



Women's Health & Wellness

TOOLKIT

10 Evidence-Based Nutrition & Lifestyle Habits for Hormones, Energy & Long-Term Health

At a Glance...



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Habit 2: Prioritise Protein at Every Meal

Habit 3: Blood Sugar Stability

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Strength Training to Maintain Muscle Mass

Women naturally lose muscle mass from their 30s onwards (around 3-8% per decade). Maintaining muscle supports metabolism, blood sugar regulation, bone health, and healthy ageing, making strength training an important investment in long-term health.

What to aim for:

- 2-3 strength sessions per week
- 8-12 repetitions per exercise
- 2-4 sets per exercise
- 6-8 exercises per session

Progress tip:

When it feels “easy,” increase weight slightly or add rep

Examples:

- Squats or leg press
- Lunges
- Deadlifts (or hip hinges)
- Push-ups or chest press
- Rows (back exercises)
- Glute bridges & hip thrusts



Prioritise Protein at Every Meal

Protein plays a key role in supporting ovulation and the production of reproductive hormones, while also helping to maintain muscle mass, stabilise blood sugar levels, and support steady energy and appetite regulation throughout the day.

What to aim for:

- ~20-30g protein per meal
- 3 meals per day minimum
- Optional 10-20g protein snacks if needed

Food examples:



• 2-3 eggs = ~18-20g



• 150g chicken = ~30g



• 150g Greek yoghurt = ~15-20g

• 1 tin tuna = ~25g

• 150-200g tofu = ~20g

• 1 cup lentils = ~18g

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Blood Sugar Stability



Blood sugar swings can significantly impact energy levels, cravings, mood, and PMS symptoms, and are particularly important in conditions such as PCOS where insulin sensitivity may be affected.

What to aim for:

- Eat within 1-2 hours of waking
- Avoid long gaps (>4-5 hours) between meals
- Always pair carbs with protein/fat

Examples:

- Eggs, toast, spinach, avocado
- Chicken, salad, cous cous, olives
- Beef, noodles, veggies, cashews
- Apple, peanut butter
- Houmous, carrots

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Increase Dietary Fibre Intake

Fibre supports gut health, hormone metabolism, and blood sugar regulation. It also helps promote fullness and digestive regularity, and many women are not meeting the recommended intake of 30g per day, meaning even small increases can have meaningful benefits for overall health.

What to aim for:



- 25-30g fibre per day
- 5+ portions of fruit/veg daily
- 2-3 different plant foods per meal

Easy adds:

- 1 tbsp chia seeds = ~5g fibre
- 1 cup lentils = ~15g fibre
- 1 medium apple = ~4g fibre
- 1 cup broccoli = ~5g fibre



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Fermented Foods for Gut Diversity

A diverse gut microbiome supports digestion, immune function, and hormone metabolism. Research suggests that gut health may also influence mood and mental wellbeing through the gut-brain axis, highlighting the important connection between the gut and the brain.

What to aim for:

1-2 servings a day (start small)



Examples:

- Kefir: 100-200ml
- Live yoghurt: 100-150g
- Sauerkraut: 1-2 tablespoons
- Kimchi: 1-2 tablespoons
- Miso: 1 tsp in warm water or soup



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Iron Intake for Energy & Fatigue Prevention

Iron deficiency is common in menstruating women, particularly those with heavy periods, and can contribute to fatigue, poor concentration, headaches, reduced exercise performance, and hair loss. Iron is essential for carrying oxygen around the body, so low levels can affect both physical and mental wellbeing.

Examples:

- Lean red meat: 100-120g (2-3x per week)
- Lentils: 1 cup cooked (~6-7mg iron)
- Spinach: 2 cups raw or 1 cup cooked
- Fortified cereals: check label (often 3-8mg per serving)

What to aim for:

- Include iron rich foods daily
- Pair plant-based iron sources with a vitamin C-rich food to improve absorption.
- Avoid drinking tea or coffee with meals, as they can reduce iron absorption.

Sleep for Hormone Regulation

What to aim for:

- 7-9 hours of sleep per night
- A consistent bedtime and wake time (within 1 hour where possible)
- 60-90 minutes of screen-free time before bed
- Exposure to natural daylight within 1 hour of waking
- Limit caffeine after 12-2pm

Sleep is one of the most powerful (and often overlooked) health behaviours. Poor sleep can affect hunger and fullness hormones, blood sugar regulation, cortisol (stress hormone), mood and concentration, recovery from exercise and reproductive hormones.

Wind down routine ideas:

- Read a book
- Gentle stretching
- Light yoga
- Journalling
- Deep breathing
- Listening to music/podcast

Move More Throughout the Day



Regular movement supports heart health, blood sugar control, mental wellbeing, and energy levels. Research suggests that long periods of sitting can negatively impact health, even if you exercise regularly.

What to aim for:

- 7,000-10,000 steps per day (or gradually build towards this)
- Break up long periods of sitting every 30-60 minutes
- Include at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity per week

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Examples:

- Take the stairs where possible
- Go for a 10-15 minute walk after meals
- Park further away from your destination



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Manage Stress & Support Mental Wellbeing

Stress is a normal part of life, but chronic stress can affect sleep, digestion, appetite, energy levels, and hormone health.

What to aim for:

- At least 5-10 minutes each day dedicated to stress management
- Regular opportunities for rest and recovery throughout the week
- Time for activities you enjoy and find relaxing

Examples:

- Deep breathing exercises
- Mindfulness or meditation
- Journalling
- Spending time outdoors
- Talking with friends or family
- Reading, crafting, gardening, or hobbies
- Gentle yoga or stretching



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Protect Your Bone Health

Most women achieve their peak bone mass by their late 20s to early 30s. The more bone you build earlier in life, the more you have to draw on as you age. After menopause, declining oestrogen accelerates bone loss, increasing the risk of osteoporosis and fractures.

What to aim for:

- Around 700mg calcium daily
- Regular weight-bearing and strength-based exercise
- Adequate vitamin D intake
- Avoid smoking and limit excessive alcohol

Examples:

- 200ml milk = ~240mg
- 150g yoghurt = ~250mg
- 30g cheese = ~220mg
- Fortified plant drinks/yoghurts
- Calcium-set tofu
- Sardines/tinned salmon



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THANK

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