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## FA FITNESS



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# JAMIE'S WOMEN'S WELLNESS GUIDE

YOUR QUICK GUIDE TO CYCLE SAVY WELLNESS

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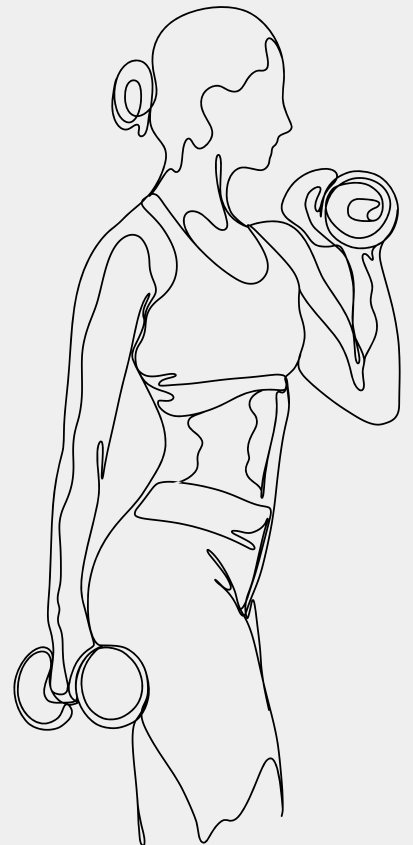
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# INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Women's wellness is deeply connected to the natural rhythms of the menstrual cycle, with each phase influencing energy levels, mood, metabolism, and overall well-being. By understanding and aligning lifestyle choices—nutrition, exercise, and self-care—with the four menstrual phases (menstrual, follicular, ovulatory, and luteal), women can optimize their health, performance, and daily balance. This guide explores each phase, offering practical strategies to support physical and mental well-being throughout the cycle.

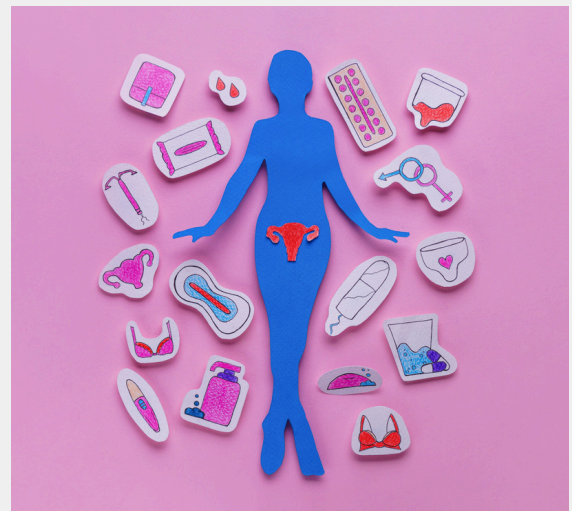
## How Your Menstrual Cycle Impacts Your Wellness Goals



The menstrual cycle influences female health by affecting hormones, energy levels, metabolism, and mood throughout its **four phases**. The **menstrual phase brings lower energy** and increased fatigue, while the **follicular phase boosts vitality**, strength, and cognitive function. **The ovulatory phase marks peak energy**, strength, and endurance, making it ideal for high-intensity workouts. During **the luteal phase, hormonal shifts can lead to cravings, fatigue, and mood changes**, requiring more focus on recovery and balanced nutrition.

## Benefits Of A Cycle-Aware Approach

Understanding these phases allows women to tailor their approach to fitness and well-being for optimal results. **By adjusting workouts, nutrition, and self-care based on hormonal fluctuations,** women can maximize performance, improve recovery, and maintain overall balance. **This cycle-aware approach prevents burnout,** supports hormonal health, and enhances both physical and mental resilience.



# MENSTRUATION PHASE

The menstrual phase marks the beginning of the menstrual cycle and typically lasts between 3 to 7 days. During this phase, the body sheds the uterine lining due to a drop in progesterone and estrogen levels, leading to menstruation. This hormonal decline often results in lower energy levels, fatigue, and increased sensitivity to pain. Many women also experience cramps, bloating, headaches, or mood fluctuations due to prostaglandin production, which triggers uterine contractions.

Physically, the body requires more rest and gentle movement rather than intense exercise. Low-impact activities like walking, stretching, and yoga can help improve circulation, ease cramps, and support overall well-being. Hydration is essential to counteract bloating, and incorporating warm foods, iron-rich meals, and anti-inflammatory ingredients like ginger and turmeric can help replenish lost nutrients and ease discomfort.

Mentally and emotionally, this phase is a time for reflection, self-care, and slowing down. Many women experience heightened introspection and may feel more withdrawn or sensitive. Taking time for restful activities, journaling, or meditative practices can help manage emotions and reduce stress. Prioritizing quality sleep is also crucial, as hormonal shifts can disrupt rest and contribute to feelings of fatigue.

From a health and fitness perspective, the menstrual phase is about recovery and nourishment. Instead of pushing for high-performance workouts, focusing on rest, mobility, and light movement can prevent burnout and support the body's natural rhythms. Honoring this phase by adjusting nutrition, exercise, and self-care leads to better hormonal balance, improved recovery, and a more sustainable long-term wellness approach.







# PERIOD PLAN

## Exercise Considerations:

- **Energy Levels:** It's important to listen to your body and adjust the intensity and duration of workouts based on your energy levels. Some women may experience fatigue during this phase, so choosing lower-intensity exercises such as walking, yoga, or Pilates can be beneficial.
- **Gentle Movement:** Engaging in gentle exercises can help alleviate menstrual cramps and discomfort. Activities like stretching, light cardio, and low-impact workouts can promote blood flow, reduce pain, and improve mood.
- **Mind-Body Practices:** Incorporating mind-body practices such as yoga or meditation can help manage stress, improve relaxation, and promote a sense of well-being during the menstrual phase.
- **Flexibility Training:** Stretching exercises, particularly targeting the lower back and pelvic area, can help ease muscle tension and promote flexibility, which may be beneficial during menstruation.

## Nutrition Considerations:

- **Iron-Rich Foods:** Due to potential iron loss during menstruation, it's important to include iron-rich foods such as lean red meat, spinach, lentils, and fortified cereals in your diet to maintain adequate iron levels.
- **Hydration:** Staying hydrated is crucial during the menstrual phase. Drinking enough water and consuming hydrating foods such as fruits and vegetables can help prevent dehydration and support overall health.
- **Balanced Diet:** Aim for a balanced diet that includes a variety of whole grains, lean proteins, healthy fats, and plenty of fruits and vegetables. This will provide essential nutrients and support overall well-being.
- **Anti-Inflammatory Foods:** Incorporating anti-inflammatory foods like fatty fish (rich in omega-3 fatty acids), turmeric, ginger, leafy greens, and berries may help alleviate menstrual cramps and reduce inflammation.
- **Healthy Snacking:** Choose nutritious snacks to satisfy cravings and maintain stable energy levels. Opt for options like Greek yogurt, nuts, seeds, fruits, or vegetable sticks with hummus.

# FOLLICULAR PHASE

The follicular phase begins on the first day of menstruation and lasts until ovulation, typically spanning 7 to 10 days. During this phase, the body prepares for ovulation as follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) triggers the growth of ovarian follicles, and estrogen levels gradually rise. This hormonal increase stimulates the thickening of the uterine lining while also enhancing cognitive function, mood, and overall energy levels. Women often experience a sense of renewal and motivation during this time, making it an ideal phase for setting new goals and engaging in mentally demanding tasks.

As estrogen rises, metabolism slows slightly, and the body becomes more efficient at using carbohydrates for energy. This makes the follicular phase a great time to incorporate higher-intensity workouts, such as strength training and cardio-based exercises, as the body is primed for performance and quicker recovery. Appetite is typically lower compared to the luteal phase, and insulin sensitivity is higher, meaning the body processes carbohydrates more effectively. A balanced diet rich in lean proteins, healthy fats, and complex carbohydrates supports sustained energy and muscle development.

This phase is also a time of increased social confidence and emotional well-being due to the surge in estrogen and dopamine. Many women feel more outgoing, focused, and optimistic, making it a great time for networking, social events, and creative projects. Prioritizing hydration, quality sleep, and micronutrient-rich foods can further enhance energy levels and cognitive function, setting the stage for optimal health and performance as the cycle progresses toward ovulation.





# FOLLICULAR PLAN

## Exercise Considerations:

- **Energy and Stamina:** The follicular phase is characterized by increased energy and stamina. Take advantage of this by engaging in higher-intensity workouts such as strength training, cardio exercises, or high-intensity interval training (HIIT) to maximize performance.
- **Strength Training:** Focus on strength training exercises during this phase to build lean muscle mass. Incorporate compound movements that target multiple muscle groups, such as squats, deadlifts, lunges, and push-ups.
- **Endurance Training:** With improved endurance during this phase, consider longer cardio sessions or endurance activities like running, cycling, or swimming to challenge yourself and improve cardiovascular fitness.
- **Flexibility and Balance:** Incorporate flexibility training, such as yoga or dynamic stretching, to maintain and enhance flexibility. Additionally, balance exercises can improve stability and joint coordination.

## Nutrition Considerations:

- **Balanced Diet:** Maintain a balanced diet that includes a variety of whole foods, including lean proteins, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats. Aim for nutrient-dense meals to support energy and recovery.
- **Pre-Workout Nutrition:** Prioritize pre-workout nutrition to fuel your workouts. Include a combination of carbohydrates and protein for sustained energy and muscle repair. Examples include a banana with nut butter or Greek yogurt with berries.
- **Hydration:** Stay adequately hydrated before, during, and after exercise. Drink water and consider incorporating electrolyte-rich beverages for longer or intense workouts.
- **Antioxidant-Rich Foods:** Include antioxidant-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds to combat oxidative stress and support recovery.
- **Post-Workout Nutrition:** After exercise, focus on post-workout nutrition to aid muscle recovery. Include a mix of carbohydrates and protein within 30-60 minutes of completing your workout. Examples include a protein shake with a banana or a chicken and quinoa salad.



# OVULATION PHASE

The ovulation phase is the peak of the menstrual cycle, occurring around days 14–16 in a typical 28-day cycle. This phase is marked by a surge in luteinizing hormone (LH), which triggers the release of an egg from the ovary. Estrogen levels are at their highest, promoting confidence, increased libido, and enhanced cognitive function. Many women experience a boost in energy, mood, and overall well-being during this time, making it an ideal phase for social interactions, productivity, and physical performance.

Physically, the body is at its strongest during ovulation. High estrogen levels contribute to improved endurance, power, and coordination, making this phase optimal for high-intensity workouts, strength training, and competitive sports. Metabolism also functions efficiently, allowing for better nutrient absorption and muscle recovery. However, due to ligament laxity caused by hormonal shifts, women may be slightly more prone to injuries, particularly in the knees and joints, so incorporating proper warm-ups and mobility exercises is essential.

Nutritionally, the body benefits from lean proteins, healthy fats, and complex carbohydrates to sustain energy and support muscle function. Cravings may be lower, and digestion tends to be more efficient, making it an ideal time to focus on balanced, nutrient-dense meals. Hydration is crucial, as increased activity and higher body temperature during ovulation may lead to a greater need for fluids. By aligning fitness, nutrition, and self-care strategies with the body's natural peak performance, women can make the most of the ovulation phase for both physical and mental well-being.







# OVULATION PLAN

## Exercise Considerations:

- **Increased Energy and Strength:** Take advantage of the surge in estrogen and energy during this phase by incorporating high-intensity workouts, strength training, and power-based exercises to maximize performance.
- **Cardiovascular Training:** Engage in aerobic exercises such as running, cycling, or high-intensity interval training (HIIT) to improve cardiovascular fitness and endurance.
- **Interval Training:** Consider interval training workouts that alternate between high-intensity bursts and active recovery periods to challenge your body and improve fitness levels.
- **Power-based Exercises:** Focus on explosive movements like plyometrics, sprints, or agility drills to take advantage of increased strength and power during this phase.

## Nutrition Considerations:

- **Balanced Diet:** Maintain a balanced diet that includes a variety of nutrient-dense foods, including lean proteins, complex carbohydrates, healthy fats, and plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- **Adequate Protein Intake:** Ensure sufficient protein intake to support muscle repair and recovery. Include lean sources of protein such as poultry, fish, tofu, eggs, and legumes in your meals.
- **Complex Carbohydrates:** Prioritize complex carbohydrates such as whole grains, legumes, and starchy vegetables to provide sustained energy for workouts and support glycogen stores.
- **Hydration:** Stay well-hydrated before, during, and after exercise. Drink water regularly and consider incorporating electrolyte-rich beverages for intense or prolonged workouts.
- **Pre-Workout Nutrition:** Fuel your workouts with a combination of carbohydrates and protein. Consider having a balanced snack like a banana with nut butter or a Greek yogurt with berries before your workouts.
- **Post-Workout Nutrition:** Optimize recovery by consuming a post-workout meal or snack rich in carbohydrates and protein within 30-60 minutes after exercise. Examples include a protein shake with a fruit smoothie or a chicken and quinoa salad.
- **Antioxidant-Rich Foods:** Include antioxidant-rich foods such as berries, leafy greens, and other colorful fruits and vegetables to support recovery and reduce inflammation.
- **Listen to Your Body:** Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues, and adjust your nutrition plan accordingly. Consider any specific dietary needs or preferences and consult with a registered dietitian for personalized guidance.

# LUTEAL PHASE

The luteal phase occurs after ovulation and lasts approximately 10 to 14 days, leading up to menstruation. During this time, progesterone levels rise, preparing the body for a potential pregnancy. This hormonal shift can cause an increase in body temperature, water retention, and a slower metabolism. Many women experience a natural dip in energy, along with mood changes due to fluctuations in serotonin and dopamine.

Physically, the body may feel more fatigued, and recovery from workouts can take longer. Strength and endurance may decline slightly, making it beneficial to shift toward moderate-intensity exercise, such as strength training with lower weights, yoga, or walking. The body also craves more carbohydrates due to progesterone's effect on insulin sensitivity, making balanced meals with protein, fiber, and healthy fats essential for stabilizing blood sugar and reducing cravings.

Mentally and emotionally, the luteal phase can bring heightened sensitivity, irritability, or mood swings. Practicing stress management techniques like breathwork, meditation, or journaling can help maintain emotional balance. Prioritizing quality sleep and reducing caffeine and alcohol intake can also support hormonal stability. By honoring the body's need for rest and nourishment during this phase, women can maintain overall wellness and reduce premenstrual symptoms.





# LUTEAL PLAN

## Exercise Considerations:

- **Energy Levels and Recovery:** Pay attention to changes in energy levels and adjust exercise intensity and duration accordingly. Focus on workouts that provide a balance between challenging yourself and allowing for adequate recovery.
- **Strength and Resistance Training:** Incorporate strength training exercises to maintain and build lean muscle mass. Emphasize compound movements that engage multiple muscle groups and consider using slightly lighter weights with higher repetitions.
- **Endurance and Cardiovascular Training:** Engage in moderate-intensity cardio exercises like brisk walking, jogging, or cycling to maintain cardiovascular fitness. Adjust the duration and intensity based on your energy levels and any symptoms experienced.
- **Low-Impact Exercises:** If experiencing discomfort or joint sensitivity, consider low-impact exercises such as swimming, cycling, or using an elliptical machine to reduce impact on the joints.

## Nutrition Considerations:

- **Balanced Diet:** Maintain a balanced diet that includes a variety of nutrient-dense foods. Focus on whole grains, lean proteins, healthy fats, and ample fruits and vegetables.
- **Complex Carbohydrates:** Prioritize complex carbohydrates such as whole grains, legumes, and vegetables to support stable energy levels and manage cravings.
- **Adequate Protein Intake:** Ensure sufficient protein intake to support muscle recovery and repair. Include lean sources of protein such as poultry, fish, tofu, eggs, and legumes in your meals.
- **Healthy Fats:** Incorporate sources of healthy fats such as avocados, nuts, seeds, and olive oil. They provide satiety, support hormone production, and help manage cravings.
- **Calcium and Magnesium-Rich Foods:** Include foods rich in calcium and magnesium such as leafy greens, dairy or dairy alternatives, nuts, seeds, and legumes. These minerals support bone health and may help alleviate premenstrual symptoms.
- **Fiber-Rich Foods:** Increase your fiber intake through fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes to support digestion and manage any gastrointestinal symptoms.
- **Hydration:** Stay well-hydrated by drinking water throughout the day and consider incorporating hydrating foods such as fruits and vegetables.
- **Mindful Eating:** Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues, and practice mindful eating. This can help manage cravings and emotional eating during the luteal phase.



# BONUS TIPS



## **Sync Workouts to Your Cycle**

Adjust exercise intensity based on your menstrual phase. Prioritize rest and light movement during menstruation, increase strength training in the follicular phase, maximize high-intensity workouts during ovulation, and focus on lower-intensity exercises like yoga or walking in the luteal phase to support hormonal balance and recovery.

## **Nourish According to Hormonal Needs**

Eat nutrient-dense foods that align with each phase. Focus on iron-rich foods during menstruation, protein and healthy fats in the follicular phase, energizing complex carbs during ovulation, and magnesium-rich foods in the luteal phase to ease PMS symptoms and support overall hormonal health.

## **Track Your Cycle with Flo App**

Using a cycle-awareness app like Flo helps monitor symptoms, energy levels, and mood changes throughout the month. Tracking allows you to plan workouts, nutrition, and self-care routines more effectively, ensuring you align your lifestyle with your body's natural rhythms for improved well-being.

## **Prioritize Rest and Recovery**

Listen to your body's signals and adjust your lifestyle accordingly. Get enough sleep, practice mindfulness, and reduce stress, especially in the luteal and menstrual phases. Proper rest enhances hormonal balance, boosts mood, and improves overall health, helping you stay consistent and resilient throughout all four phases.