

Living and Working With Your Cycle

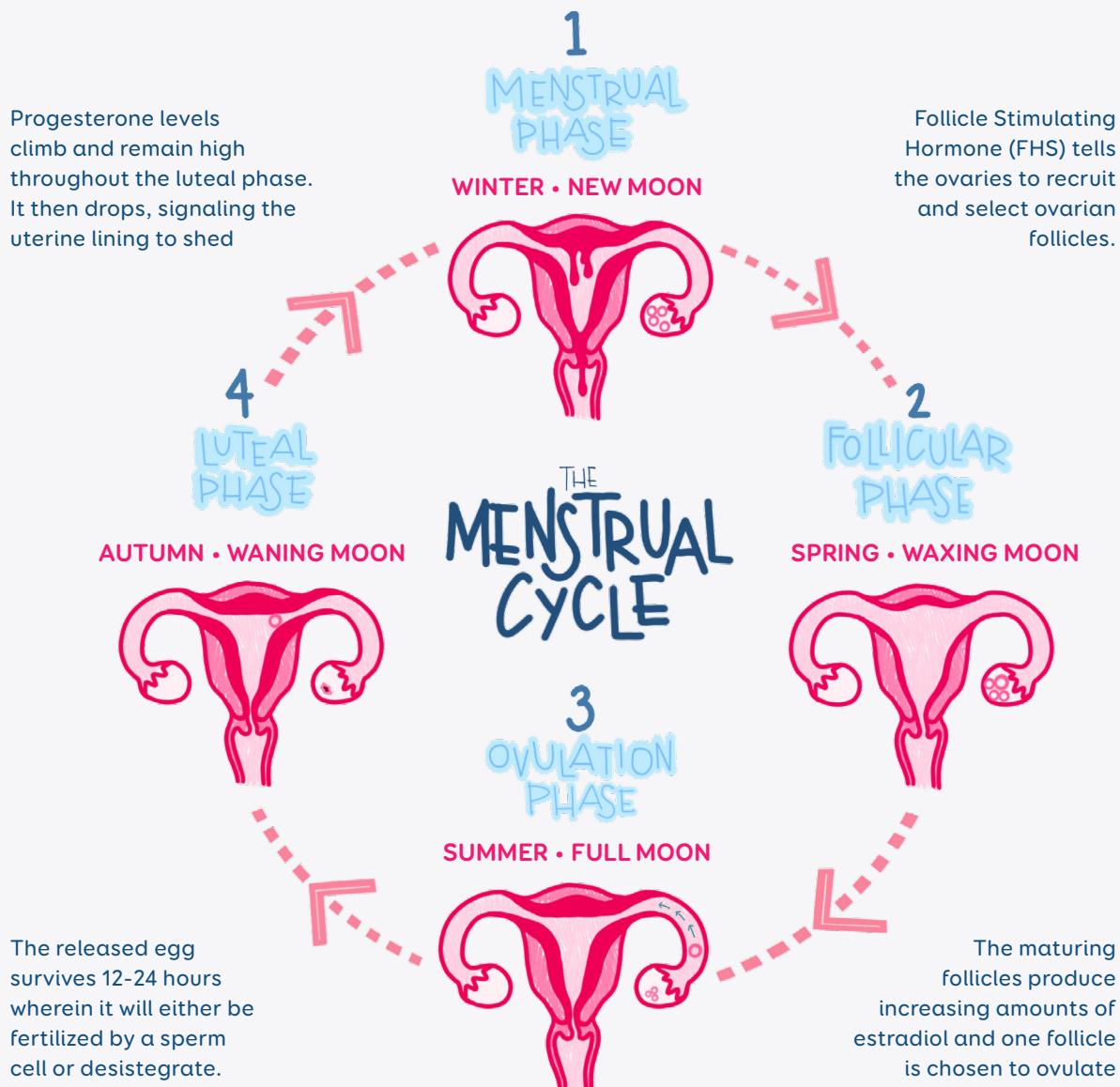
**TIME TO FEEL
BETTER!**

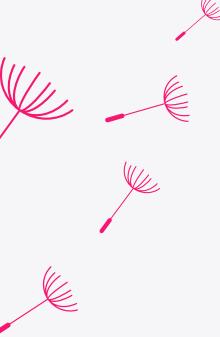


HOW TO LIVE AND WORK IN HARMONY WITH YOUR CYCLE

Your hormones, particularly estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone, are meant to ebb and flow throughout the four phases of your menstrual cycle. As it cycles through the bleeding, follicular, ovulatory, and luteal phases, your body is changing nearly every week, heck, sometimes every day!

Just as each season brings its own distinct characteristics, such as the cold, quiet of winter or the light-filled, fecundity of spring, the hormonal shifts occurring in each phase of your cycle create different physical responses and emotions. By recognizing these changes and living in sync with them you can ensure that you're always performing at your best.





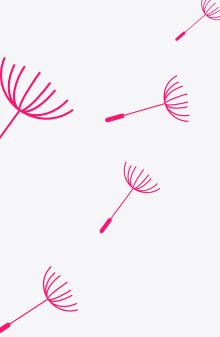
HOW TO LIVE AND WORK IN HARMONY WITH YOUR CYCLE

We women work hard to stay on top of everything we do. We expect ourselves to have the same energy levels every single day of every single month but it's just not possible because of the cyclical nature of our bodies. It's not in your head. The hormonal changes occurring on an almost weekly basis throughout your cycle impact:

- Your mood and whether you feel happy, sad, anxious, or calm
- Sleeping habits
- How you react to situations and people
- The decisions you make
- How social or introverted you are
- Your motivation and energy levels
- The nutrients you need most
- The type of exercise that will best support you
- Your libido

To optimize your life according to your cycle, begin to pay attention to your symptoms during each phase – how you feel physically and emotionally. Notice what feels off or not right.

Add these symptoms to a cycle tracking app. Start implementing some of the suggested ways to take advantage of the natural tendencies and changes associated with each phase of your cycle. Does adjusting your diet, exercise routine, social calendar, and work engagements improve or resolve your symptoms? When you begin noticing your body's messages, you'll be able to honor its need for rest and relaxation during the less active, quieter phases and get more out of the energetic, busier phases of your cycle.



ALIGNING WITH THE MOON'S PHASES

If you have hypothalamic amenorrhea or you don't have a period for whatever reason (you're pregnant, breastfeeding, in perimenopause, menopause or have had a hysterectomy), harnessing these external moon phases will help you recreate the phases you have lost if your period is MIA.

Living in accordance with the moon cycles will provide a framework for you to live like you're still cycling menstrually.

In my experience with clients, this practice may even encourage your period to return if you have hypothalamic or post-birth control induced amenorrhea. Similarly, if you have an extremely irregular cycle (you get a period every 2-3 months for instance) aligning your energetic patterns with the phases of the moon during the times you don't have a period can be very helpful.

HERE'S HOW TO DO IT:

Add the moon cycles to your calendar (google calendar allows you to do this), download a moon calendar app, or purchase a paper moon calendar, so you know when the different phases of the moon occur.

Each new moon phase indicates the start of a new biological phase and a new set of lifestyle guidelines to follow for that phase.

Start day one of the "cycle" on the day of the new moon, which is the beginning of the moon cycle. The follicular phase would be the waxing phase between the new moon and full moon. "Ovulation" would be at the full moon and then the luteal phase would be the waning phase or the time in between the full moon and new moon.

Even though your period is absent, you would act as if you are in each phase by following the same guidelines for food, self-care, and activities as outlined for the four phases of a regular cycle.

At the next new moon, start the process over again.

MENSTRUATION PHASE - WINTER MOON PHASE - NEW MOON

THEMES - REST AND RELAX, QUIET TIME, TRUST, INTUITION

3-7 Days - from day 1 of period to last day of it

PHYSICAL

- Fatigue
- Cramps or achy
- Food cravings or no appetite
- Bloating
- Lower backache
- Headaches or migraines

EMOTIONAL

- Feeling of relief
- Withdrawn
- Self reflection or introspection
- Evaluation of the last month and your life
- Desire for course correction
- Strong intuition and "gut feelings" - don't ignore
- Time to check in on thoughts worries or fears

FOOD

- Nutrient-dense foods are so important
- Focus on low to no sugar so as not to disrupt moods or cause inflammation
- Water rich fruits and veggies
- Seafood and sea vegetables to replenish vital minerals - iron, zinc etc
- Comforting easy foods like one pot dishes, turkey chili made in crockpot, lentil soup, beef and vegetable stews, or a stir fry
- Warming foods like bone broth and warming spices like turmeric, cayenne and cinnamon

MENSTRUATION PHASE - WINTER MOON PHASE - NEW MOON

THEMES - REST AND RELAX, QUIET TIME, TRUST, INTUITION

3-7 Days - from day 1 of period to last day of it

EXERCISE

- Focus on rest and recovery exercise
- Walks versus running
- Yoga or stretching
- Pilates

LIFESTYLE & BUSINESS

- Take a break from activities
- Journal - get all those swirling thoughts out your head
- Pay attention to your deep insight, gut feelings and instinct
- You'll find a lot of solutions come with all the insight
- Slow down work activities - don't do interviews, program launches, or anything that requires too much brain power
- This is a good time to write

SEX

- Low desire for some women whereas others have testosterone surge and want sex
- Use a blanket to protect your bed and lots of lube
- Approach period sex with an open mind if you've never done it before.
- Keep in mind that higher pH because of menstrual blood coupled with low estrogen can increase vaginal infections during this time
- Things tend to be a little sensitive down there during your period, so penetrative sex may be out of the question. Focus on external stimulation instead

FOLLICULAR PHASE (NON-MENSTRUATING) - SPRING MOON PHASE - WAXING

THEMES - RENEWAL, CREATIVITY, NEW BEGINNINGS & CONNECTIONS

7-10 Days from end of period to day before ovulation

PHYSICAL

- Body is starting fertility process all over again
- FSH is stimulating ovaries to produce estrogen and testosterone
- Physical Energy Increases
- Estrogen stimulates the cervix and makes cervical fluid wetter

EMOTIONAL

- Feeling more energized, outgoing and upbeat
- Revitalized, almost like you're a new person after the shedding of your uterine lining/your old self from last month
- Great time to step out of your comfort zone - as building estrogen and testosterone make you bolder
- Desire to be more social
- Stimulated by new experiences or adventures

FOOD

- Light, fresh, vibrantly-colored foods like salads with a variety of veggies and toppings. Include spring mixes, arugula and baby kale
- Lean protein and healthy fats like avocado and seeds pumpkin and flax to support building estrogen
- Microbiome-friendly foods like sauerkraut, kimchi and coconut kefir
- Steamed or sauteed veggies like broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, cabbage, and leafy greens like kale, spinach or collards

FOLLICULAR PHASE (NON-MENSTRUATING) - SPRING MOON PHASE - WAXING

THEMES - RENEWAL, CREATIVITY, NEW BEGINNINGS & CONNECTIONS

7-10 Days from end of period to day before ovulation

EXERCISE

- Great time to try new workout classes or different types of exercise
- Pick up the pace in exercise, especially as you get closer to ovulation
- Try more challenging workouts

LIFESTYLE & BUSINESS

- Initiate new projects at work or at home
- Creativity peaks
- A good time for new things and new beginnings
- Brainstorming sessions and problem solving
- Mentally challenging assignments
- Social events, especially with bigger groups of people
- Schedule kids play dates
- Be more active in all areas of life
- Start to put yourself out there in business - attend a meetup group or a workshop

SEX

- Best time to try new things
- A good time for toys
- Foreplay is important during this week
- Good time to use lube as this is a drier time of the month especially right after your period

OVULATORY PHASE - SUMMER MOON PHASE - FULL

THEMES - FERTILE, ENERGETIC, IRRESISTIBLE, SEDUCTIVE

3-5 Days - 1-2 days before ovulation & ends 1-2 days after ovulation

PHYSICAL

- Estrogen and testosterone continue their rise to peak levels
- This transforms cervical fluid into wet, watery, stretchy, egg-white-like fluid
- Very fertile time of the cycle
- Big energy surge
- May feel lighter
- Skin is brighter (thanks to estrogen)
- Feel naturally attractive and feel like you look good!
- May feel bloating around ovulation (sign of gut dysbiosis or histamine intolerance)

EMOTIONAL

- Lots of motivation to get things done (thanks testosterone)
- Cravings for carbs - it takes a lot of energy to ovulate each month
- Connecting with your community - work, friends, family
- Important conversations are good at this time because of heightened communication skills
- You'll have clear thoughts and opinions
- You're receptive to others' opinions and feelings
- Feel good about yourself

FOOD

- You may be craving salads or lighter foods still or you may want more robust meals. Listen to what you're craving and have that
- Increase your carbs - sweet potatoes, rice, quinoa, starchy vegetables to support ovulation
- Lots of veggies and low sugar fruit like berries, apples, pears and watermelon. Increase consumption of fatty fish, like wild salmon, sardines, mackerel, tuna.
- Heartier breakfasts with pasture-raised eggs, sweet potatoes, veggies, and avocado

OVULATORY PHASE - SUMMER

MOON PHASE - FULL

THEMES - FERTILE, ENERGETIC, IRRESISTIBLE, SEDUCTIVE

3-5 Days - 1-2 days before ovulation & ends 1-2 days after ovulation

EXERCISE

- High impact exercise, especially in group setting
- Energy levels at max weight lifting
- Running
- Plyometrics
- Dance
- Spin
- Team Activities

LIFESTYLE & BUSINESS

- Date Nights Out
- Go on a blind date
- Try a new way of dating - speed dating maybe?
- Job interviews, networking events, public speaking or running a meeting - very good at recalling memories and important information
- Game night - you're most likely to win
- Program or product launches, workshops, presentations, interviews
- Take up a new hobby, preferably one where you are with others - painting class, pottery making, jewelry design, baking etc.

SEX

- You are naturally very lubricated and your sex drive is often the highest it will be in your cycle
- You find yourself wanting and needing sex
- Ask for it from your partner
- Try new positions and have quickies
- Passionate and intense sex is most likely in this phase
- May not want as much foreplay and instead get straight to it

LUTEAL PHASE - AUTUMN MOON PHASE - WANING

THEMES - SLOWER, SENSITIVE, SELF CARE, ATTENTION TO DETAIL

11-17 Days - begins after ovulation and ends day before period

PHYSICAL

- Estrogen and testosterone decline significantly taking your amazing energy and verve
- Progesterone increases and causes cervical fluid to become sticky or dry up
- Uterine lining builds and preps for potential implantation
- Early luteal phase - still riding high off of ovulation but energy slowly starts to shift
- Later luteal phase - bloating, crampy, headaches or migraines, sugar or alcohol cravings

EMOTIONAL

- Physical energy remains high after ovulation and starts to decline by mid-luteal phase
- Subtle energy shift - you'll feel quieter, more withdrawn and less social, turning inwards
- Desire to stay home rather than go out with friends or be amongst others
- Mid-late luteal phase - irritable, mood swings, anger, impatience, anxiousness, feeling of fullness and desire to release!
- May feel isolated and alone in the symptoms you experience but you're not!
- These symptoms often start halfway through phase and increase until period begins, then dissipate

LUTEAL PHASE - AUTUMN MOON PHASE - WANING

THEMES - SLOWER, SENSITIVE, SELF CARE, ATTENTION TO DETAIL

11-17 Days - begins after ovulation and ends day before period

FOOD

- Foods that won't cause blood sugar spikes and crashes so as not to worsen PMS symptoms - Aim for higher protein, higher fat and lower carbohydrate meals
- Enjoy lots of hearty cooked veggies like kale, collards, brussel sprouts,
- For fiber and complex carbs to support your mood in this phase, think roasted veggies like sweet potatoes, carrots (all colors), beets, parsnips, turnips and yuca root, and onions
- Enjoy some super dark chocolate or stevia sweetened dark chocolate
- Add in sesame and sunflower seeds to meals each day to support progesterone production

EXERCISE

- In beginning of luteal phase you may still want to keep up with strenuous activity
- In the last five days slow down more - yoga, pilates, walking, climbing
- stairs, elliptical machine etc.
- The following week as you approach mid-luteal you can focus on resistance training, and lower impact exercise.

SEX

- Quite sensitive to every touch which may leave you feeling overstimulated quite quickly
- Need more foreplay compared to ovulatory phase - sometimes 30-45 minutes
- You may want to lots of kissing and gentle touch so you can ease into and build up towards sex
- You might crave self-pleasure and not want to engage with your partner sexually

LUTEAL PHASE - AUTUMN MOON PHASE - WANING

THEMES - SLOWER, SENSITIVE, SELF CARE, ATTENTION TO DETAIL

11-17 Days - begins after ovulation and ends day before period

LIFESTYLE & BUSINESS

- Working from home
- Schedule big social events until later when ovulation is approaching
- Make a date with yourself - take a bath, read a great fiction book, plant yourself on the couch and watch a movie
- You'll become more aware and tuned into what is and is not working in your life and business
- Desire to nest and for comfort and coziness
- Attention to detail - Focus on household chores, re-organizing your closet, or jewelry box!
- Brain prioritizes administrative details and you'll feel more responsible - good time to do your bookkeeping, accounting, handle bills and other financial commitments
- Great time to focus on writing projects