3 STEPS TO HORMONE HAPPINESS
1. TAKE YOUR BODY TO THE CLEANERS

Detoxing your body is fundamental towards a healthier, more radiant you—and happy hormones. After all, every day you're immersed in a chemical war—outside and inside your body. A sea of toxins—100,000 to be exact—surround you, from environmental chemicals in solvents, plastics, and adhesives to poisons in makeup, moisturizers, nail polish, hair dyes, and shampoos. Even our food and soil are inundated with pesticides and herbicides. Not to mention the contaminants and parasites lurking in our water. Everything you touch, taste, breathe, and eat is propelling your liver into overdrive.

Cleansing has never been more urgent for women of all ages and stages of life and here's why. Once your liver becomes overwhelmed by all the poisons it needs to neutralize, transform or process, it loses its ability to function properly. This in turn leads to a cascade of disastrous health consequences. And once your liver becomes heavily stressed, it can no longer effectively rid toxins, which causes vital body systems to malfunction.

Plus, carrying around these toxins often equates to carrying around extra pounds that you can't seem to lose. One of the most serious results of an overstressed or toxic liver is that it becomes so bogged down, it can't fully metabolize fat. As a result, it dumps fat and cholesterol back into the bloodstream, sabotaging your weight loss and putting you at risk for numerous health problems including indigestion, fatigue, high cholesterol, depression, mood swings, lupus, arthritis, and other autoimmune conditions. A toxic liver also creates disastrous results for your skin, leaving you with a tendency for blotchy patches, “liver spots,” and rashes.

Love Your Liver

A lean, mean, chemical-clearing machine, the liver cleans 1 1/2 quarts of blood every minute of the day, allowing other organs to be nourished by purified blood. Serving as a toxic waste neutralizer, it sends toxins off to the next detox organ—the kidneys—for elimination. The liver also chemically deactivates vital hormones (such as estrogen), thereby maintaining hormonal balance, sustains the body's major detoxification pathways, makes bile salts, produces cholesterol and amino acids, stores vitamin A, D, B12 and iron, metabolizes fat for energy, and regulates blood sugar for energy.

If toxins, rancid fats, or drugs clog up the liver's detoxification pathways, secondary symptoms will arise. Blood sugar levels fluctuate and chronic fatigue and PMS or perimenopausal-type problems like bloating, anxiety, and irritability manifest. And when the liver is congested, it presses on the vein that connects it to the colon (the portal vein) and causes hemorrhoids, sometimes referred to as the “varicose veins” of the colon. In time, toxins run rampant, prompting the body to choose to store them in fatty tissues (which are metabolically less active than other tissues)—where they can stay for years!

Identify the Source

Where do these toxins come from? Literally everywhere, from the environmental poisons in our air and water to the high-sugar, preservative-laden, processed foods in our diets. You can also welcome them in if you choose to smoke and/or drink alcohol, and you may even be unwittingly consuming them in your prescription drugs.

Plus, many of these chemicals are not just ordinary chemicals. They are petrochemicals found in pesticides, plastics, household cleaners, automobile exhaust, and common beauty products,
like makeup, hair dyes, nail polish, and polish remover. Petrochemicals are known as xenobiotics or xenoestrogens, which function as hormone disrupters. And xenoestrogens include BPA (Bisphenol A), found in the lining of the inside of tin cans; phthalates, contained in the plastic wrappings that leach into foods; and pesticides such as chlordane, dieldrin, alachor, heptachlor, and atrazine. Even in the smallest of doses, xenoestrogens are widely recognized as being highly potent, fat-soluble, non-biodegradable, and extremely toxic because estrogen receptors in women's cells can accept them as real estrogen with all of its cancer-potentiating effects.

Xenoestrogens function as hormone disrupters because they interfere with the body's natural estrogen receptor cites. These petrochemicals have a molecular structure similar to estrogens, tricking the body into a condition known as estrogen excess or estrogen dominance. When your system is thrown into hormone havoc, disease can surface such as arthritis, Lupus, M.S., and even breast cancer, placing you as a woman on the front lines of the xenobiotic battle.

Reset Your System

So, aside from avoiding known toxins to the best of your ability, what can you do? Avoid toxins to the best of your ability, paying close attention to what drinkware and cookware you use, ensuring your water is purified, and ditching dangerous habits like smoking and consuming alcohol in excess.

Another biggie is to clean up your diet—and focus on fiber. If you’re not getting enough fiber—and most Americans aren’t—your colon doesn’t have the support it needs to do its job. An overworked colon means that toxins and bile (a crucial substance produced by the liver) can sit in your gut too long. Eventually, your body reabsorbs the toxins and sends them back to the liver once again. Pack your diet with fiber-rich foods like flax, broccoli, spinach, kale, cauliflower, bok choy, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, and cilantro.

Simple life changes will make detox a daily affair, flushing out toxins and balancing hormones. You can make your body a fortress with the following:

1) Love your liver with Liver-Lovin Formula and Bile Builder to support liver detox and estrogen metabolism. Liver-Lovin contains purifying chlorophyll for the bloodstream and the liver detox pathways. Bile Builder contains important nutrients to rid the body of excess hormones.

2) Clean up your diet by going organic and buying natural body care products with natural ingredients.

3) Fiber up with daily flax, chia, and hemp seeds to flush out toxic waste and keep the toxins flowing.

2. TRAIN YOUR BODY WITH WORKOUT WISDOM

A diet of lean protein, healthy fats and oils, healing spices, and nutritious veggies and fruits is critical for your health. Coupled with nutrition, exercise is one of the greatest gifts you can give your body! You may groan at the idea, but once you get into the groove, you'll never know how you went without it.

Exercise aids in calcium metabolism, and helps to strengthen existing bone and stimulate the formation of new bone. Activities that are aerobic provide intermittent stress and strain, which actually stretches the bone and helps to maintain and build bone mass. The stress causes
an electric current to go through the bone, triggering the calcification process, known as the piezoelectric effect. An added bonus on the weight loss front, exercise can mobilize stored estrogen from the fatty tissue.

Learn to Love it
If you need a little motivation to get moving, here are more of exercise’s truly spectacular benefits.

- Calorie and fat burning
- Stronger joints, muscles, bones
- Better lung capacity
- Circulation improvement
- Lower blood pressure
- Reduced stress levels
- Improved mood
- Better quality sleep
- Removal of toxins and wastes
- Increased oxygen and nutrient flow, including to the brain
- Strengthened immune system and heart
- Counteraction of the aging process
- Reduction of disease risk, including cancer

Know Your Limits
However, please don't overdo it! For women in adrenal burn-out, exercising to exhaustion is counter-productive because it puts more stress on the adrenals. Too much exercise (over two hours of strenuous, nonstop activity on a daily basis) causes a halt in estrogen production that can actually contribute to calcium loss—particularly if you are quite thin. Even when exercise is decreased and estrogen levels become normalized, a 20 percent bone loss remains. If this cycle is repeated and the diet contains lots of calcium-robbers—such as coffee, sugar and soda—premature bone thinning will set in.

Overexercise can also lead to hormonal imbalance. Increased loss of body fat, brought on by strenuous exercise, first causes progesterone levels to drop. Progesterone deficiency may ensue, and this leads to bone loss. The secondary consequence of increased fat loss is the depletion of estrogen stores, resulting in menstrual irregularities, including cessation of menstrual periods. This situation is often evident in trained athletes—such as body builders, runners, and ballet dancers—who can turn their periods on and off with a 3- to 5-lb. weight gain or loss. Women who were involved in athletics in their teens and 20s and missed at least one-third of their regular menstrual periods might be wise to check out their current bone density. In older women, this exercise-induced hormonal imbalance may be confused with menopause. Keep the mental mantra that balance is key, watch the clock during your sweat sesh, and always listen to what your body is telling you.

The nice thing about exercise is that it is available to everybody, practically any time of the year, at little or no cost. An ideal, well-rounded exercise program should include certain kinds of exercises designed to meet the three basic physical fitness components: cardiovascular exercise, muscle strength, and flexibility. Choosing a variety of exercises that fit into these categories will
ensure that the entire body gets a workout. While some of the exercises can be done at gyms and studios, they can also be done in the comfort of your own home! Today’s technology allows us to welcome a trainer right into our living rooms via online videos, DVDs, and handy printables.

**Get Started**

For women who have not been exercising on a regular basis, here is a sample weekly program that you can follow:

- Cardiovascular exercise and/or HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training): Three days a week (aim for at least thirty minutes each day)
- Strength training: In alternation with cardiovascular exercises, three days a week (aim for at least thirty minutes each day)
- Stretching and foam rolling: Daily (aim for ten to twenty minutes each)

The ultimate key to exercise is regularity. Many individuals make exercise a part of their daily regimen. Others exercise four days out of seven to keep the blood moving, muscles toned, and joints flexible. Whatever you decide to do, approach your program realistically and focus on variety. This will challenge your body—and your mind—so neither is bored with your regime. Exercise is a lifelong activity, so avoid crash programs, which can be painful and dangerous in the long run.

Discovering the right exercises for you (and focusing on variety) will not only majorly boost your health, but your happiness too. Focus on how strong and healthy you feel and forget about sizes and circumferences. Exercise is about building your best self—and that looks different on everyone.

**Recover Post-Workout**

For better recovery after workouts and to upgrade your system, make a smoothie or shake with a protein powder 30-minutes after working out. My personal favorites are UNI KEY’s Fat Flush Whey and Body Proteins. The whey variety is made from only non-mutated A2 milk protein and is free of heavy metals, GMOs, hormones, gluten, egg, soy, corn, added sugars, artificial sweeteners and colors, preservatives, pesticide residues, and synthetic fillers. It’s vegan counterpart is made from brown rice and pea protein and is free of gluten, dairy, egg, soy, GMOs, and artificial sweeteners.

**3. TAKE YOUR BODY TO DREAMLAND**

It’s not new news that Americans don’t seem to sleep. Blame it on our busy, hectic lives. Blame it on our addiction to social media, television, and movies. Regardless of the cause, we’re not sleeping and the effect is taking a serious toll on our health. A poll conducted by Gallup in 2013 showed that 40 percent of Americans get less than 6 hours of sleep per night. Moreover, Gallup has consistently found this number since 1990. The average amount of sleep Americans get falls short as well, coming in at around 6.8 hours since 1990—and that was a “slower” decade!

**The Walking Exhausted**

This new norm to try to function while running on fumes is a living nightmare for the United States. When you don’t get enough sleep, you put your body under stress as you deprive it of critical time to repair tissue, reset hormones, and consolidate memories. The above numbers
show that almost half of the country putting undue stress on their body, and functioning at a suboptimal level. During perimenopause, sleep is particularly important to give a solid foundation to hormones that naturally want to go over the edge.

One of the main purposes of the cortisol curve and the curve of its sister melatonin is to control the sleep-wake cycle. For this reason, getting enough sleep is absolutely foundational to restoring healthy cortisol rhythms, and reducing stress.

**Minimal Shuteye**

How much sleep do you typically get in a night? If the answer is less than a solid seven plus hours, then it is time to make some changes, especially in the onset of stressful perimenopause. In only two weeks, reducing your shut eye from eight hours to six hours will have significant repercussions on your cortisol curve. It can also increase low-grade, chronic inflammation and decrease insulin sensitivity, as well as put you at a higher risk for all of the conditions associated with these factors, such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.

Experts say you need seven to eight hours of sleep to maintain healthy functioning, and save yourself from stress, but I say push for eight. To some of you, it may sound impossible to find the time to get eight hours of sleep, but you simply must. Your health depends on it. If you aren't immediately falling asleep in first attempts at an earlier bedtime, keep trying. You are still giving your body the opportunity to rest, relax, and restore its normal rhythms.

**Rest Easy**

Here are my best sleep tips to help you get the shut eye you need to open up your life:

- Turn off electronics at least one hour before bed. Our beloved devices that we put so much of our lives into give up back a type light called blue light that mimics daylight. Your body cannot tell the difference between the kind blue light you see outside at noon, and the kind you see from your device at midnight, and reacts to both the same way: reducing the sleep hormone melatonin.

- Create a sleep-promoting environment. Sleep in a quiet, dark, cool room, ideally between 62 and 70ºF, that is absent of electronics devices. A warm room impedes sleep and causes more awakenings, and electronics emit electromagnetic radiation (electropollution) that puts stress on your body. Use a fan or air-conditioner to keep you cool and comfortable, and keep wireless devices outside.

- Sleep on a schedule. Try going to bed at the same time every night, and waking up with the sunrise. I recommend going to bed around 10 p.m. if at all possible. This will mimic your natural cortisol rhythm as closely as possible. Getting an hour of morning sunlight (or using extremely bright lights in the morning) could help with falling asleep at night.

- Take a warm bath. Researchers suggest that taking a fifteen-minute bath of 105ºF approximately ninety minutes before going to bed is helpful. The rise in body temperature, followed by the decline in the core temperature, signals the body that it's bedtime. Add some lavender or chamomile aromatherapy to the bath to enhance your relaxation.

- Avoid eating or exercising in the 2 hours before bed. Both of these things can cause hormonal disruptions, namely with cortisol and insulin, that interfere with sleep.

- Create a nighttime routine. Practicing a specific bedtime ritual will establish a set behavior pattern that cues your brain to relax and go to sleep. I strongly encourage you to incorporate relaxation
techniques into this routine. Take a warm bath, meditate, or journal to reduce sleep-sabotaging anxiety, and quiet your mind and body.

• If sleep is still a challenge, try a “sleeping aid”—but a natural one—30 minutes before bedtime. I recommend a time-released melatonin and/or Mag-Key at the dosage of 5 mg per pound of body weight.

Those 7-8 hours are absolutely critical across the board for your body. While it may feel as if your lack of sleep isn’t necessarily your choice due to balancing a jam-packed schedule, you must change your perspective. While some things can’t be put off, others can. The cleaning can wait. Your health and wellness can’t.

FINAL THOUGHTS

“Your body is a temple” is a quote that you should truly take to heart. Taking your health and hormone harmony into your own hands will direct this change before the change on a peaceful, stable course.