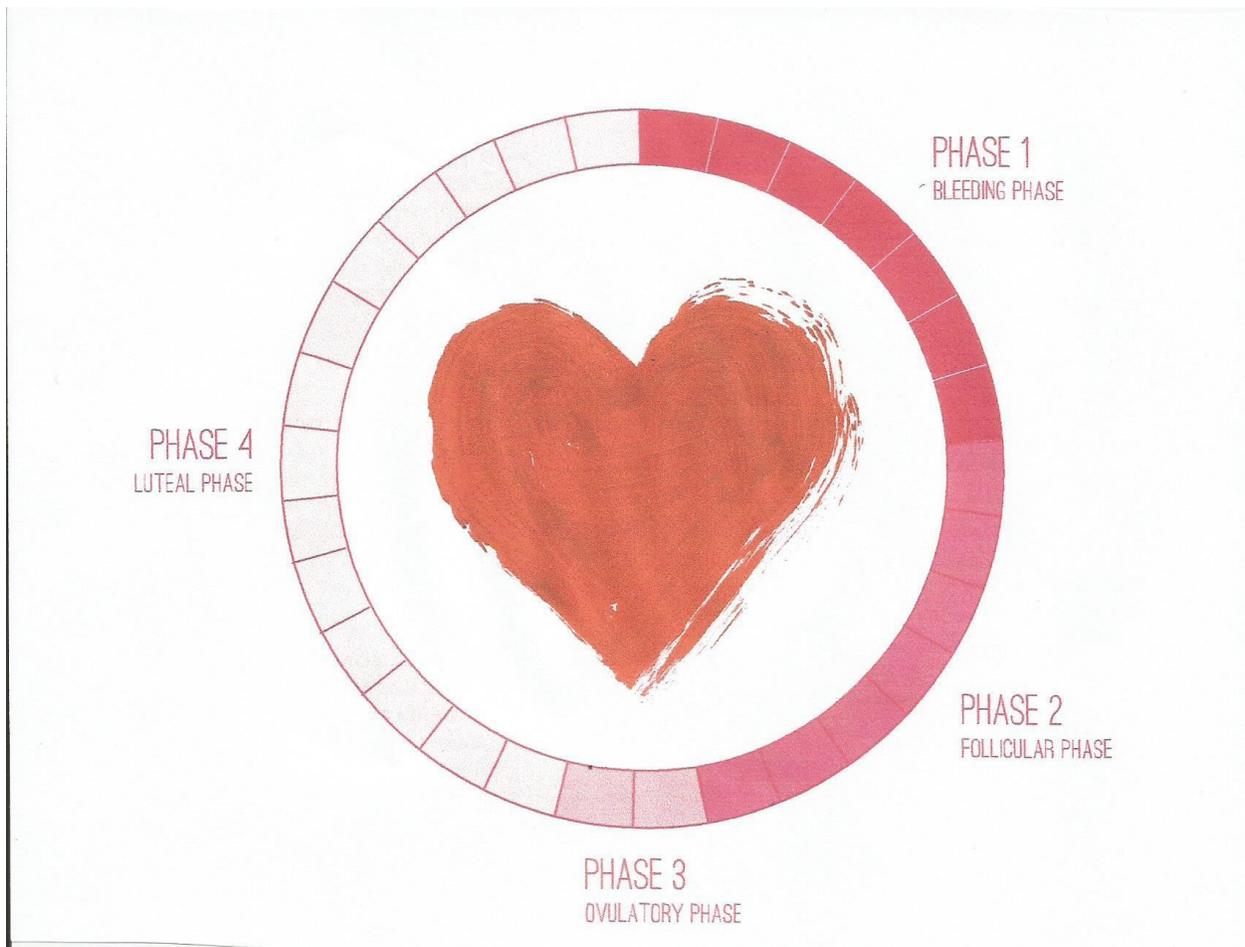


**Fix Your Period!**

***How to Work With Your Cycle  
For Optimal Health***

Did you know that there are **four unique phases** in your monthly cycle? Each of these phases brings about different physical and emotional feelings. There is a reason nature has seasons of cold and quiet and seasons of growth and lots of light – our bodies are cyclical just like the natural environment around us. Understanding how your hormones work in each phase of your cycle is the key to maximizing your potential in your personal and professional life.



**Menstruation** occurs approximately every 28 days. However, during these 28 days, there is always something going on in a woman's reproductive system. The menstrual cycle takes about 28 days to complete and takes in several stages.

### **Phase 1 - The Bleeding Phase**

At the beginning of the menstrual cycle, the body begins to prepare for the possibility of becoming pregnant. So, when estrogen levels rise, the body takes that as a signal to start thickening the uterine lining. At the same time, the egg is stimulated in one of the ovaries to become mature.

## **Physical**

This phase lasts approximately 3-7 days. Your progesterone level plunges and this causes the break down and shedding of your uterine lining.

## **Emotional**

You may feel a sense of release and relief when your period starts. Your energy is the lowest it will be during your cycle and you may feel the desire to be left alone. Most women want to rest and take a break from daily duties or even take a day off. Life is hectic but try to honor these feelings as best you can.

## **Food Tips**

Indulge in red raspberry leaf tea. Most of its benefits are attributed to frangine (an alkaloid which gives tone to the muscles of the uterus). It is known to regulate menstrual cycles and decrease heavy bleeding. Drink 1-2 cups a day.

## **Action Steps**

Clear your calendar of social events so you can spend more time close to home. Take a hot bath with Epsom salts to improve circulation and relax those uterine muscles. This is a time of reflection, so consider writing in your journal, and reflecting on the events and happenings of the past month. Also take note of any goals, intentions and big-picture plans.

## **Favorite Products**

Dr. Teal's Epsom Bath Salts. They come in a pretty package and smell so



good! And your body gets to absorb all that magnesium goodness! Did you know that magnesium is one of the most deficient minerals in the modern diet? Yet it is responsible for over 300 functions in our bodies, including detoxifying the body and reducing muscle cramping.



Throw away heating pads – the electricity circulating in them can make cramps worse – and get an old-fashioned hot water bottle. A hot water bottle naturally increases circulation to your ovaries and uterus, easing painful periods!

## **Phase 2 – The Follicular Phase**

### **Physical**

The Follicular phase begins after your period and lasts for 7 – 10 days. Your body releases Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH), which stimulates the follicles in one of your ovaries to mature. FYI-these follicles contain your eggs. Estrogen and testosterone start to rise as you approach ovulation.

### **Emotional**

Higher estrogen and testosterone levels boost your energy, mood and social skills. You will start to feel more confident, powerful and willing to take more risks. A bonus: Estrogen suppresses your appetite, which will make you feel lighter and less weighed down during this phase.

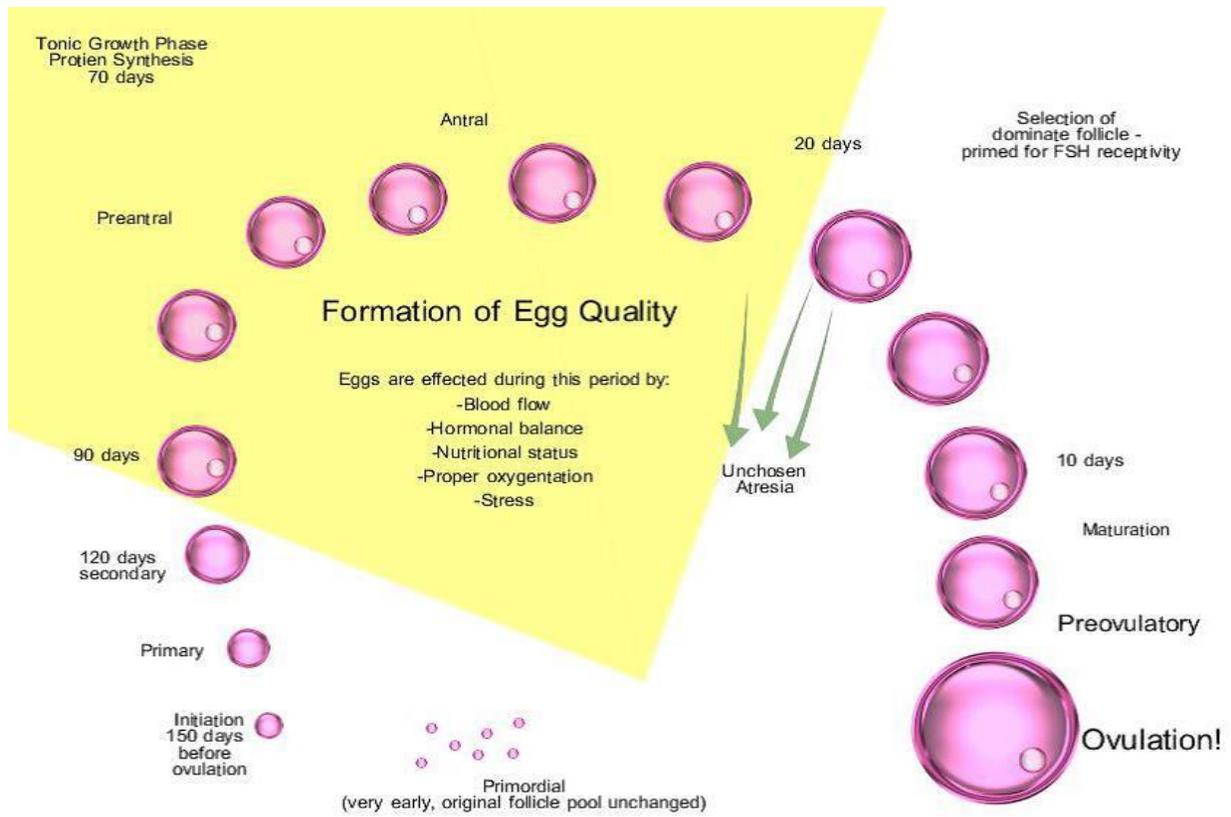
### **Food Tips**

Leafy greens! They are high in iron, calcium, magnesium and potassium, which are great to replenish any nutrients lost during your period. Leafy greens are also loaded with vitamins A, C, E and K, which are essential for the production of sex hormones.

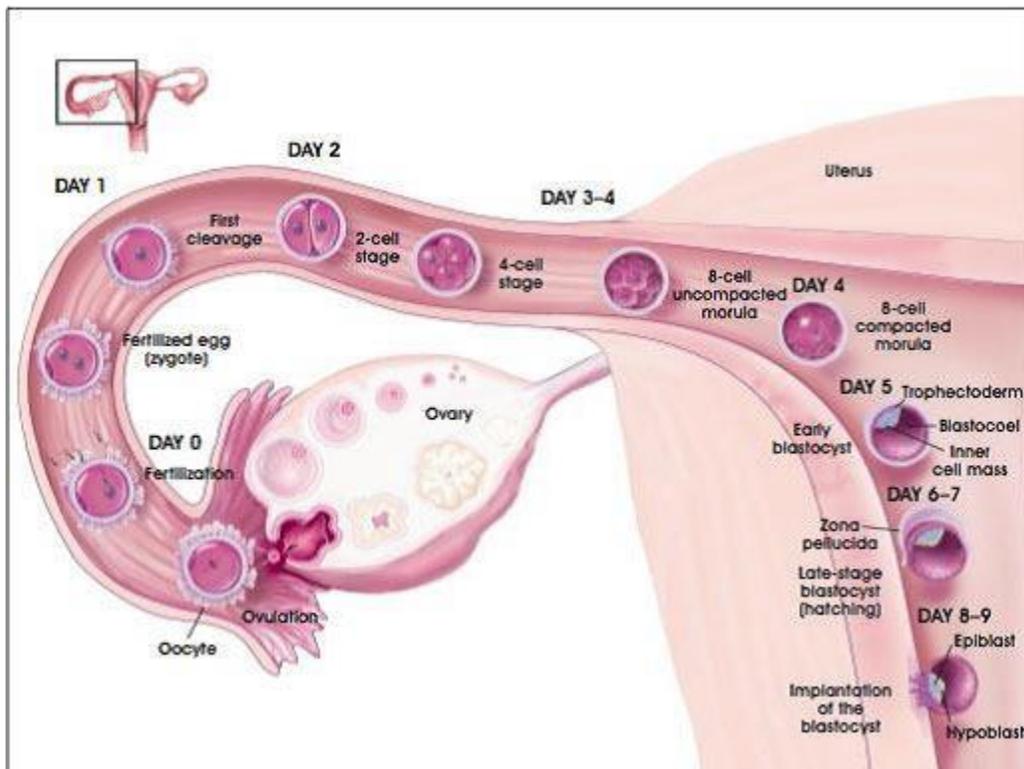
### **Action Steps**

This is a good time to initiate new projects at work or at home. Make use of your extra social super powers and schedule time to meet with your girlfriends or join a fun new meet-up group. Your body becomes better able to handle strenuous exercise during this time too, so get out there and move!

After the egg has been released from the ovary, it begins to make its way through the fallopian tube. At this point in time, a woman can become pregnant. If the egg is not fertilized, it is then passed from the body along with the uterine lining during menstruation.



© Yemaya Center, J&H Group 2007



## **Phase 3 – The Ovulatory Phase**

### **Physical**

The ovulatory phase is the shortest phase and lasts for 2 – 3 days. It is the culmination of all the hard work your body has been doing over the previous weeks. The egg will survive 12-24 hours and will either be fertilized or die. High estrogen levels make your skin look and feel better.

### **Emotional**

Estrogen and Testosterone continue their rise to peak levels, boosting all of the effects you enjoyed during the follicular phase. Testosterone increases your sex drive and estrogen makes you look more attractive and feel more confident about your appearance.

### **Food Tips**

Keep it light! Focus on foods that will give you lots of energy so you can keep up with all you've got planned. Whole grains like quinoa and brown rice are perfect for keeping your blood sugar balanced and your energy stable throughout the day.

### **Action Steps**

This is a great time to do job interviews, go to networking events, brainstorm and make plans for the future. Make a date with your current beau or if you're single, ask a hot guy or gal out!

## **Phase 4 – The Luteal Phase**

### **Physical**

This phase has two halves and lasts from 10 – 14 days. Estrogen and testosterone gradually decline and the follicle that released the egg will start to produce progesterone, causing this hormone to rise gradually. Progesterone stimulates the growth of the uterus lining in preparation for pregnancy (and menstruation).

### **Emotional**

During the first half of the luteal phase you are still riding high off the effects of the ovulatory phase. However, as Progesterone production increases, you will find yourself starting to wind down. This is because progesterone is a natural sleep aid and anti-anxiety hormone, kind of like natural Valium.

The second half of the luteal phase is usually most difficult for most women. You might start to feel PMS symptoms, cravings for carbohydrate-heavy

comfort foods, moodiness and anxiety. You may have a feeling of fullness and an anxiousness to release this fullness – this will happen when your period begins.

### **Food Tips**

Focus on comfort foods – the healthy kinds. Indulge in yummy mashed sweet potatoes or oven-baked squashes. Boated? Eats lots of celery, fennel and watermelon – they have diuretic properties!

### **Action Steps**

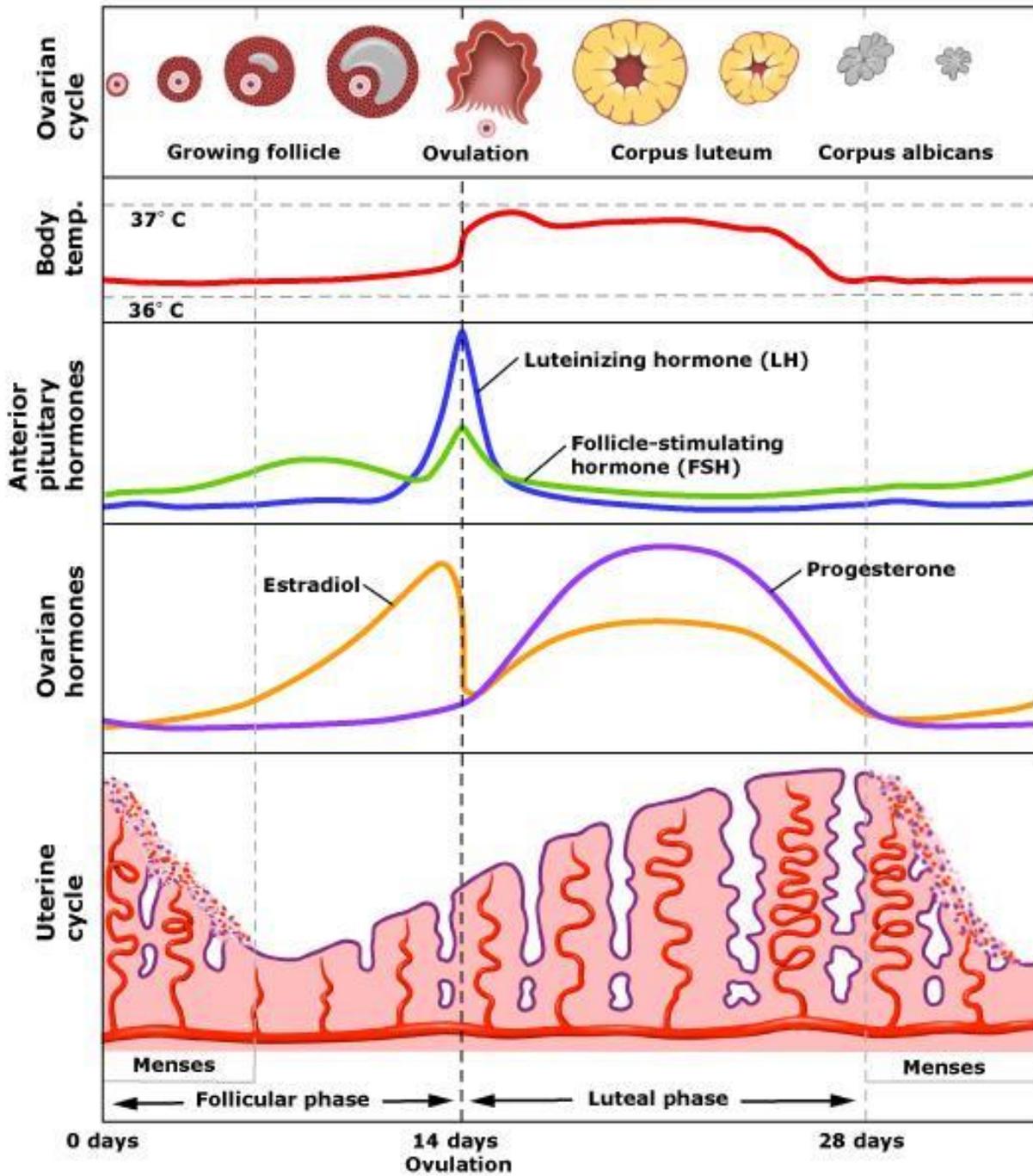
Now is a good time for nesting, organizing your home or office and taking care of your personal to-do list. Practice really good self-care during the week before your period. This means eating really nourishing healthy comfort foods, taking a yoga class, clearing your calendar of big events or getting to bed early one night. Conserve your precious energy during this phase.

Meditate – many women live with chronic feelings of stress and overwhelm. Your chance of having painful and difficult periods drastically increase when your stress levels are high.

### **Favorite Products**

Meditation calms your nervous system, reducing the tension and emotional stress that typically occur the week before your period. Join a yoga class, meditation class or Yoga Nidra class.

## Diagram of a Normal Cycle



## **Four Ways to Work With, Not Against, Your Cycle**

### **Tip #1**

Estrogen and testosterone peak at the time around ovulation – the middle of your cycle. These two hormones work together to make you feel prettier, sexier, more outgoing and more willing to take risks. Really use this time to practice your social charm – ask for a raise, make new friends and flirt with the cute guy at the coffee shop! Men find you even more attractive during ovulation! See how many stares you get the next time you are ovulating!

### **Tip #2**

Variations in estrogen levels, caused by the menstrual cycle, regulate the brain's ability to suppress pain. On days 23 through 28 of your cycle, painful procedures tend to hurt more. That's when your body's natural feel-good chemicals that reduce pain are at their lowest level. So make your OB/GYN, dental or waxing appointments for when you're ovulating – typically days 13 – 17. That's when your estrogen levels, and your body's ability to handle pain, are highest.

### **Tip #3**

Progesterone is the hormone that dominates the second half of a woman's cycle after ovulation. Its main purpose is to support the growth of the uterine lining but it also has the effect of relaxing smooth muscles. A lot of these smooth muscles reside in our uterus and intestinal tract. If the muscles in our intestinal tract are too relaxed, they can't effectively move food and fluid and you may become constipated. So after ovulation, make sure to get tons of fiber-rich food, coconut water for added hydration and consider taking a good magnesium supplement to keep those bowels moving.

### **Tip #4**

Do you start to feel anxiety, stress and/or moodiness in the second half of your cycle after ovulation? This might be happening because estrogen plummets after ovulation and it takes serotonin (the feel-good brain chemical) down with it. Serotonin is made primarily in your intestinal tract. You're going to start craving all the "bad carbs" to boost up your serotonin levels. Instead, eat sweet vegetables like sweet potatoes, butternut squash and pumpkin. These veggies are energetically grounding and will kill those sweet cravings!

There are many ways to help restore menstrual health. Exercise, getting enough sleep, eating whole, nutritious foods is a good place to start. Think about what you can do to help de-stress your life. Make lifestyle changes that can help enhance overall health and well-being.

Eat right – get on a healthy diet. Avoid foods high in sugar and fat and cut out or have less caffeine.

Sleep right – try to go to bed at the same time each night and wake up at the same time each morning.

Exercise right – work out on a regular basis – at least 30 minutes of aerobic activity four times a week.

Schedule right – although some things cannot be moved, try to move events and happenings in your life that are taxing to the week following your period. This reduces stress and decreases your overall suffering.

Load up on calcium – 1000 mg a day. This helps to reduce bloating, cramps and joint pain.

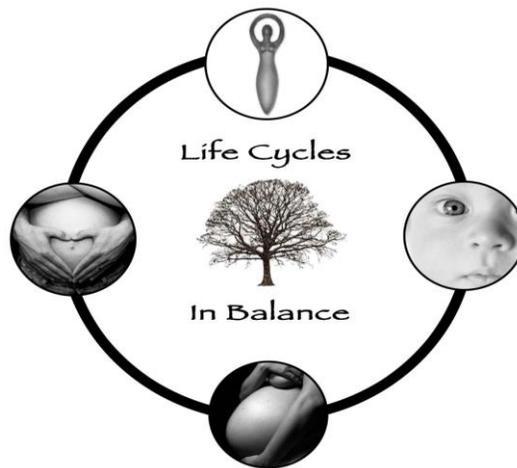
Track your cycle – this will give you an idea where there are issues and help you to know what needs to be worked on or changed.

Practice the Hormone Balancer – place a palm on your forehead – rest fingers on top of your head. Place other palm on the lower back of your head with fingers just touching the tips of the other hand. Breathe in slowing – close your eyes – breath in and out in a rhythmic breath for 3 – 5 minutes in the morning and/or in the evening. This balances your hormones.

Practice the Adrenal Rub – go one inch above your belly button and one inch out on both sides – rub – this may hurt – that is a sign that your adrenals are fatigued. When they are, you produce too much cortisol – making stress even worse. Rub these spots 2 – 3 times a day. This will help your adrenals work more efficiently.

# Fix Your Period Programs are available in:

- **Single Sessions**
- **Private Programs**
- **Group Programs**



***Guiding you on the path to creating  
fertile ground for your baby's first home  
and empowering women. . .one  
birth at a time***

(518)-307-9810

[www.integrativehealthny.com](http://www.integrativehealthny.com)