

MENSTRUAL CYCLE NUTRITION

A Functional Approach

Real foods that are not processed form the foundation of a menstrual health tool kit.

1. Nutrient dense – focus on foods that contain as many valuable nutrients as possible. Foods that qualify come with one ingredient and no label, such as broccoli, avocado, fish, eggs, nuts & seeds. Always look to nature's kitchen to add further zest with herbs and spices. If you can grow it, one way or another, then eat it. If you need to utilise heavy machinery and complex manufacturing systems, probably best to avoid it.

Real food works well with our bodies. Fake foods don't.

Real food is less likely to trigger inflammation than moderately or ultra processed foods.

So, given a choice and opportunity, select from the foods that work best for you.

"Eat food made by men in white coats and you'll end up seeing men in white coats."

2. Hydrate – help your liver help you. Oestrogens support liver function and as they fluctuate in levels from one end of the cycle to the next, it can add additional duress on the liver. In addition, the liver is an organ that also creates non-ovarian oestrogens, so we really do need to be kind to it whenever we can. The liver's primary objective is to cleanse your body of toxins and keep you alive. The changing levels of hormones can directly impair or enhance the ability of the liver to do its simple task. For example, during the high points of oestrogen in the cycle you may find you can consume wine without it affecting you too much, but when oestrogens dip in your cycle your response to alcohol may change.

3. Support gut health - in order to absorb as many nutrients from the real food we need to make sure that gut-health is considered. Changing levels of oestrogens affect the gut microbiome, which in turn can affect our ability to digest foods. Making conscious choices of what you eat and when will support gut health.

Reduce Stress – Reduce Inflammation

There are four other key components to positive steps to great health, menstrual or otherwise that can't be overlooked. I like to call them "Virtual Vitamins".

- Vit O – breathe. This helps to reduce cortisol levels from being too high for too long. High cortisol impairs the function of other hormones.
- Vit S – sleep. Rest and repair.
- Vit L – laugh. We are social creatures and respond well to interaction with others.
- Vit M - movement. Move it or lose it!