



MENSTRUAL PHASE WEEK 4

by Laura Martin

THE 'WINTER' PHASE OF YOUR CYCLE



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WEEK #4 – MENSTRUAL PHASE

WINTER

WHAT IT IS

This stage typically falls between days 24-28, encompassing the final days of your cycle when menstruation or bleeding occurs as the uterine lining sheds. Consider this as the winter season of your cycle – a time when the body rids itself of what's no longer necessary and readies for new growth. For most women, this phase spans about two to seven days.

The onset of the bleeding phase occurs as progesterone levels decline, prompting the breakdown and shedding of the uterine lining. Throughout this week, your energy is at its lowest point in the entire cycle. You might experience feelings of fatigue, withdrawal, and introspection.

OPTIMAL FOODS TO INCORPORATE

It is strongly recommended to incorporate a variety of nutritious comfort foods such as soups, bone broth, stews, and vitamin-packed smoothies to replenish lost iron and mineral stores due to blood loss. Opt for iron-rich foods like liver, grass-fed animal protein, beans, and leafy green vegetables.

Ensure an ample intake of B vitamins, vital for supporting energy levels during this period. Include nuts, seeds, eggs, leafy greens, mushrooms, and dark chocolate in your diet. Boost your vitamin C consumption with citrus fruits, leafy greens, bell peppers, and colorful fruits and vegetables to enhance iron absorption.

Include zinc-rich foods like organic peanut butter and seaweed to remineralize your blood. Finally, incorporate omega fatty acid-rich foods such as avocados, wild-caught fish, cod liver oil, hemp, sesame seeds, and sunflower seeds to reduce inflammation and enhance overall mood.

CORE EATING PRINCIPLES

- Maintain stable blood sugar levels to avoid adding extra stress on the body during the process of releasing the uterine lining.
- Embrace a WINTER mindset by opting for warm, nourishing, and easily digestible foods. Consider reducing caffeine intake if you experience intense cramping.
- Stay well-hydrated by continuing to drink plenty of water, aiming for at least half your body weight in ounces to alleviate bloating and cramping.

HERBS + SUPPLEMENTS

- Red Raspberry Leaf — Continue consuming this tea or infusion throughout the menstrual cycle to alleviate cramping and replenish iron levels in the body.
- Nettle — This tea or infusion is also rich in iron, aiding in the support of blood loss and the remineralization of the body.
- Crampbark — Assists in relieving cramping associated with menstruation. Take it as a tincture or tea on a daily basis.
- Turmeric — A highly anti-inflammatory spice that supports the digestive system and helps alleviate menstrual cramps. Incorporate it into your meals or take it as a daily capsule.
- Chaga Mushroom — This adaptogen, with its earthy taste, is a personal favorite for its immune-supporting and energy-regulating properties. Consume it as a drink or add the powdered form to recipes.
- Magnesium — Consider citrate for aiding elimination and glycinate for supporting sleep and reducing menstrual cramps.
- B-Vitamins — Essential for optimal energy, consider taking an activated B complex supplement.

MOVEMENT

Try avoiding high-impact workouts during this time. Focus on walks, gentle yoga, or light stretching, making sure to avoid doing inversions in yoga because they reverse blood flow.

LIFESTYLE

Your body is exerting considerable effort during this period, leading to fatigue. Ensure you get sufficient sleep – approximately 8-9 hours per night – and engage in restful activities that aren't physically demanding. A pre-menstrual massage can be beneficial for enhancing circulation. It's also crucial to consume warming foods (think winter) and maintain warmth during menstruation.

As all your sex hormones (estrogen, testosterone, and progesterone) are at low levels, now is an opportune time for —

- Granting yourself some downtime for rejuvenation
- Trusting your intuition
- Prioritizing self-care
- Maintaining stable blood sugar levels to avoid additional stress on the body as it undergoes the process of releasing the uterine lining.



RECIPE IDEAS FOR MENSTRUAL PHASE



CHAGA CHOCOLATE FUDGE SMOOTHIE BOWL

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

Servings — 1

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup unsweetened hemp, almond, coconut, cashew, or other non-dairy milk (add more if you want a thinner consistency)
- 1 cup frozen spinach
- ½ cup frozen cauliflower or sweet potato (steaming prior is also easier on your digestion)
- ½ frozen banana
- 1 serving of chocolate collagen protein powder
- 1 heaping tbsp cacao powder
- 1 heaping tbsp cacao nibs
- 1 heaping tbsp sunflower seeds
- 1 heaping tbsp peanut butter
- 1 serving of chaga mushroom powder
- 1-2 dates, pitted and chopped
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp sea salt

Optional toppings: shredded coconut, cacao nibs, chopped dark chocolate, peanut butter, coconut yogurt

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all ingredients to a high-speed blender and blend until smooth and creamy.
2. Pour into a bowl and add recommended toppings.

PUMPKIN CHICKEN CHILI

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

Servings — 4-6

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- 1 sweet onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 ½ lbs organic, pasture-raised boneless skinless chicken thighs, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 heaping tbsp chili powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 bay leaves
- Black pepper to taste
- 2 large carrots, peeled and chopped
- 2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 1 15 oz can organic pumpkin puree (make sure BPA free)
- 3 cups organic bone broth
- 2 cups leafy greens, chopped
- Cilantro, coconut, or Greek yogurt for topping

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat the grass-fed ghee in a large stovetop pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and cook for 5-10 minutes, until translucent.
2. Add chopped chicken and brown for 3 to 5 minutes, until much liquid is seeping out.
3. Stir in all the seasonings and cook for 1-2 minutes, until fragrant.
4. Stir in carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin puree, and bone broth, cover and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook for 30 minutes, until chili is thick and vegetables are soft.
5. Remove from heat and top with coconut yogurt and fresh cilantro

ITALIAN MEATBALLS + BUTTERNUT SQUASH NOODLES

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

Servings — 4-6

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For The Italian Meatballs

- 1 lb lean grass-fed ground beef
- 1 large pasture-raised egg
- 3 tbsp almond flour
- 1 tbsp Italian Seasoning
- 1 tbsp fresh minced parsley
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp sea salt
- Black pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee, for frying
- 1 large 32 oz jar marinara (I prefer Rao's)

For The "Pasta"

- 1 box of Cece's Butternut Squash Noodles (or you can use zucchini noodles or gluten-free, nutrient-rich pasta noodle of choice)
- 1 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- Sea salt + black pepper to taste
- Fresh parsley, minced

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all meatball ingredients to a mixing bowl and mix well with hands, careful not to overwork the meat.
2. Heat a large skillet or stovetop pan over medium-high heat and add the 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee.
3. Once the ghee is heated and sizzling, begin rolling the meat mixture into balls (about 1.5 inches in diameter) and place each one in the pan, continuing until the mixture is used up.
4. Once the bottoms are browned (about 2-3 minutes) flip each meatball over to brown the other side, careful to brown on all four sides.
5. Once all four sides are browned, add red sauce and bring to a boil. Cover and lower heat to simmer, allowing meatballs to cook through, about 10 minutes.
6. Uncover once cooked through and add butternut squash noodles to the pan, cooking for an extra five minutes.
7. Once done cooking remove from heat and serve immediately.

1 PAN EGG SHAKSHUKA

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

Servings — 4

Cook Time — 30 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsp grass-fed ghee
- 1 yellow onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp red pepper flakes
- Black pepper to taste
- 1 large (28 oz can) crushed tomatoes, preferably fire-roasted
- 1 large handful chopped greens (1-2 cups)
- 1 handful fresh chopped cilantro/parsley or mix
- 6 large pasture-raised eggs
- 1 large avocado, chopped
- Quinoa, brown or cauliflower rice, or glutenfree sourdough toast for serving

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 375 F. Warm the grass-fed ghee in a large, oven-safe skillet over medium heat. Once sizzling, add the chopped onion, bell pepper, garlic, and sea salt, cooking for 5-10 minutes, stirring frequently until translucent.
2. Add the tomato paste, cumin, paprika, red pepper flakes, and black pepper, stirring until fragrant, about 1-2 minutes.
3. Pour in the crushed tomatoes, stir, and let the mixture come to a simmer. Simmer for 5 minutes until the mixture is thick and bubbling.
4. Turn off the heat and stir in the herbs and leafy greens.
5. Use the back of a spoon to make indents around the perimeter of the pan. Crack the eggs directly into the indents and gently spoon some of the tomato mixture over the whites to help contain the eggs. Sprinkle sea salt and pepper over the eggs.
6. Carefully transfer the skillet to the oven and bake for 12 minutes. Eggs should be opaque white with creamy and soft yolks (they should still jiggle in the centers when you shimmy the pan).
7. Remove from oven and let cool for a few minutes. Top with sliced avocado and more fresh herbs and serve with quinoa, brown or cauliflower rice, or gluten-free toast if desired.

CHOCOLATE PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE

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

Servings — 8

Cook Time — 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

For the Peanut Butter Mixture

- ½ cup creamy organic peanut butter
- 2 tbsp coconut oil, melted and cooled
- 2 tbsp organic coconut sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

For the Dark Chocolate Mixture

- 1 cup dark chocolate chips (70% cacao or higher)
- ¼ cup coconut sugar
- ¼ cup organic coconut oil
- ¼ cup organic full-fat canned coconut milk
- ½ tsp sea salt
- CoconutOil (8.4 mg per serving)
- Optional: ⅓ cup chopped nuts like almonds, pistachios or cashews

DIRECTIONS:

1. Add all dark chocolate mixture ingredients to a small stovetop pot and melt over low heat, stirring continuously. Once melted, thick, and shiny, remove from heat and let cool for a few minutes.
2. While the dark chocolate mixture is cooling, stir the creamy peanut butter mixture until smooth.
3. Pour dark chocolate mixture in with peanut butter mixture, stirring until creamy and well combined.
4. Pour into an 8x8 parchment-lined baking pan and chill in the freezer for 1 hour or fridge 3 hours before serving. Remove it in the freezer 30 minutes before eating, or leave it in the refrigerator 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

