



LUTEAL PHASE WEEK 3

by Laura Martin

THE 'FALL' PHASE OF YOUR CYCLE



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WEEK #3 – LUTEAL PHASE

FALL

WHAT IT IS

This phase, spanning approximately 10-12 days (roughly days 14-24 of your cycle), is commonly referred to as the "fall season" of your menstrual cycle.

To be considered an optimal fertile cycle, the luteal phase must fall within the timeframe of days 14-24. This window allows sufficient time for a fertilized egg to travel from the fallopian tube and implant into the uterine lining, typically taking at least 10 days. Following ovulation, FSH and LH levels sharply decline, remaining low for the remainder of the cycle. While estrogen and testosterone also decrease, estrogen will reappear later in the luteal phase.

Conversely, progesterone levels rise during this phase, stimulating the growth of the uterine lining in anticipation of pregnancy. Additionally, progesterone transforms cervical fluid from stretchy and wet to sticky and dry, making it less fertile and unfavorable for sperm.

Emotionally, the first half of the luteal phase often retains the positive effects from the ovulatory or "summer phase." However, as progesterone production increases, there's a tendency to wind down, and the desire to avoid the social scene that was sought in the first half of the cycle becomes more apparent.

In the second week of the luteal phase, estrogen experiences a slight increase to prepare the uterine lining for potential pregnancy further. If pregnancy does not occur, estrogen and progesterone levels drop, leading to the shedding of the uterine lining during the subsequent bleeding or menstruation phase.

OPTIMAL FOODS TO INCORPORATE

It's crucial to choose foods that support progesterone production during the luteal phase, ensuring a healthy growth of the uterine lining. Opt for foods rich in zinc and magnesium, such as nuts, seeds, oysters, and beans, along with vitamin C sources like citrus, leafy greens, and bell peppers. Additionally, incorporate foods high in vitamin B6, like salmon, bananas, and walnuts, to boost progesterone levels.

Maintaining stable blood sugar is essential during the luteal phase, as progesterone can lead to lower-than-normal blood sugar levels compared to the follicular phase. This dip may contribute to emotional PMS symptoms like moodiness and anxiety. Ensure a consistent intake of nutrient-dense meals balanced with protein, fat, and fiber, as demonstrated by the recipes in this plan, for optimal blood sugar balance.

To address water retention that increases during this phase, causing bloating, stay well-hydrated by drinking at least half of your body weight in ounces of water daily. Include hydrating fruits and vegetables in your diet.

During the luteal phase, the decline in feel-good hormones like serotonin and dopamine may lead to stress, sadness, and cravings for sweets and carbohydrates. Choose treats or carbohydrate-rich options from the recipes provided in your reset plan, ensuring they contain ample nutrients, protein, fat, and fiber to satisfy your sweet cravings without the subsequent sugar crash.

CORE EATING PRINCIPLES

- Ensure to boost your protein and healthy fat intake, along with incorporating warming, nourishing foods to support your body as it prepares for a demanding period.
- Include a diverse range of hydrating fruits and vegetables in your diet, and stay well-hydrated by drinking at least half of your body weight in ounces of water. This helps combat water retention and bloating.
- Aim to reduce alcohol and caffeine consumption during this phase, as they often exacerbate PMS symptoms and deplete the body of essential nutrients needed for the impending bleeding phase.

HERBS + SUPPLEMENTS

- Chaste Tree Berry — aids in extending the luteal phase by boosting progesterone levels, crucial for addressing potential conception challenges. Take in tincture or capsule form daily during this phase.
- Raspberry Leaf — consume as a tea to alleviate cramping during both the luteal and menstruation phases.
- Burdock Root — assists in gently detoxifying the liver, eliminating excess hormones built up in the body. Consume daily as a tea or infusion.
- Triphala — start taking at the end of your luteal phase (a few days before menstruation) to support elimination, relieve constipation, and enhance your body's detoxification capabilities.
- Dandelion Root — incorporate into your daily routine to minimize bloating or edema.
- Ginger — enjoy daily as a tea to warm the body, alleviate gas and bloating, and support digestion and detoxification.

MOVEMENT

Light exercise is encouraged during this phase to help balance mood and hormones. Just be sure to stay away from anything too strenuous as it will deplete the body.

LIFESTYLE

Similar to the transition from summer to fall, you'll naturally observe your body inclining toward a slower pace, and you might feel more introverted. It's crucial to heed these signals and allow yourself sufficient space. Engage in activities such as journaling, massage, meditation, deep breathing exercises, stretching, and yoga.

As your progesterone (the calming and relaxation hormone) levels rise, it's an opportune time for:

- Nesting
- Organizing your home or office
- Attending to personal to-do lists and chores
- Prioritizing excellent self-care practices, like massages and baths
- Embracing gentle exercises, such as yin yoga
- Opting for earlier bedtimes or indulging in extra sleep in the mornings

RECIPE IDEAS FOR LUTEAL PHASE



BANANA BREAD WALNUT OATS

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 2

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups unsweetened coconut, hemp, cashew or almond milk
- 1 cup sprouted, gluten-free rolled oats (substitute for cauliflower rice if you don't digest grains well or have a thyroid condition)
- 1 ripe banana, mashed
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- 2-4 tbsp pure maple syrup
- 1 tbsp creamy nut butter
- 1 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Sprinkle of sea salt
- Optional coconut shreds, flakes or yogurt for topping
- Optional (but recommended) 1 serving collagen protein powder

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a medium-sized stovetop pot, bring milk to a boil.
2. Add in oats and stir well, reducing heat to a simmer for about 5 minutes.
3. Stir in mashed bananas, walnuts, cinnamon, vanilla, and sea salt. Keep cooking until most of the liquid is absorbed (about 2-3 minutes).
4. Remove from heat and stir in maple syrup, creamy nut butter, grass-fed ghee, and optional collagen powder and coconut shavings.

SWEET POTATO TOAST 2 WAYS

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan, Paleo

Servings — 2

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large sweet potato, sliced into ¼-inch thick pieces

For Savory Toppings

- Kale Walnut Pesto
- Sliced avocado
- Hempseeds
- Drizzle of extra virgin olive oil
- Flaky sea salt, pepper, and chili flakes
- Fresh herbs (like basil, dill, or arugula)
- Optional pasture-raised fried eggs

For Sweet Toppings

- 2 tbsp creamy nut butter
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1-2 tbsp 4th and Heart Grass-fed Ghee spread (can substitute for coconut oil or butter)
- Chopped walnuts
- Sprinkle of cinnamon or flaky sea salt
- Optional coconut yogurt or shavings for toppings

DIRECTIONS:

1. To make the toast, add ¼ inch thick pieces of sweet potato to a toaster and toast at least 2-3 times (depending on your toaster, you may have to do this several times) until cooked through. Alternately, if you like the sweet potato softer, you could bake it at 400 for 1 hour (until soft) and layer toppings to make a stuffed sweet potato version.
2. Once cooked, layer with savory or sweet toppings.

SHEET PAN GLAZED GINGER MISO SALMON

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free

Servings — 2

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For The Salmon + Broccoli

- 2 tbsp avocado oil or grass-fed ghee
- 1 large head of broccoli, rinsed, dried and chopped into florets
- 2 wild salmon fillets
- Minced garlic
- Sea salt + black pepper to taste

For The Ginger Miso Sauce

- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- 2 tsp minced ginger
- ¼ cup chickpea miso paste
- ¼ cup hot water
- Chopped walnuts
- Sprinkle of cinnamon or flaky sea salt
- Optional coconut yogurt or shavings for toppings

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 425 F and line it with parchment paper.
2. Spread broccoli florets evenly on parchment paper and coat with 1-2 tbsp avocado oil or melted grass-fed ghee. Coat with garlic, sea salt, and black pepper and roast for 15 minutes.
3. whisk together ginger miso sauce ingredients while baking broccoli and set aside.
4. After 15 minutes, remove the tray from the oven and nestle the wild salmon fillets, skin side down, among the broccoli.
5. Pour miso sauce over broccoli and salmon and sprinkle sea salt and pepper on the salmon.
6. Roast in the oven for 8-10 more minutes, until the fillets are cooked and the broccoli is tender.

GUT-FRIENDLY MAC N' CHEESE

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan-friendly

Servings — 4

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For the Pasta

- 1 box gluten-free, nutrient-rich pasta of choice (chickpea, lentil, quinoa, or brown rice options, especially for week #3)
- 1-2 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- Optional veggies like cooked peas, roasted broccoli, or leafy greens
- Sea salt, chile flakes, and black pepper to taste

For the "Cheese" Sauce

- 1 cup roasted butternut squash (can also swap for yams or carrots)
- 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee, melted
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsweetened and unflavored nut milk, such as cashew or almond
- $\frac{1}{4}$ heaping cup of nutritional yeast
- 2 tbsp chickpea miso paste
- 1 tbsp arrowroot starch
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp sea salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp onion powder
- Black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Follow the cooking instructions for your pasta of choice.
2. While cooking pasta, add cheese sauce ingredients to a high-speed blender and mix until smooth and creamy. Set aside.
3. Once pasta is done cooking, follow instructions to drain and rinse. Place in a bowl and toss with more grass-fed ghee and the cheesy sauce (+ chopped leafy greens like spinach or cooked veggies of choice). Sprinkle with sea salt, black pepper, and red chile flakes.

****Note — depending on how saucy you like, you may have leftover cheesy sauce. Reserve to use on baked, stuffed sweet potatoes if you like.*

PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE CHIP CHICKPEA COOKIE DOUGH

Gluten-Free, Dairy-Free, Grain-Free, Refined-Sugar-Free, Vegan

Servings — 8

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can Eden's organic chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- ½ cup organic creamy peanut butter (with no additives or inflammatory oils like palm, sunflower, etc.) I like the Marantha brand.
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ½ cup chopped dark chocolate or chocolate chips (70% cacao or higher)
- Optional - 2-4 tbsp almond or oat flour if you like a thicker, dryer cookie dough consistency

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all ingredients except for chocolate to a food processor or high-speed blender and mix until creamy and smooth.
2. Fold in dark chocolate chunks or chips with a spatula until evenly mixed.
3. Sprinkle with more sea salt if desired. Store in the fridge for up to a week.



Thank you

It is my hope that you find this information useful and helpful in your healing journey. I am here to support you. I would love to work with you and help you attain your goals of balancing your hormones while navigating the restoration your health. I have also incorporated a photolight therapy patch system to correlate this restoration and balance. Please reach out to me to learn more.

Laura Martin

