of dehydration and hold on to fluid, this causes water retention and bloat. Being hydrated will also boost your metabolism and aids in absorption of nutrients.

Have you ever craved a certain food when you're feeling a bit down or even anxious? Well, that's because your brain has serotonin receptors and when you eat certain foods, your brain get flooded with hormones and you feel good. This feeling is short lived though, and before you know it, you're craving more of that food to get the hormones flowing again. This is precisely why I cannot eat just one cookie!

Have you ever eaten something and then felt crappy afterward? Well, that's an indicator that you may have a food sensitivity. What I have discovered in my own body, is the things I ate when I was was younger don't work so well with my body any longer. The most common food sensitivities are are dairy, gluten-containing grains, corn, soy, and some nuts. Do your best to eliminate these foods foods while you're doing the program. Food sensitivities can cause inflammation in your body. After you complete the program, you can test these foods, but only 1 at a time and keep a food journal to keep track of how you feel after eating them. This way, you'll know for sure which foods foods to avoid. There are just some foods I don't eat any longer because they just don't work with my body. This may be the case for you as well.

It's not only what you eat, but also how you eat that affects your mood. If you're stressed and eating lunch while on a conference call and checking emails, your digestion will not be optimal. This leads to poor nutrient absorption and often over eating. If you skip meals or go too long between meals, you can get HANGRY and feel pretty miserable as your blood sugar levels plummet. All this can lead to increased belly fat.

When you eat, do your best to:

- Start your meal with a deep breath to bring you in the present moment
- Take a moment of gratitude for your meal
- Eat slowly and chew thoroughly
- Focus on eating and nothing else while eating
- Drink 4oz of fluid or less while eating
- Put down your utensils between bites
- Breathe and enjoy your food
- Don't take another bite while you still have food in your mouth
- Go 12-15 hours between your last meal of the day and your first of the following day, but don't go more than 4 hours between your 3 meals for the day

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When you take your time and chew thoroughly, you give your brain enough time to signal to your stomach when you've eaten enough. The brain and gut are connected via the vagus nerve and it's this pathway that the gut bacteria communicate directly with the brain. So it makes sense that your mood is connected to your gut health. If you have poor digestion, bad gut bacteria, or inflammation, your mood will be affected. And, remember, your immune hormones and your happy hormones are made in the gut.

Avoid foods that bring short term joy and produce long term belly fat such as sugar, refined carbs and processed foods. Choose healthy, clean, whole foods for long term

## Meditation

Did you know that the last thoughts you have before falling asleep will stay in your brain for the next four hours as you sleep? So what are you thinking about before your head hits that pillow and you're off to dream land?

This is one of the reasons I suggest meditating for five minutes before falling asleep. I would also suggest five minutes of meditating upon waking. Who doesn't have five minutes to spare if it would change your life for four hours?

Meditation can be intimidating for those who have never done it. Maybe you tried it, and it just didn't work for you. My suggestion is that you go into it without expectations. Nothing specific is supposed to happen. It's just about breathing and settling the mind to whatever extent that's possible for you.

Meditation isn't something you do once and then reap major benefits. It's the kind of thing that brings changes over time with small daily effort. If you go to the gym, do a single workout, then go home and look in the mirror, you won't see much difference. Changes to the body don't appear instantly. Yet if you work out over three months and then look at a past photo of yourself, you'll see the change. Meditation is like that. Do it daily, and over time you'll notice that you have started to feel calmer and more balanced.

Current research shows that meditation helps balance the stress response in the body. When stress levels go out of balance, cortisol and adrenaline levels increase. Cortisol and adrenaline are stress hormones that cause a pro-inflammatory state in the body when they're out of balance. Inflammation is the root cause of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, and cancer. Inflammation is the root cause of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, and cancer. Inflammation can also disrupt the digestive system and weaken your immune system. AND, cause belly fat!

There are different types of meditation. You can simply focus on your breath and count the ins and outs or you can chant a word such as OM, One, or Love. If you like guided visualization, find an app that you like. One of my favorites is Calm. I suggest you play around and find what works best for you. Also, don't make it a big deal, or you'll never do it. Start with just 5 minutes upon waking and before sleeping. You'll reap the benefits of deep sleep and focused days in no time.

You'll fall asleep with good thoughts and a clear mind, which will improve the quality of your sleep. Remember, the thoughts you have before bed remain in your subconscious for the next four hours! That is why thoughts of gratitude before sleep are so important. I've heard, "The way you fall asleep is the way you wake up." There's a lot of truth in that saying.

I also used to be a news junkie. I listened to National Public Radio (NPR) almost 24/7. I worked in the environmental field, and I stayed on top of every horrible thing that was happening in the world. Then, I decided to take a break from the daily onslaught of negativity. And, you know what happened? I didn't miss it and I realized I didn't need to know everything. What I did instead was began listening to books and podcasts.

Many people fear that they will miss something important if they don't watch TV news, read newspapers, or listen to news radio. Believe me, you will find out about something important if you need to know about it. When my mom starts a sentence with "Did you see in the news what happened to those children?" I say, "Stop. Is this something I really need to know about or will it just be a sad, horrible story?" I can't recall once where she completed the story. Now she has reduced her daily news intake and no longer shares negative stories with me. I am a lot happier in my daily life without starting the day with the barrage of negativity. Give it a try. I think you'll love it too.

Just like your body, your brain will appreciate a detox. Toxic thinking and negativity can undermine your success and good intentions.

Here are some ways you can detox your brain:

Limit negative media.

Limit exposure to negative people. This may include family and co-workers.

Clear out clutter. Clutter distracts your thoughts and disrupts your Chi flow. When clutter is cleared you feel energetically lighter and more creative.

Do less and be more. I'm a list maker so I get it. Limit what you expect yourself to accomplish in a day and take more time to be present.

Choose your thoughts mindfully. If something happens that feels negative, feel it fully and then process and release it.

I'm not in any way suggested that you should only think happy, positive thoughts, but what I am suggesting is spending less time in the negativity loop. You do have a choice. Turning a negative into a positive can be a challenge and it will take work and practice. With that effort, you will be rewarded with a joy-filled life

Menopause can be challenging so let's make this simple. You don't have to suffer through the hormonal changes. You can take charge of your experience. I would love to be able to offer you a quick fix solution, but honestly, it doesn't exist. And if anyone tells you it does, they are lying. I've been through it and I have shared with you all my best information. When you follow my plan, you will feel better and you will melt your middle. Will it take work? Yes. Will it happen overnight? No. Remember every journey begins with the first step. You are making the first step right now. Take your time with this. Make a plan and follow it. If you go off track, just get back on the next day. That is how life works. Progress, not perfection is my mantra. Make it yours too.

## Daily Schedule

Scrape your tongue before eating or drinking anything. Drink hot or warm water with lemon juice and ginger

Before you eat, take our digestive enzymes and probiotic After your meal, take your nutritional supplements

Before you eat, take your digestive enzymes After you eat, take your nutritional supplements.

Before you eat, take your digestive enzymes After you eat, take your nutritional supplements

Take 3 Hepasil and your melatonin before 9pm

Remember to drink 4oz of water every 30 minutes to stay hydrated. Drink 4oz of water every ½ hour from 8am to 7pm. This will help you get hydrated as well as allow your body to absorb the fluids. That way you won't be running to the bathroom every 20 minutes. You may need to go a few more times than normal, but your body will adjust. And, the reality is, a dehydrated body doesn't need to urinate as often as a well hydrated one.

## Middle Melting Smoothie

## INGREDIENTS

cup organic, unsweetened coconut water or coconut milk
cups (tightly packed) fresh, organic baby spinach or kale
stalk ORGANIC celery, chopped
1/2 cup pineapple or ORGANIC strawberry chunks (fresh or frozen)
tsp freshly grated ginger
1/2 Tbsp ground flax or chia seeds
1/2 cup fresh mint leaves
1/2 avocado
Juice of 1/2 lemon or lime
Tbsp. collagen powder
scoop USANA protein booster powder (optional)
1/2 cup ice (optional)

Put all ingredients in blender and process until smooth. It will keep in the fridge up to 3 days, but I think it tastes best on the first day.

## **Digestion Activator**

Drink a small glass of this about 20 minutes before you eat to promote digestion.

#### INGREDIENTS

2 Tbsps raw, organic apple cider vinegar or lemon juice

- 32 ounces of pure, filtered water
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger

Put all ingredients in a jar with a lid. Shake well to combine ingredients. Store in the fridge.

### Middle Melting Mocktail

Sometimes I just want something fun to drink but don't want alcohol with all its sugar. This is one of my favorites. This recipe makes 2 tall glasses.

#### INGREDIENTS

5-8 frozen organic blackberries or raspberries 1 inch of fresh ginger, peeled and chopped 8 fresh mint leaves Lime juice either from 2 fresh limes or organic jarred version Ginger kombucha Sparkling mineral water ice

Put the berries, ginger, mint, and lime juice, in a mortar and pestle. Muddle until it becomes mush. Divide the mixture into two tall glasses. Then add some ice. Fill half the glass with mineral water and half with the kombucha. If you don't like kombucha, you can just use the mineral water. Garnish with a lime slice and mint sprig. Enjoy!

**Condition** – How are you feeling? Tired? Depressed? Foggy Brain? Happy? Energized? Clear headed? Tracking daily symptoms allows for correlating how you feel to what you are doing for movement, supplements and nutrition.

**Movement** – Are you moving? Walking? Stretching? Doing Yoga? Track it! Are you wearing a Jawbone, Fitbit or other wearable? Track it!

**Journal** – Do you know that people who journal are more successful at following a plan? This is your place to record all the details (just use the Home or microphone button on your phone and you can even dictate your entries!)

### The Clean Eating Challenge

A program that includes whole and fresh fruits and vegetables, lean protein, healthy fat. Recipes are dairy-free and gluten-free. Presented as a guide with options for lunch and dinner, rather than specific meal plans.

There are meal plans, recipes and shopping lists to get you started. You don't need to follow the meal plans exactly. You may substitute any plan-appropriate recipe for the suggested meal to suit your taste, or make substitutions with ingredients from the "What to Eat" list. Make sure you exclude the foods on the "What Not to Eat List."

Calories are not counted on Clean Eating Challenge. There is no need to be hungry! If you need more food than is on the meal plans, increase the portions or have an additional snack. Similarly, you do not need to eat all the food on the meal plan. If you are not so hungry, it is okay to have smaller portions.

Remember to aim for 4-5 small meals daily (per plan recommendations) along with plenty of fluids. Your goal should be 64-80oz. (2-2.5L) of fluids each day, primarily water but tea and broth count.

#### What to Eat

There are many, many delicious foods to consume, look for recipes that are full of the following.

Whole fruits: all included but limit to 2-3 servings daily.

Vegetables: all are included

Gluten-free Grains: quinoa, brown and wild rice, buckwheat, teff, millet, amaranth, brown rice pasta.

But limit to 2 times daily at the very most.

Meat & Poultry: organic or free-range chicken, turkey, lamb, duck, wild game, grass-fed or organic red meat, organ meats, bone broth. Red meat should be limited to two times per week maximum.

Fish & Shellfish: Wild-caught, low-mercury fish including salmon, black cod (sablefish) tilapia, trout, anchovies, herring, sardines (fresh & canned). Shellfish including clams, lobster, shrimp, scallops, oysters. Sea vegetables

Beans and legumes: including all beans, split peas and lentils. Limit to a maximum of two servings per day

Dairy-substitutes: plain and unsweetened almond and coconut milks, yogurts and cheeses Eggs: Organic or free-range eggs Healthy fats: avocado, nuts and seeds Oils: cold-pressed/extra virgin oils: Olive oil, walnut oil, coconut oil, avocado oi Caffeine: in moderation! Vinegars & condiments: apple cider, white wine, red wine, balsamic• Fresh green juices: fresh pressed, cold pressed Dark chocolate: raw 70% cacao or higher Sweeteners: Honey and maple syrup used very sparingly, if at all. Herbs and spices: all herbs and spices are good.

#### What's Out

The following foods should be avoided:

Alcohol: all wine, beer and spirits

Gluten-grains: including wheat, barley, rye, spelt, bran, farina, kamut, couscous and all refined foods such as white breads and white flours

Dairy: cow and goat milk, butter, cheese and yogurt, cottage cheese Processed and packaged foods: chips, pastas, frozen dinners, white breads, energy bars. If it has a food label, it is likely on the out list.

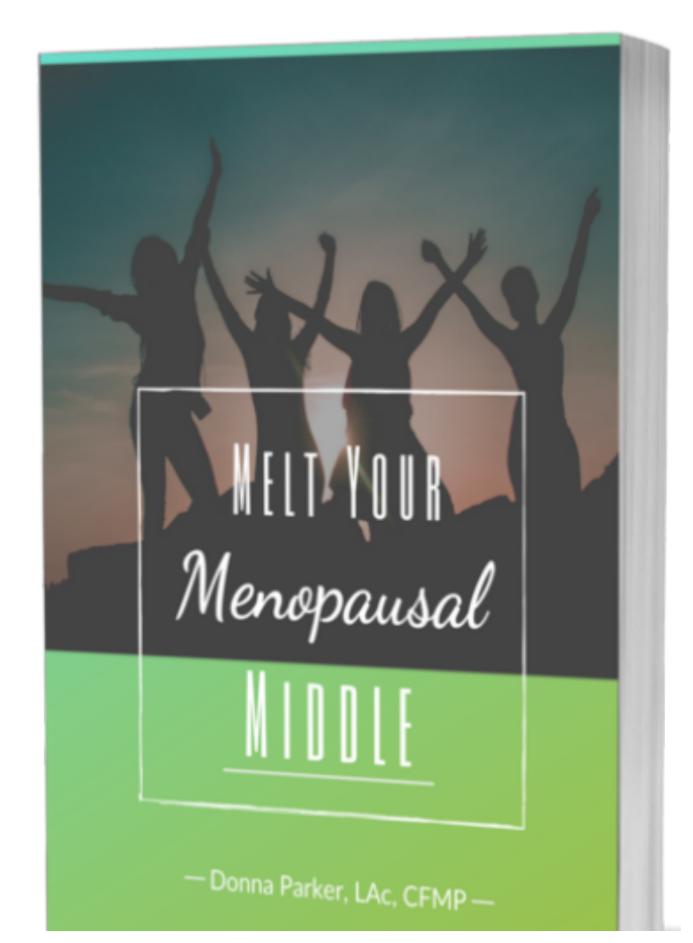
Factory-farmed and processed meats: including chicken, turkey, pork, beef, veal, cold cuts, canned meats, hot dogs, sausage (These foods are high in refined carbohydrates and sugars in addition to added chemicals.)

Soda, carbonated and other sweetened beverages: teas, sodas and other processed beverages (sodium-free sparkling water is ok).

Sweeteners: processed sugars (white, brown, beet), corn syrup, Stevia, Agave Syrup and all artificial sweeteners (including Equal Spenda and Sweet 'n Low) Processed fruit juices:

Candies & sweets: all candy including milk chocolate.

Fats & oils: processed and refined oils including canola oil, vegetable oil.



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This eBook is filled with useful information, which when put into practice, can have a dramatic effect on how you feel; mind, body, and spirit. In addition to this book, you can visit my website at www.HealthCoachDonna.com for more resources and support. I post a weekly blog filled with practical tips and information that is easy to implement into your life, as well as supportive programs that can help you on your wellness journey. I look forward to connecting with you and sharing additional tools on your journey to a healthier you.

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This book is intended to be educational and is designed to supplement, not replace, the advice of your doctor or health professional. The authors of this book disclaim any liability that may incur as a result of

applying information from this book. If you suspect that you may have a health problem we recommend that you consult your physician.

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I know first hand what it's like to suffer through menopausal symptoms as well as struggle with unwanted weight gain. What I'm going to share with you is the system that I have used to help myself as well as my patients go through menopause with ease and grace. And, a lot less weight gain!

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sometimes quite suddenly. You may feel as though you're living inside of a very different body than the one you're used to. You may have less energy and be a bit more cranky than usual. These experiences can be deeply distressing. They sure were for me!

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Congratulations on taking the first step to balancing your hormones and melting that menopausal middle. To make this happen, it's important to reduce belly bloat, burn stored fat, and eliminate weight-gaining inflammation.

Your menopausal middle is made up of a combination of belly fat and bloat. Hormonal changes during peri-menopause cause weight to accumulate around your belly, thighs, hips, and butt. These fluctuating hormones also increase water retention, intestinal gas, and bloating. Your metabolism also slows down causing you to burn fat more slowly. It's not about calories in, calories out. It's more about how to move your body and only adding nutrient dense, hormone friendly foods.

What I will focus on are the most important things to naturally balance your hormones:

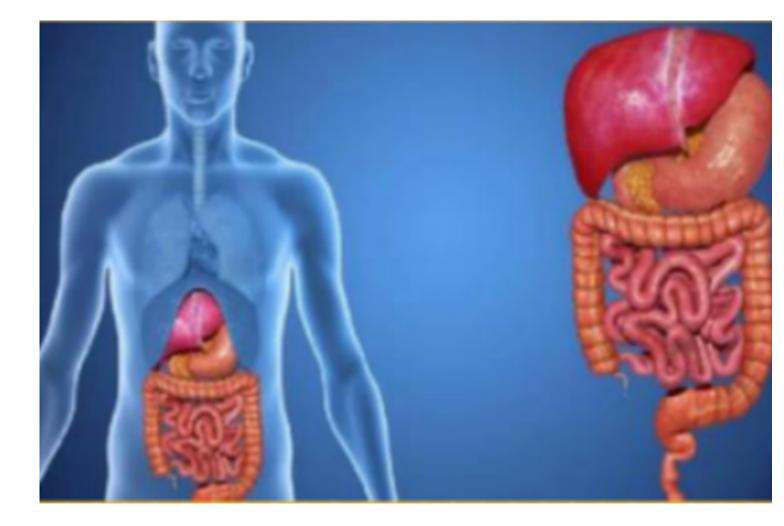
hormone-friendly foods nutrients exercise simple lifestyle changes

Remember I mentioned dangerous fat? Well, I want to take a minute to explain what that really is. It's called visceral fat and it's the deep fat that surrounds your organs. This is not a good thing. Have you ever heard of fatty liver? Well, that's just one example of visceral fat. This visceral fat happens because of poor diet choices. Liver toxicity and stress are also huge contributing factors. The fat around your middle contains way more cortisol, that's the stress hormone, than other cells in your body. So stress adds to your belly fat. The other thing that makes visceral fat dangerous is it causes inflammation. When you twist your ankle and it swells, that's acute inflammation. That's a good thing. What you don't want is chronic inflammation. That is not good for your body. When you have chronic inflammation, your body sends out cortisol, which then increases insulin, which tells your body to store more fat around your middle. This is often referred to as insulin resistance. And it's precisely why your belly fat does not budge.

Because everything--even balancing hormones--begins and ends in the gut, my plan focuses on optimizing digestion, elimination, and absorption, allowing you to melt your middle.

When you follow my plan, you will reduce inflammation and insulin resistance. Those are exactly what you need to do to melt your middle. My plan may mean you will need to make some changes in your regular dietary habits, but trust me, they will be worth it. I ask that you commit to this plan for the full 14 days so you can get the best results possible from your efforts.

Now, let's start with your gut.



The following is a list of foods that tax your liver and can result in estrogen dominance causing visceral fat.

refined and processed foods sugar bad fats, like vegetable and canola oils, as well as fried foods

non organic meats and dairy are filled with hormone



and antibiotic

non organic veggies are filled with dangerous chemicals GMOs (genetically modified foods) artificial additives, sweeteners and preservatives excess alcohol unfiltered water coffee (especially nonorganic) pesticides and herbicides plastics nonstick cookware household cleaners mattresses many personal care products prescription and OTC

Visceral fat is not fat utilized for energy. So that means reducing calories and exercising will not reduce it. The way you rid your middle of that fat is to cleanse your liver and avoid toxins. Toxins in the body cause inflammation and remember, you do not want chronic inflammation.

Your liver is your largest internal organ. Did you know that the primary cause of high cholesterol is a poor functioning liver? Yep. Think about its amazing detoxifying role and that if it works efficiently, it will help you reduce belly fat. The liver either burns fat or creates it, depending on how you support it. When the liver is running efficiently it burns fat and balances hormones. When your liver doesn't function well, hormones don't get processed, cholesterol increases, metabolism slows down and fat gets stored.

Estrogen builds up in your system when your liver is not optimally functioning. This is called estrogen dominance. When this happens, you get weight gain, bloated, and cellulite. The excess estrogen communicates to your liver to start storing fat. Remember, you will have some squishiness in menopause because the fat is needed to balance your estrogen, but you don't want to be estrogen dominant.

In the supplements chapter, I'll cover the nutritional supplements that will support your liver function.

In Chinese medicine, the liver connects to the emotions of anger and frustration. It may sound strange, but your emotions can get stuck in your body. That's why it's so important to move your body, every day, in some way that brings joy. If you can get a little sweat going as well, that's a good thing too. If you have access to a sauna, take time to have a regular sweat as that's another great way to detox your liver and all your organs.

Chronic, toxic thoughts will actually change your body chemistry. Cleansing your body means also cleansing your thoughts. I suggest 5-10 minutes of daily meditation and try a loving mantra such

as "I love myself and accept me just as I am." It may seem silly, but those sort of mind tricks really do work. When I catch myself in a negative thought loop, I actually tell myself "STOP" and then I choose a better feeling thought. I might take a few deep, cleansing breaths or take a short walk or do something to shift my energy. Maybe it's just taking a moment to pet my cat or dog. Then, magically, the negativity is released. Find what works best for you and start doing it. Remember to be kind and loving to yourself as this is a journey, not a quick fix.

So how does our liver get filled with toxins? Life.There are toxins in your environment, in your home, in your bath and body products so it's inevitable that you will be exposed to them. Additionally, when you consume processed foods, soft drinks, sugar and other unhealthy foods, your toxic burden will be even more increased. Toxins store in your fat cells because the body doesn't know what to do with them. So the better your gut, liver and hydration are, the less toxins you'll be storing.

To Achieve optimal health and wellbeing, your gut, liver and adrenals all need to be working well. We've talked about your gut and liver so let's take a closer look at your adrenals. The way you support your adrenals is by reducing your stress therefore reducing your cortisol levels. When you are less stressed you will also have better balance in your hormones as well as insulin response and reduce inflammation. So you can see how important your adrenal support can be. Avoiding toxic foods, eating nourishing foods, staying hydrated, getting good sleep, meditation, and daily exercise all help de stress your body. I want to talk a bit about meditation. It can be as simple as taking a few deep breaths or lying in bed before you get up in the morning to take stock of your day and have a moment of gratitude. There are so many ways to meditate and so many options in apps I would encourage you to try them and see what works best for you. Once you've found your sweet spot, take time when you first wake up and before you fall asleep to do your meditation. It doesn't have to be long amounts of time, but what science has shown is the benefits happen over time. So being consistent is the key to your success.

So what are your adrenals? Well, they are tiny, walnut sized glands that sit on top of your kidneys. They are responsible for producing several different hormones such as sex and stress hormones as well as helping balance blood sugar levels and regulating blood pressure. When you just keeping going and going in your life without really resting, your adrenals get taxed. They work really hard until they just get exhausted and don't have anything more to give. At that point, your cortisol levels will be all out of whack and the sheer level of fatigue can throw your life out the window. I do not want you to get to that place, so that's why you need to support them and



nourish them.

What causes adrenal fatigue?

Poor diet. Think about not only processed and poor quality foods, but also too much caffeine and alcohol.

Dieting.Consuming too few calories can mess up your hormones causing a decrease in estrogen. Remember healthy fats are good for your hormones. If you drop your calorie intake too you're your body will hold onto fat for survival. Stress. Remember the connection between stress and cortisol and fat storage? That hormone imbalance depletes your adrenals as well. Too Much Exercise. Too many days of high intensity and too long of duration can deplete you. You should feel energized after exercise, not exhausted.

Sleep. Not enough and poor quality will leave you exhausted. This throws off your hormones which causes weight gain. Less than 5 hours of sleep per night can cause a 32% increase probability of gaining visceral fat.

What helps repair adrenal fatigue?

Follow my plan of healthy, clean eating and include protein with every meal Move your body daily, but not too much Go to bed before 10pm Eat good, healthy fats Reduce your stress with daily meditation and breathing exercises Take high quality nutritional supplements Limit caffeine intake

If you don't currently exercise, then start slowly. I suggest to my patients to start with just 5-10 minutes per day. Choose something that brings you joy and happiness. Walking in nature is an excellent choice as nature itself also increases serotonin. There are several options on YouTube that you may enjoy. I love the BeFit channel and Yoga with Adrienne. Try a variety and switch it up to keep your body fit.

I find the best time to exercise is first thing in the morning. That way it's sets me for the day and I feel energized. Exercise too late in the evening can inhibit your ability to fall asleep easily. The first thing I do when I get out of bed is put on my workout clothes. That way I'm dressed and ready to go. If you schedule it, you will do it. Look at your schedule and see where you can fit it in. If you can't do 30 minutes all at one time, then break it into 2 sessions of 15 minutes each.

Remember, it's progress NOT perfection.

Water is essential. And the better hydrated you are, the less bloated you'll be. Yes, that's true. You need to aim for about ½ your body weight in ounces. So if you're 100lbs, then drink 50oz of water per day. You can count herbal tea but no more than 2 glasses per day.

You really need to consume straight up, clean, filtered water. Do your best not to drink out of plastic water bottles, as they are full of toxins that can be found in the water which contain hormone disrupters. Additionally, they harmful to the environment and most never get

recycled.

I like to keep a pitcher on my counter with fresh mint or lemons and limes, or even slicked fresh ginger. You can infuse your water to give is a subtle flavor that you will want to drink all day. If you drink caffeine, then you need 2 glasses of water to make up for 1 cup of coffee or black tea. That's because those things dehydrate you. If you're just not up for drinking all that water per day, then start easily. I suggest drink 4oz of water every 30 minutes. This will get you hydrated and allow your cells to absorb the water, which will cause less frequent urination. If you're not hydrated, your body will think you are in danger of dehydration and hold on to fluid, this causes water retention and bloat. Being hydrated will also boost your metabolism and aids in absorption of nutrients.

Have you ever craved a certain food when you're feeling a bit down or even anxious? Well, that's because your brain has serotonin receptors and when you eat certain foods, your brain get flooded with hormones and you feel good. This feeling is short lived though, and before you know it, you're craving more of that food to get the hormones flowing again. This is precisely why I cannot eat just one cookie!

Have you ever eaten something and then felt crappy afterward? Well, that's an indicator that you may have a food sensitivity. What I have discovered in my own body, is the

things I ate when I was younger don't work so well with my body any longer. The most common food sensitivities are dairy, gluten-containing grains, corn, soy, and some nuts. Do your best to eliminate these foods while you're doing the program. Food sensitivities can cause inflammation in your body. After you complete the program, you can test these foods, but only 1 at a time and keep a food journal to keep track of how you feel after eating them. This way, you'll know for sure which foods to avoid. There are just some foods I don't eat any longer because they just don't work with my body. This may be the case for you as well.

It's not only what you eat, but also how you eat that affects your mood. If you're stressed and eating lunch while on a conference call and checking emails, your digestion will not be optimal. This leads to poor nutrient absorption and often over eating. If you skip meals or go too long between meals, you can get HANGRY and feel pretty miserable as your blood sugar levels plummet. All this can lead to increased belly fat storage.



Start your meal with a deep breath to bring you in the present moment Take a moment of gratitude for your meal Eat slowly and chew thoroughly Focus on eating and nothing else while eating Drink 4oz of fluid or less while eating Put down your utensils between bites Breathe and enjoy your food Don't take another bite while you still have food in your mouth Go 12-15 hours between your last meal of the day and your first of the following day, but don't go more than 4 hours between your 3 meals for the day

When you take your time and chew thoroughly, you give your brain enough time to signal to your stomach when you've eaten enough. The brain and gut are connected via the vagus nerve and it's this pathway that the gut bacteria communicate directly with the brain. So it makes sense that your mood is connected to your gut health. If you have poor digestion, bad gut bacteria, or inflammation, your mood will be affected. And, remember, your immune hormones and your happy hormones are made in the gut.

Avoid foods that bring short term joy and produce long term belly fat such as sugar, refined carbs and processed foods. Choose healthy, clean, whole foods for long term joy.



Menopause supplement shopping cart link.

https://healthcoachdonna.ehealthpro.com/products/egcg-250mg-60-vegetarian-capsules

https://healthcoachdonna.ehealthpro.com/products/cla-softgels-1000-mg-90s

https://healthcoachdonna.ehealthpro.com/products/endotrim-120-capsules

## Meditation

Did you know that the last thoughts you have before falling asleep will stay in your brain for the next four hours as you sleep? So what are you thinking about before your head hits that pillow and you're off to dream land?

This is one of the reasons I suggest meditating for five minutes before falling asleep. I would also suggest five minutes of meditating upon waking. Who doesn't have five minutes to spare if it would change your life for

## four hours?

Meditation can be intimidating for those who have never done it. Maybe you tried it, and it just didn't work for you. My suggestion is that you go into it without expectations. Nothing specific is supposed to happen. It's just about breathing and settling the mind to whatever extent that's possible for you.

Meditation isn't something you do once and then reap major benefits. It's the kind of thing that brings changes over time with small daily effort. If you go to the gym, do a single workout, then go home and look in the mirror, you won't see much difference. Changes to the body don't appear instantly. Yet if you work out over three months and then look at a past photo of yourself, you'll see the change. Meditation is like that. Do it daily, and over time you'll notice that you have started to feel calmer and more balanced.

Current research shows that meditation helps balance the stress response in the body. When stress levels go out of balance, cortisol and adrenaline levels increase.

Cortisol and adrenaline are stress hormones that cause a pro-inflammatory state in the body when they're out of balance. Inflammation is the root cause of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, and cancer.

Inflammation is the root cause of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, and cancer. Inflammation can also disrupt the digestive system and weaken your immune system. AND, cause belly fat!

There are different types of meditation. You can simply focus on your breath and count the ins and outs or you can chant a word such as OM, One, or Love. If you like guided visualization, find an app that you like. One of my favorites is Calm. I suggest you play around and find what works best for you. Also, don't make it a big deal, or you'll never do it. Start with just 5 minutes upon waking and before sleeping. You'll reap the benefits of deep sleep and focused days in no time.

You'll fall asleep with good thoughts and a clear mind, which will improve the quality of your sleep. Remember, the thoughts you have before bed remain in your subconscious for the next four hours! That is why thoughts of gratitude before sleep are so important. I've heard, "The way you fall asleep is the way you wake up." There's a lot of truth in that saying.

I also used to be a news junkie. I listened to National Public Radio (NPR) almost 24/7. I worked in the environmental field, and I stayed on top of every horrible thing that was happening in the world. Then, I decided to take a break from the daily onslaught of negativity. And, you know what happened? I didn't miss it and I realized I didn't need to know everything. What I did instead was began listening to books and podcasts.

Many people fear that they will miss something important if they don't watch TV news, read newspapers, or listen to news radio. Believe me, you will find out about something important if you need to know about it. When my mom starts a sentence with "Did you see in the news what happened to those children?" I say, "Stop. Is this something I really need to know about or will it just be a sad, horrible story?" I can't recall once where she completed the story. Now she has reduced her daily news intake and no longer shares negative stories with me. I am a lot happier in my daily life without starting the day with the barrage of negativity. Give it a try. I think you'll love it too.

Just like your body, your brain will appreciate a detox. Toxic thinking and negativity can undermine your success and good intentions.

Here are some ways you can detox your brain:

- Limit negative media.
- Limit exposure to negative people. This may include family and co-workers.
- Clear out clutter. Clutter distracts your thoughts and disrupts your Chi flow. When clutter is cleared you feel energetically lighter and more creative.
- Do less and be more. I'm a list maker so I get it. Limit what you expect yourself to accomplish in a day and take more time to be present.
- Choose your thoughts mindfully. If something happens that feels negative, feel it fully and then process and release it.

I'm not in any way suggested that you should only think happy, positive thoughts, but what I am suggesting is spending less time in the negativity loop. You do have a choice. Turning a negative into a positive can be a challenge and it will take work and practice. With that effort, you will be rewarded with a joy-filled life. Menopause can be challenging so let's make this simple. You don't have to suffer through the hormonal changes. You can take charge of your experience. I would love to be able to offer you a quick fix solution, but honestly, it doesn't exist. And if anyone tells you it does, they are lying. I've been through it and I have shared with you all my best information. When you follow my plan, you will feel better and you will melt your middle. Will it take work?Yes. Will it happen overnight? No. Remember every journey begins with the first step. You are making the first step right now. I am so happy for you. Take your time with this. Make a plan and follow it. If you go off track, just get back on the next day. That is how life works. Progress, not perfection is my mantra. Make it yours too.

You have options. I love options.

The first is to print the 14-day guide and go it alone. If you're focused and disciplined, then this is a great option for you.

The second is to email me,

donna@donnaAcupuncture.com and ask to join the WellWorld app. This app will allow you to get my support, reminders, recipes, food log, and more all in one, easy to use app. It's essentially the app that compliments the 14-day clean eating guide.

The third option is to do my Clear the Way program. This is my 28-day online program that provides everything you need to balance your hormones. You can read more about that option at this link. <u>Clear the Way</u>. Upon Waking Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Before Bed

# **Daily Schedule**

Scrape your tongue before eating or drinking anything. Drink hot or warm water with lemon juice and ginger

Before you eat, take our digestive enzymes and probiotic After your meal, take your nutritional supplements

Before you eat, take your digestive enzymes After you eat, take your nutritional supplements if you didn't take them at breakfast

Before you eat, take your digestive enzymes After you eat, take your nutritional supplements

Take 3 Hepasil and your melatonin before 9pm

Remember to drink 4oz of water every 30 minutes to stay hydrated.

Drink 4oz of water every  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour from 8am to 7pm. This will help you get hydrated as well as allow your body to absorb the fluids. That way you won't

be running to the bathroom every 20 minutes. You may need to go a few more times than normal, but your body will adjust. And, the reality is, a dehydrated body doesn't need to urinate as often as a well hydrated one.

# Middle Melting Smoothie INGREDIENTS

cup organic, unsweetened coconut water or coconut milk
cups (tightly packed) fresh, organic baby spinach or kale
stalk ORGANIC celery, chopped
1/2 cup pineapple or ORGANIC strawberry chunks (fresh or frozen)
tsp freshly grated ginger
1/2 Tbsp ground flax or chia seeds 1/2 cup fresh mint leaves
1/2 avocado
Juice of 1/2 lemon or lime
Tbsp. collagen powder
scoop USANA protein booster powder (optional)
1/2 cup ice (optional)

Put all ingredients in blender and process until smooth. It will keep in the fridge up to 3 days, but I think it tastes best on the first day. Digestion Activator

Drink a small glass of this about 20 minutes before you eat to promote digestion.

# INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsps raw, organic apple cider vinegar or lemon juice
- 32 ounces of pure, filtered water
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger

Put all ingredients in a jar with a lid. Shake well to combine ingredients. Store in the fridge.

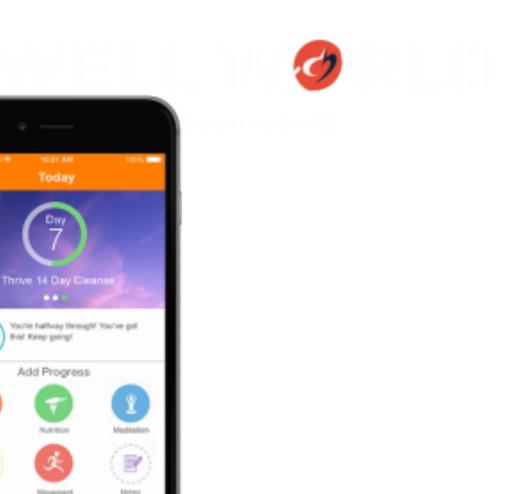
## Middle Melting Mocktail

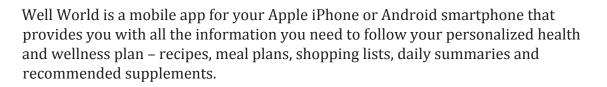
Sometimes I just want something fun to drink but don't want alcohol with all its sugar. This is one of my favorites. This recipe makes 2 tall glasses.

## INGREDIENTS

5-8 frozen organic blackberries or raspberries 1 inch of fresh ginger, peeled and chopped 8 fresh mint leaves Lime juice either from 2 fresh limes or organic jarred version Ginger kombucha Sparkling mineral water ice

Put the berries, ginger, mint, and lime juice, in a mortar and pestle. Muddle until it becomes mush. Divide the mixture into two tall glasses. Then add some ice. Fill half the glass with mineral water and half with the kombucha. If you don't like kombucha, you can just use the mineral water. Garnish with a lime slice and mint sprig. Enjoy!





Well World also allows you to track your progress in key areas, and your practitioner will be able to follow along. The more you track, the more your practitioner will understand about how the plan is working for you, where it needs to be adjusted and how best to support you.

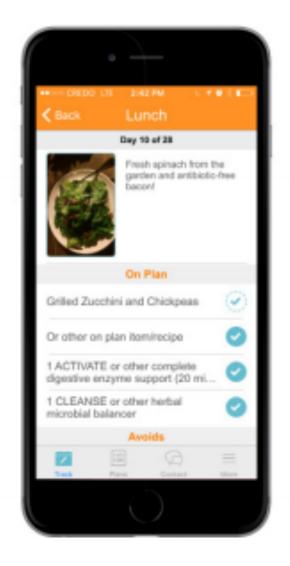
## Let's Get Started!

Check your email program for an email from Well World with an app download link and your login information. Follow the link to download the app from the App Store or Google Play. If supplements are recommended as part of you plan, you will be able to order them directly from the link in the email.

Once you have downloaded the app and entered your login information, your app will automatically update with the plan your practitioner would like you to start.

## **Plan Resources**

Use the Plans menu to view the



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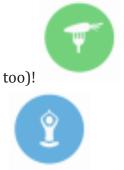
plan guidelines for any day of the plan.

Check out the More menu to find recipes for all the meals in your plan, weekly shopping lists, as well as any additional documents or videos your practitioner has included for your reference. How to Track

Following your plan and logging your progress is simple with Well World. From the Tracking Dashboard you have easy access to the different parts of your lifestyle health and wellness plan: **Body** – How are you sleeping? Have you lost weight? What is your blood pressure? Your ann is pre-configured so that you can track what is important citizener and your individual wellness

program.

**Nutrition** – What are you eating? Take a photo of your food, type in a note, log the plan items you're consuming (and even the off plan items



**Meditation** – If mindfulness or meditation is part of your wellness program, you can record time spent meditating.

**Condition** – How are you feeling? Tired? Depressed? Foggy Brain? Happy? Energized? Clear headed? Tracking daily symptoms allows for correlating how you feel to what you are doing for movement, supplements and



nutrition.

**Movement** – Are you moving? Walking? Stretching? Doing Yoga? Track it! Are you wearing a Jawbone, Fitbit or other wearable? Automatically upload your data to Well World.

**Journal** – Do you know that people who journal are more successful at following a plan? This is your place to record all the details (just use the Home or microphone button on your phone and you can even dictate your entries!)

## Get the most out of your Well World app

Take the Tour! When you first open the app, there is a short tour you can take to

show you the key features of the app. Any time you forget something, you can find the Tour under the More menu.

**Personalize your Profile** – upload a profile picture to make your profile complete.

**Turn on In-App Notifications** - Say yes to In-App Notifications when you first install Well World. You will then receive automated reminders to help keep you on-plan. You can also turn this feature on or off under the Profile menu.

**Sync your health and fitness tracking devices or apps** – if you have a health or fitness tracking device or app, turn on data sharing by choosing Import Data for the appropriate device type(s) under your Profile. This will enable you and your practitioner to see key information in your Well World profile.

Still need Help? Check out this short <u>app tutorial</u> (https://designsforhealth.wistia.com/medias/3zvz2rzimo)



Clean Eating Challenge 14 days

In this packet: Meal Plans Shopping Lists Recipes

#### The Clean Eating Challenge

A program that includes whole and fresh fruits and vegetables, lean protein, healthy fat. Recipes are dairy-free and gluten-free. Presented as a guide with options for lunch and dinner, rather than specific meal plans.

## How to Follow This Plan

Make sure to download the WELL WORLD App and login. You'll find detailed daily plan information from you practitioner under the Plans section of the App. Also look for additional resources under the More Menu in the App.

During the Clean Eating Challenge, you will be prompted to follow a diet that includes whole, fresh fruits and vegetables, and lean protein (organic poultry and wild-caught fish), along with plenty of fluids. The recipes in this program are also gluten-free and dairy-free.

There are meal plans, recipes and shopping lists to get you started. You don't need to follow the meal plans exactly. You may substitute any plan-appropriate recipe for the suggested meal to suit your taste, or make substitutions with ingredients from the "What to Eat" list. Make sure you exclude the foods on the "What Not to Eat List."

Calories are not counted on Clean Eating Challenge. There is no need to be hungry! If you need more food than is on the meal plans, increase the portions or have an additional snack. Similarly, you do not need to eat all the food on the meal plan. If you are not so hungry, it is okay to have smaller portions.

Remember to aim for 4-5 small meals daily (per plan recommendations) along with plenty of fluids. Your goal should be 64-80oz. (2-2.5L) of fluids each day, primarily water but tea and broth counts too.

#### What to Eat

There are many, many delicious foods to consume, look for recipes that are full of the following.

Whole fruits: all included but limit to 2-3 servings daily. Vegetables: all are included Gluten-free Grains: guinoa, brown and wild rice, buckwheat, teff, millet, amaranth, brown rice pasta. But limit to 2 times daily at the very most. Meat & Poultry: organic or free-range chicken, turkey, lamb, duck, wild game, grass-fed or organic redmeat, organ meats, bone broth. Red meat should be limited to two times per week maximum. Fish & Shellfish: Wild-caught, low-mercury fish including salmon, black cod (sablefish) tilapia, trout, anchovies, herring, sardines (fresh & canned). Shellfish including clams, lobster, shrimp, scallops, oysters. Sea vegetables Beans and legumes: including all beans, split peas and lentils. Limit to a maximum of two servings per day Dairy-substitutes: plain and unsweetened almond and coconut milks, yogurts and cheeses Eggs: Organic or free-range eggs Healthy fats: avocado, nuts and seeds Oils: cold-pressed/extra virgin oils: Olive oil, walnut oil, coconut oil, avocado oi Caffeine: in moderation! Vinegars & condiments: apple cider, white wine, red wine, balsamic• Fresh green juices: fresh pressed, cold pressed Dark chocolate: raw 70% cacao or higher Sweeteners: Honey and maple syrup used very sparingly, if at all. Herbs and spices: all herbs and spices are included

#### What's Out

The following foods should be avoided:

Alcohol: all wine, beer and spirits

Gluten-grains: including wheat, barley, rye, spelt, bran, farina, kamut, couscous and all refined foods such as white breads and white flours Dairy: cow and goat milk, butter, cheese and yogurt, cottage cheese Processed and packaged foods: chips, pastas, frozen dinners, white breads, energy bars. If it has a food label, it is likely on the out list. Factory-farmed and processed meats: including chicken, turkey, pork, beef, veal, cold cuts, canned meats, hot dogs, sausage (These foods are high in refined carbohydrates and sugars in addition to added chemicals.)

Soda, carbonated and other sweetened beverages: teas, sodas and other processed beverages (sodium-free sparkling water is ok).

Sweeteners: processed sugars (white, brown, beet), corn syrup, Stevia, Agave Syrup and all artificial sweeteners (including Equal Spenda and Sweet 'n Low) Processed fruit juices:

Candies & sweets: all candy including milk chocolate.

Fats & oils: processed and refined oils including canola oil, vegetable oil.

Weekly Menu Plan

Get all the recipe of Clean Eating Challenge here!

Chinese medicine enable me to help you create healthier lifelong habits.

This eBook is filled with useful information, which when put into practice, can have a dramatic effect on how you feel; mind, body, and spirit. In addition to this book, you can visit my website at www.HealthCoachDonna.com for more resources and support. I post a weekly blog filled with practical tips and information that is easy to implement into your life, as well as supportive programs that can help you on your wellness journey.

I look forward to connecting with you and sharing additional tools on your journey to a healthier you.

Wishing you a lifetime of great health + boundless joy.

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# Discl a imer

This book is intended to be educational and is designed to supplement, not replace, the advice of your doctor or health professional. The authors of this book disclaim any liability that may incur as a result of

applying information from this book. If you suspect that you may have a health problem we recommend that you consult your physician.

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I know first hand what it's like to suffer through menopausal symptoms as well as struggle with unwanted weight gain. What I'm going to share with you is the system that I have used to help myself as well as my patients go through menopause with ease and grace. And, a lot less weight gain! During peri-menopause, your body begins to change, sometimes quite suddenly. You may feel as though you're living inside of a very different body than the one you're used to. You may have less energy and be a bit more cranky than usual. These experiences can be deeply distressing. They sure were for me!

I found the best way to approach these changes and this "new" body is to accept that I need to make changes that support myself rather than struggling against it and wishing for things to go back to the way they were. They're not going back and, honestly, that's a good thing. As a menopausal woman, you will be able to step into your power and live fully in joy. I do not mean to diminish your negative feelings in the least. You may need to grieve the loss of your former body. It's important to acknowledge the sadness and reality of this loss. And, know, this book will offer solutions that can nourish your mind, body and spirit as you move forward into this sacred transition.

I work with a lot of menopausal women and the number ONE biggest complaint is weight gain, especially around the middle. This middle expansion is really an increase in belly fat and bloat resulting from hormonal changes. Your body uses fat to produce estrogen. So some softening around the middle is needed, but if it's more than 32inches, then you've entered into the danger zone (visceral belly fat). More on that later. In this book, I will lay out exactly what you can do to reduce your middle and shed some of that dangerous visceral fat and feel fabulous in your body again.

Congratulations on taking the first step to balancing your hormones and melting that menopausal middle. To make this happen, it's important to reduce belly bloat, burn stored fat, and eliminate weight-gaining inflammation.

Your menopausal middle is made up of a combination of belly fat and bloat. Hormonal changes during peri-menopause cause weight to accumulate around your belly, thighs, hips, and butt. These fluctuating hormones also increase water retention, intestinal gas, and bloating. Your metabolism also slows down causing you to burn fat more slowly. It's not about calories in, calories out. It's more about how to move your body and only adding nutrient dense, hormone friendly foods.

What I will focus on are the most important things to naturally balance your hormones:

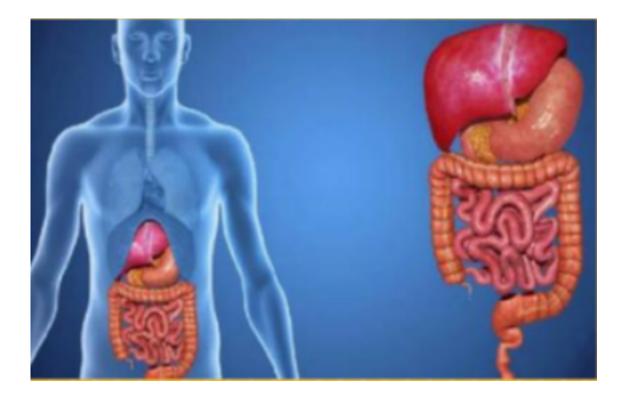
hormone-friendly foods nutrients exercise simple lifestyle changes

Remember I mentioned dangerous fat? Well, I want to take a minute to explain what that really is. It's called visceral fat and it's the deep fat that surrounds your organs. This is not a good thing. Have you ever heard of fatty liver? Well, that's just one example of visceral fat. This visceral fat happens because of poor diet choices. Liver toxicity and stress are also huge contributing factors. The fat around your middle contains way more cortisol, that's the stress hormone, than other cells in your body. So stress adds to your belly fat. The other thing that makes visceral fat dangerous is it causes inflammation. When you twist your ankle and it swells, that's acute inflammation. That's a good thing. What you don't want is chronic inflammation. That is not good for your body. When you have chronic inflammation, your body sends out cortisol, which then increases insulin, which tells your body to store more fat around your middle. This is often referred to as insulin resistance. And it's precisely why your belly fat does not budge.

Because everything--even balancing hormones--begins and ends in the gut, my plan focuses on optimizing digestion, elimination, and absorption, allowing you to melt your middle.

When you follow my plan, you will reduce inflammation and insulin resistance. Those are exactly what you need to do to melt your middle. My plan may mean you will need to make some changes in your regular dietary habits, but trust me, they will be worth it. I ask that you commit to this plan for the full 14 days so you can get the best results possible from your efforts.

Now, let's start with your gut.



The following is a list of foods that tax your liver and can result in estrogen dominance causing visceral fat.

- refined and processed foods
- sugar

bad fats, like vegetable and canola oils, as well as fried foods

non organic meats and dairy are filled with hormone and antibiotic

non organic veggies are filled with dangerous chemicals

GMOs (genetically modified foods)

artificial additives, sweeteners and preservatives excess alcohol

unfiltered water

coffee (especially nonorganic)

pesticides and herbicides

plastics

nonstick cookware

household cleaners

mattresses

- many personal care products
- prescription and OTC

Visceral fat is not fat utilized for energy. So that means reducing calories and exercising will not reduce it. The way you rid your middle of that fat is to cleanse your liver and avoid toxins. Toxins in the body cause inflammation and remember, you do not want chronic inflammation.



Your liver is your largest internal organ. Did you know that the primary cause of high cholesterol is a poor functioning liver? Yep. Think about its amazing detoxifying role and that if it works efficiently, it will help you reduce belly fat. The liver either burns fat or creates it, depending on how you support it. When the liver is running efficiently it burns fat and balances hormones. When your liver doesn't function well, hormones don't get processed, cholesterol increases, metabolism slows down and fat gets stored.

Estrogen builds up in your system when your liver is not optimally functioning. This is called estrogen dominance. When this happens, you get weight gain, bloated, and cellulite. The excess estrogen communicates to your liver to start storing fat. Remember, you will have some squishiness in menopause because the fat is needed to balance your estrogen, but you don't want to be estrogen dominant.

In the supplements chapter, I'll cover the nutritional supplements that will support your liver function.

In Chinese medicine, the liver connects to the emotions of anger and frustration. It may sound strange, but your emotions can get stuck in your body. That's why it's so important to move your body, every day, in some way that brings joy. If you can get a little sweat going as well, that's a good thing too. If you have access to a sauna, take time to have a regular sweat as that's another great way to detox your liver and all your organs.

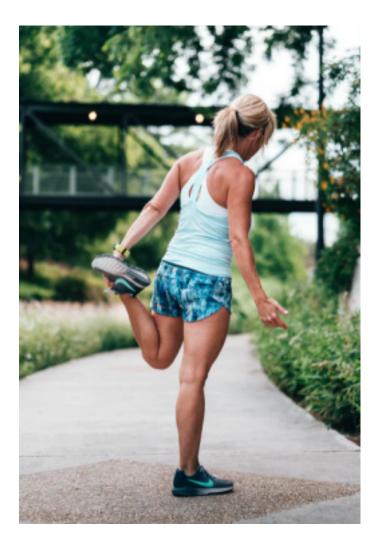
Chronic, toxic thoughts will actually change your body chemistry. Cleansing your body means also cleansing your thoughts. I suggest 5-10 minutes of daily meditation and try a loving mantra such

as "I love myself and accept me just as I am." It may seem silly, but those sort of mind tricks really do work. When I catch myself in a negative thought loop, I actually tell myself "STOP" and then I choose a better feeling thought. I might take a few deep, cleansing breaths or take a short walk or do something to shift my energy. Maybe it's just taking a moment to pet my cat or dog. Then, magically, the negativity is released. Find what works best for you and start doing it. Remember to be kind and loving to yourself as this is a journey, not a quick fix.

So how does our liver get filled with toxins? Life.There are toxins in your environment, in your home, in your bath and body products so it's inevitable that you will be exposed to them. Additionally, when you consume processed foods, soft drinks, sugar and other unhealthy foods, your toxic burden will be even more increased. Toxins store in your fat cells because the body doesn't know what to do with them. So the better your gut, liver and hydration are, the less toxins you'll be storing.

To Achieve optimal health and wellbeing, your gut, liver and adrenals all need to be working well. We've talked about your gut and liver so let's take a closer look at your adrenals. The way you support your adrenals is by reducing your stress therefore reducing your cortisol levels. When you are less stressed you will also have better balance in your hormones as well as insulin response and reduce inflammation. So you can see how important your adrenal support can be. Avoiding toxic foods, eating nourishing foods, staying hydrated, getting good sleep, meditation, and daily exercise all help de stress your body. I want to talk a bit about meditation. It can be as simple as taking a few deep breaths or lying in bed before you get up in the morning to take stock of your day and have a moment of gratitude. There are so many ways to meditate and so many options in apps I would encourage you to try them and see what works best for you. Once you've found your sweet spot, take time when you first wake up and before you fall asleep to do your meditation. It doesn't have to be long amounts of time, but what science has shown is the benefits happen over time. So being consistent is the key to your success.

So what are your adrenals? Well, they are tiny, walnut sized glands that sit on top of your kidneys. They are responsible for producing several different hormones such as sex and stress hormones as well as helping balance blood sugar levels and regulating blood pressure. When you just keeping going and going in your life without really resting, your adrenals get taxed. They work really hard until they just get exhausted and don't have anything more to give. At that point, your cortisol levels will be all out of whack and the sheer level of fatigue can throw your life out the window. I do not want you to get to that place, so that's why you need to support them and nourish them.



What causes adrenal fatigue?

Poor diet. Think about not only processed and poor quality foods, but also too much caffeine and alcohol.

Dieting.Consuming too few calories can mess up your hormones causing a decrease in estrogen. Remember healthy fats are good for your hormones. If you drop your calorie intake too you're your body will hold onto fat for survival. Stress. Remember the connection between stress and cortisol and fat storage? That hormone imbalance depletes your adrenals as well. Too Much Exercise. Too many days of high intensity and too long of duration can deplete you. You should feel energized after exercise, not exhausted.

Sleep. Not enough and poor quality will leave you exhausted. This throws off your hormones which causes weight gain. Less than 5 hours of sleep per night can cause a 32% increase probability of gaining visceral fat.

What helps repair adrenal fatigue?

Follow my plan of healthy, clean eating and include protein with every meal Move your body daily, but not too much Go to bed before 10pm Eat good, healthy fats Reduce your stress with daily meditation and breathing exercises Take high quality nutritional supplements Limit caffeine intake

If you don't currently exercise, then start slowly. I suggest to my patients to start with just 5-10 minutes per day. Choose something that brings you joy and happiness. Walking in nature is an excellent choice as nature itself also increases serotonin. There are several options on YouTube that you may enjoy. I love the BeFit channel and Yoga with Adrienne. Try a variety and switch it up to keep your body fit.

I find the best time to exercise is first thing in the morning. That way it's sets me for the day and I feel energized. Exercise too late in the evening can inhibit your ability to fall asleep easily. The first thing I do when I get out of bed is put on my workout clothes. That way I'm dressed and ready to go. If you schedule it, you will do it. Look at your schedule and see where you can fit it in. If you can't do 30 minutes all at one time, then break it into 2 sessions of 15 minutes each.

Remember, it's progress NOT perfection.

Water is essential. And the better hydrated you are, the less bloated you'll be. Yes, that's true. You need to aim for about ½ your body weight in ounces. So if you're 100lbs, then drink 50oz of water per day. You can count herbal tea but no more than 2 glasses per day. You really need to consume straight up, clean, filtered water. Do your best not to drink out of plastic water bottles, as they are full of toxins that can be found in the water which contain hormone disrupters. Additionally, they harmful to the environment and most never get recycled.

I like to keep a pitcher on my counter with fresh mint or lemons and limes, or even slicked fresh ginger. You can infuse your water to give is a subtle flavor that you will want to drink all day. If you drink caffeine, then you need 2 glasses of water to make up for 1 cup of coffee or black tea.

That's because those things dehydrate you. If you're just not up for drinking all that water per day, then start easily. I suggest drink 4oz of water every 30 minutes. This will get you hydrated and allow your cells to absorb the water, which will cause less frequent urination. If you're not hydrated, your body will think you are in danger of dehydration and hold on to fluid, this causes water retention and bloat. Being hydrated will also boost your metabolism and aids in absorption of nutrients.

Have you ever craved a certain food when you're feeling a bit down or even anxious? Well, that's because your brain has serotonin receptors and when you eat certain foods, your brain get flooded with hormones and you feel good. This feeling is short lived though, and before you know it, you're craving more of that food to get the hormones flowing again. This is precisely why I cannot eat just one cookie!

Have you ever eaten something and then felt crappy afterward? Well, that's an indicator that you may have a food sensitivity. What I have discovered in my own body, is the

things I ate when I was younger don't work so well with my body any longer. The most common food sensitivities are dairy, gluten-containing grains, corn, soy, and some nuts. Do your best to eliminate these foods while you're doing the program. Food sensitivities can cause inflammation in your body. After you complete the program, you can test these foods, but only 1 at a time and keep a food journal to keep track of how you feel after eating them. This way, you'll know for sure which foods to avoid. There are just some foods I don't eat any longer because they just don't work with my body. This may be the case for you as well.

It's not only what you eat, but also how you eat that affects your mood. If you're stressed and eating lunch while on a conference call and checking emails, your digestion will not be optimal. This leads to poor nutrient absorption and often over eating. If you skip meals or go too long between meals, you can get HANGRY and feel pretty miserable as your blood sugar levels plummet. All this can lead to increased belly fat storage.



When you eat, do your best to:

Start your meal with a deep breath to bring you in the present moment Take a moment of gratitude for your meal Eat slowly and chew thoroughly Focus on eating and nothing else

while eating Drink 4oz of fluid or less while eating Put down your utensils between bites Breathe and enjoy your food Don't take another bite while you still have food in your mouth Go 12-15 hours between your last meal of the day and your first of the following day, but don't go more than 4 hours between your 3 meals for the day

When you take your time and chew thoroughly, you give your brain enough time to signal to your stomach when you've eaten enough. The brain and gut are connected via the vagus nerve and it's this pathway that the gut bacteria communicate

directly with the brain. So it makes sense that your mood is connected to your gut health. If you have poor digestion, bad gut bacteria, or inflammation, your mood will be affected. And, remember, your immune hormones and your happy hormones are made in the gut.

Avoid foods that bring short term joy and produce long term belly fat such as sugar, refined carbs and processed foods. Choose healthy, clean, whole foods for long term joy.



Menopause supplement shopping cart link.

https://healthcoachdonna.ehealthpro.com/products/egcg-250mg-60-vegetarian-capsules

https://healthcoachdonna.ehealthpro.com/products/cla-softgels-1000-mg-90s

https://healthcoachdonna.ehealthpro.com/products/endotrim-120-capsules

### Meditation

Did you know that the last thoughts you have before falling asleep will stay in your brain for the next four hours as you sleep? So what are you thinking about before your head hits that pillow and you're off to dream land?

This is one of the reasons I suggest meditating for five minutes before falling asleep. I would also suggest five minutes of meditating upon waking. Who doesn't have five minutes to spare if it would change your life for four hours?

Meditation can be intimidating for those who have never done it. Maybe you tried it, and it just didn't work for you. My suggestion is that you go into it without expectations. Nothing specific is supposed to happen. It's just about breathing and settling the mind to whatever extent that's possible for you.

Meditation isn't something you do once and then reap major benefits. It's the kind of thing that brings changes over time with small daily effort. If you go to the gym, do a single workout, then go home and look in the mirror, you won't see much difference. Changes to the body don't appear instantly. Yet if you work out over three months and then look at a past photo of yourself, you'll see the change. Meditation is like that. Do it daily, and over time you'll notice that you have started to feel calmer and more balanced.

Current research shows that meditation helps balance the stress response in the body. When stress levels go out of balance, cortisol and adrenaline levels increase.

Cortisol and adrenaline are stress hormones that cause a pro-inflammatory state in the body when they're out of balance. Inflammation is the root cause of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, and cancer.

Inflammation is the root cause of degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, and cancer. Inflammation can also disrupt the digestive system and weaken your immune system. AND, cause belly fat!

There are different types of meditation. You can simply focus on your breath and count the ins and outs or you can chant a word such as OM, One, or Love. If you like guided visualization, find an app that you like. One of my favorites is Calm. I suggest you play around and find what works best for you. Also, don't make it a big deal, or you'll never do it. Start with just 5 minutes upon waking and before sleeping. You'll reap the benefits of deep sleep and focused days in no time.

You'll fall asleep with good thoughts and a clear mind, which will improve the quality of your sleep. Remember, the thoughts you have before bed remain in your subconscious for the next four hours! That is why thoughts of gratitude before sleep are so important. I've heard, "The way you fall asleep is the way you wake up." There's a lot of truth in that saying.

I also used to be a news junkie. I listened to National Public Radio (NPR) almost 24/7. I

worked in the environmental field, and I stayed on top of every horrible thing that was happening in the world. Then, I decided to take a break from the daily onslaught of negativity. And, you know what happened? I didn't miss it and I realized I didn't need to know everything. What I did instead was began listening to books and podcasts.

Many people fear that they will miss something important if they don't watch TV news, read newspapers, or listen to news radio. Believe me, you will find out about something important if you need to know about it. When my mom starts a sentence with "Did you see in the news what happened to those children?" I say, "Stop. Is this something I really need to know about or will it just be a sad, horrible story?" I can't recall once where she completed the story. Now she has reduced her daily news intake and no longer shares negative stories with me. I am a lot happier in my daily life without starting the day with the barrage of negativity. Give it a try. I think you'll love it too.

Just like your body, your brain will appreciate a detox. Toxic thinking and negativity can undermine your success and good intentions.

Here are some ways you can detox your brain:

Limit negative media.

Limit exposure to negative people. This may include family and co-workers. Clear out clutter. Clutter distracts your thoughts and disrupts your Chi flow. When clutter is cleared you feel energetically lighter and more creative.

Do less and be more. I'm a list maker so I get it. Limit what you expect yourself to accomplish in a day and take more time to be present.

Choose your thoughts mindfully. If something happens that feels negative, feel it fully and then process and release it.

I'm not in any way suggested that you should only think happy, positive thoughts, but what I am suggesting is spending less time in the negativity loop. You do have a choice. Turning a negative into a positive can be a challenge and it will take work and practice. With that effort, you will be rewarded with a joy-filled life. Menopause can be challenging so let's make this simple. You don't have to suffer through the hormonal changes. You can take charge of your experience. I would love to be able to offer you a quick fix solution, but honestly, it doesn't exist. And if anyone tells you it does, they are lying. I've been through it and I have shared with you all my best information. When you follow my plan, you will feel better and you will melt your middle. Will it take work?Yes. Will it happen overnight? No. Remember every journey begins with the first step. You are making the first step right now. I am so happy for you. Take your time with this. Make a plan and follow it. If you go off track, just get back on the next day. That is how life works. Progress, not perfection is my mantra. Make it yours too.

You have options. I love options.

The first is to print the 14-day guide and go it alone. If you're focused and disciplined, then this is a great option for you.

## The second is to email me,

donna@donnaAcupuncture.com and ask to join the WellWorld app. This app will allow you to get my support, reminders, recipes, food log, and more all in one, easy to use app. It's essentially the app that compliments the 14-day clean eating guide.

The third option is to do my Clear the Way program. This is my 28-day online program that provides everything you need to balance your hormones. You can read more about that option at this link. <u>Clear the Way</u>. Upon Waking Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Before Bed

## Daily Schedule

Scrape your tongue before eating or drinking anything. Drink hot or warm water with lemon juice and ginger

Before you eat, take our digestive enzymes and probiotic After your meal, take your nutritional supplements

Before you eat, take your digestive enzymes After you eat, take your nutritional supplements if you didn't take them at breakfast

Before you eat, take your digestive enzymes After you eat, take your nutritional supplements

Take 3 Hepasil and your melatonin before 9pm

Remember to drink 4oz of water every 30 minutes to stay hydrated.

Drink 4oz of water every ½ hour from 8am to 7pm. This will help you get hydrated as well as allow your body to absorb the fluids. That way you won't be running to the bathroom every 20 minutes. You may need to go a few more times than normal, but your body will adjust. And, the reality is, a dehydrated body doesn't need to urinate as often as a well hydrated one.

#### Middle Melting Smoothie INGREDIENTS

cup organic, unsweetened coconut water or coconut milk
cups (tightly packed) fresh, organic baby spinach or kale
stalk ORGANIC celery, chopped
cup pineapple or ORGANIC strawberry chunks (fresh or frozen)
tsp freshly grated ginger
Tbsp ground flax or chia seeds 1/2 cup fresh mint leaves
avocado
Juice of 1/2 lemon or lime
Tbsp. collagen powder
scoop USANA protein booster powder (optional)
cup ice (optional)

Put all ingredients in blender and process until smooth. It will keep in the fridge up to 3 days,

but I think it tastes best on the first day. Digestion Activator

Drink a small glass of this about 20 minutes before you eat to promote digestion.

## INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsps raw, organic apple cider vinegar or lemon juice
- 32 ounces of pure, filtered water
- 1 Tbsp grated fresh ginger

Put all ingredients in a jar with a lid. Shake well to combine ingredients. Store in the fridge.

## Middle Melting Mocktail

Sometimes I just want something fun to drink but don't want alcohol with all its sugar. This is one of my favorites. This recipe makes 2 tall glasses.

## INGREDIENTS

5-8 frozen organic blackberries or raspberries 1 inch of fresh ginger, peeled and chopped 8 fresh mint leaves Lime juice either from 2 fresh limes or organic jarred version Ginger kombucha Sparkling mineral water ice

Put the berries, ginger, mint, and lime juice, in a mortar and pestle. Muddle until it becomes mush. Divide the mixture into two tall glasses. Then add some ice. Fill half the glass with mineral water and half with the kombucha. If you don't like kombucha, you can just use the mineral water. Garnish with a lime slice and mint sprig. Enjoy!



Well World is a mobile app for your Apple iPhone or Android smartphone that provides you with all the information you need to follow your personalized health and wellness plan – recipes, meal plans, shopping lists, daily summaries and recommended supplements.

Well World also allows you to track your progress in key areas, and your practitioner will be able to follow along. The more you track, the more your practitioner will understand about how the plan is working for you, where it needs to be adjusted and how best to support you.

#### Let's Get Started!

Check your email program for an email from Well World with an app download link and your login information. Follow the link to download the app from the App Store or Google Play. If supplements are recommended as part of you plan, you will be able to order them directly from the link in the email.

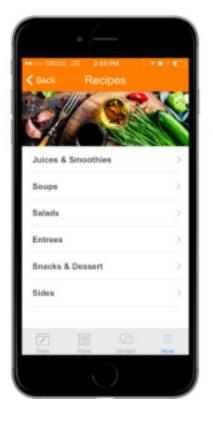
Once you have downloaded the app and entered your login information, your app will automatically update with the plan your practitioner would like you to start.

#### Plan Resources

Use the Plans menu to view the plan guidelines for any day of the plan.

Check out the More menu to find recipes for all the meals in your plan, weekly shopping lists, as well as any additional documents or videos your practitioner has included for your reference. How to Track





Following your plan and

logging your progress is simple with Well World. From the Tracking Dashboard

# you have easy access to the different parts of your lifestyle health and wellness plan:



**Body** – How are you sleeping? Have you lost weight? What is your blood pressure? Your app is pre-configured so that you can track what is important to your practitioner and your individual wellness program.

**Nutrition** – What are you eating? Take a photo of your food, type in a note, log the plan items you're consuming (and even the off plan items too)!



**Meditation** – If mindfulness or meditation is part of your wellness program, you can record time spent meditating.

**Condition** – How are you feeling? Tired? Depressed? Foggy Brain? Happy? Energized? Clear headed? Tracking daily symptoms allows for correlating how you feel to what you are doing for movement, supplements and nutrition.

**Movement** – Are you moving? Walking? Stretching? Doing Yoga? Track it! Are you wearing a Jawbone, Fitbit or other wearable? Automatically upload your data to Well World.

**Journal** – Do you know that people who journal are more successful at following a plan? This is your place to record all the details (just use the Home or microphone button on your phone and you can even dictate your entries!)

Get the most out of your Well World app

**Take the Tour!** When you first open the app, there is a short tour you can take to show you the key features of the app. Any time you forget something, you can find the Tour under the More menu.

**Personalize your Profile** – upload a profile picture to make your profile complete.

**Turn on In-App Notifications** - Say yes to In-App Notifications when you first install Well World. You will then receive automated reminders to help keep you on-plan. You can also turn this feature on or off under the Profile menu.

**Sync your health and fitness tracking devices or apps** – if you have a health or fitness tracking device or app, turn on data sharing by choosing Import Data for the appropriate device type(s) under your Profile. This will enable you and your practitioner to see key information in your Well World profile.

Still need Help? Check out this short <u>app tutorial</u> (https://designsforhealth.wistia.com/medias/3zvz2rzimo)



Clean Eating Challenge 14 days

In this packet: Meal Plans Shopping Lists Recipes

## The Clean Eating Challenge

A program that includes whole and fresh fruits and vegetables, lean protein, healthy fat. Recipes are dairy-free and gluten-free. Presented as a guide with options for lunch and dinner, rather than specific meal plans.

#### How to Follow This Plan

Make sure to download the WELL WORLD App and login. You'll find detailed daily plan information from you practitioner under the Plans section of the App. Also look for additional resources under the More Menu in the App.

During the Clean Eating Challenge, you will be prompted to follow a diet that includes whole, fresh fruits and vegetables, and lean protein (organic poultry and wild-caught fish), along with plenty of fluids. The recipes in this program are also gluten-free and dairy-free.

There are meal plans, recipes and shopping lists to get you started. You don't need to follow the meal plans exactly. You may substitute any plan-appropriate recipe for the suggested meal to suit your taste, or make substitutions with ingredients from the "What to Eat" list. Make sure you exclude the foods on the "What Not to Eat List."

Calories are not counted on Clean Eating Challenge. There is no need to be hungry! If you need more food than is on the meal plans, increase the portions or have an additional snack. Similarly, you do not need to eat all the food on the meal plan. If you are not so hungry, it is okay to have smaller portions.

Remember to aim for 4-5 small meals daily (per plan recommendations) along with plenty of fluids. Your goal should be 64-80oz. (2-2.5L) of fluids each day, primarily water but tea and broth counts too.

There are many, many delicious foods to consume, look for recipes that are full of the following.

Whole fruits: all included but limit to 2-3 servings daily. Vegetables: all are included Gluten-free Grains: guinoa, brown and wild rice, buckwheat, teff, millet, amaranth, brown rice pasta. But limit to 2 times daily at the very most. Meat & Poultry: organic or free-range chicken, turkey, lamb, duck, wild game, grass-fed or organic redmeat, organ meats, bone broth. Red meat should be limited to two times per week maximum. Fish & Shellfish: Wild-caught, low-mercury fish including salmon, black cod (sablefish) tilapia, trout, anchovies, herring, sardines (fresh & canned). Shellfish including clams, lobster, shrimp, scallops, oysters. Sea vegetables Beans and legumes: including all beans, split peas and lentils. Limit to a maximum of two servings per day Dairy-substitutes: plain and unsweetened almond and coconut milks, yogurts and cheeses Eggs: Organic or free-range eggs Healthy fats: avocado, nuts and seeds Oils: cold-pressed/extra virgin oils: Olive oil, walnut oil, coconut oil, avocado oi Caffeine: in moderation! Vinegars & condiments: apple cider, white wine, red wine, balsamic• Fresh green juices: fresh pressed, cold pressed Dark chocolate: raw 70% cacao or higher Sweeteners: Honey and maple syrup used very sparingly, if at all. Herbs and spices: all herbs and spices are included

#### What's Out

The following foods should be avoided:

Alcohol: all wine, beer and spirits

Gluten-grains: including wheat, barley, rye, spelt, bran, farina, kamut, couscous and all refined foods such as white breads and white flours Dairy: cow and goat milk, butter, cheese and yogurt, cottage cheese Processed and packaged foods: chips, pastas, frozen dinners, white breads, energy bars. If it has a food label, it is likely on the out list. Factory-farmed and processed meats: including chicken, turkey, pork, beef, veal, cold cuts, canned meats, hot dogs, sausage (These foods are high in refined carbohydrates and sugars in addition to added chemicals.)

Soda, carbonated and other sweetened beverages: teas, sodas and other processed beverages (sodium-free sparkling water is ok).

Sweeteners: processed sugars (white, brown, beet), corn syrup, Stevia, Agave Syrup and all artificial sweeteners (including Equal Spenda and Sweet 'n Low) Processed fruit juices:

Candies & sweets: all candy including milk chocolate.

Fats & oils: processed and refined oils including canola oil, vegetable oil.

Weekly Menu Plan

Get all the recipe of Clean Eating Challenge here!