

Eating

FOR HORMONE BALANCE

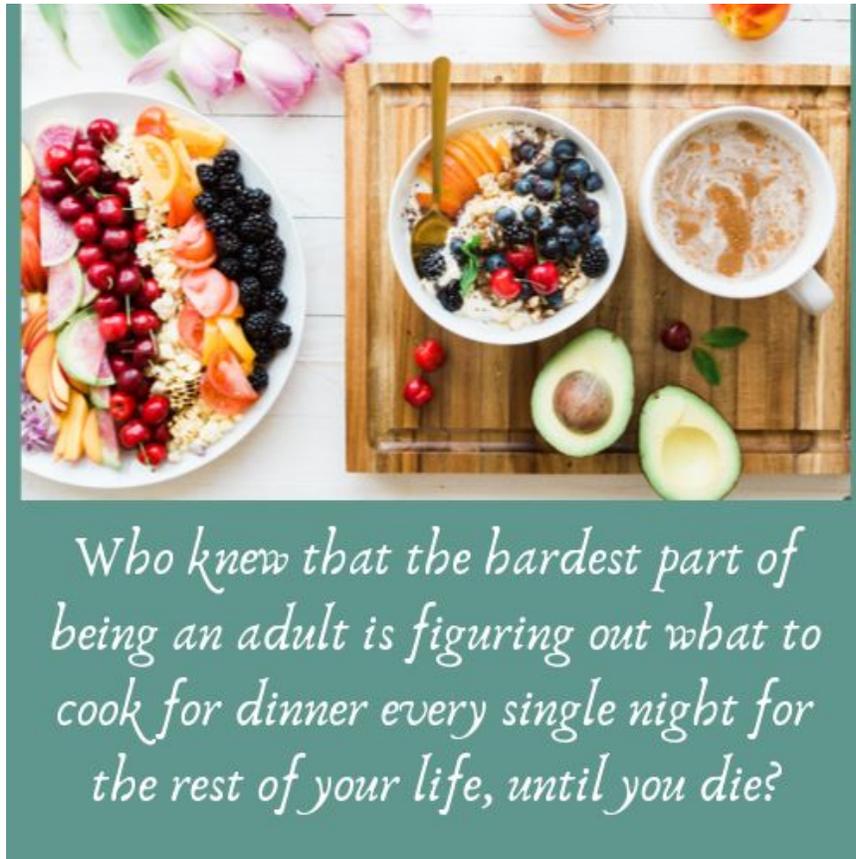
Quick & Easy Meals • 7 Day Meal Plan
Tips & Tricks for Easy Meal Prep



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EATING FOR HORMONE BALANCE

Ever feel confused and overwhelmed about how to eat in a way that supports optimal health and energy, yet still tastes great and doesn't require spending hours in the kitchen? *Friend, you're not alone.* Not long ago, I was absentmindedly scrolling through Facebook and saw this meme:



It funny because it feels so true, doesn't it? Trying to figure out what to have for dinner can feel like a major decision most days. Add to that the fact that you're trying to eat in a way that supports energy and hormone balance (meaning you're cutting out a lot of convenience foods and maybe even a whole group of foods, like grains or dairy), and it gets even trickier to eat right for your health.

I know eating healthy can feel like a chore sometimes, but it's SO worth it to get your hormones back on track and feel your best. Your diet really is the foundation of it all. Without this piece in place, it's going to be difficult to truly reset your hormones or regain your energy.

I put together this guide to make it easier. There aren't a bunch of super-fancy recipes with a long list of expensive, or hard-to-find ingredients. Instead, I want to show you how easy it can be to eat in a way that not only tastes delicious, but also supports your hormones and your energy, without taking hours in the kitchen.

I've put together a seven day meal plan to help you get started with eating for hormone balance. These are some of my favorite recipes. Most of them are quick and simple. In fact, a few are so easy that don't even require a recipe!

In this guide, I also want to show you how to eat right for your hormones by using three principles that will help guide your food decisions. No matter if you have a meal plan in front of you, you're shopping for groceries, or you're eating out, you will always know exactly how to choose the right foods to help you feel your best when you keep these three principles in mind at every meal.

Finally, you will find a few more tips and tricks for eating for hormone balance at the end of this guide. These are some things to keep in mind to help you maximize the flavor and nutrition of your meals, as well as to help you make meal planning easier- and to stick to that plan once you've made it!

Print this guide out and keep it in your kitchen. It's packed with delicious recipes and guiding principles to get your hormones back on track, so you can start feeling your best- vibrant, balanced, and full of energy!

3 PRINCIPLES OF EATING FOR HORMONE BALANCE

If you're confused about what to eat to feel your best, let's cut through the confusion. When it comes to eating for hormone balance, there are three principles to keep in mind, no matter who you are, or what your health goal is.

1. **Eat to Balance Blood Sugar.** Many of us are eating a diet high in sugar and refined carbohydrates. These foods are easy to access and to prepare. They taste good, and even give the brain a hit of dopamine, improving your mood, at least for the short term. They also cause a cascade of negative consequences for your hormones. These foods disrupt the balance between insulin and cortisol, and in turn can disrupt your thyroid and sex hormones, making you feel more sluggish and irritable, not to mention, more prone to gaining weight.

Instead, ditch the sugar, bread, pasta, and other refined carbohydrates in favor of foods that keep blood sugar balanced. This is easy to do when you follow this mantra:

Protein, Fat and Fiber at every meal.

When you sit down to a meal, make sure you have a portion of quality protein, such as pasture-raised chicken, grass-fed beef, or wild-caught salmon. Then add some healthy fats, like ghee, olives, or coconut oil. Finally fiber and phytonutrients (also important!) will be provided by non-starchy vegetables, such as zucchini, peppers, cauliflower, and more.

If you need extra carbs, stick to high-quality whole foods, such as sweet potatoes, spaghetti squash, or beans, and keep the portions on the smaller side to keep blood sugar in balance. Don't worry, you will see plenty of examples of what a meal containing protein, fat, and fiber looks like in the meal plan!

Quick note on ditching the refined carbs- If you've been relying on sugar and refined carbohydrates for energy, it can feel really tough to remove them from your diet. The good news is, when you stick with this plan, your sugar and carb cravings will naturally recede. It's true! If you find yourself craving sugar, have a piece of fruit or a smoothie made with chocolate protein powder to satisfy your sweet tooth. Getting control of your sweet tooth is hands-down one of the best things you can do to improve your health, so don't give up!

One last word about sugar: an occasional drizzle of raw honey, or a square of dark chocolate is ok, just don't overdo it. If you can't stop at one square of dark chocolate and you are seriously struggling with sugar, it's probably best to let it go for now. Don't cheat yourself out of getting the results you want by overdoing the "healthy" sugars and carbs.

2. **Eat to Beat Inflammation.** Inflammation is at the root of chronic disease. Foods that promote inflammation include sugar, processed foods, and refined seed oils. You may notice that these are the same foods that spike your blood sugar. Those refined carbs and sugar cause the pancreas to release a bunch of insulin into the bloodstream. Insulin promotes inflammation in the body, causing you to feel sluggish and foggy, and aging you more rapidly.

Eating the wrong type of fat can increase inflammation as well. Refined seed oils, such as corn, canola, soy, and vegetable oils, as well as margarine, and trans-fats, oxidize quickly within the body, promoting free-radical damage at the cellular level.

Instead, choose foods which are nutrient dense and rich in antioxidants, which help to lower inflammation and protect your cells from accelerated aging. Look for whole foods, as close to their natural state as possible, including berries, cruciferous veggies like broccoli and cabbage, spices like turmeric and thyme, as well as nuts and seeds, wild-caught salmon, green tea, olive oil, mushrooms, avocados, and more. (Keep reading for a list of the top ten foods to eat to balance hormones- and ten to avoid!)

3. **Eat to Optimize Digestion.** I utilize the Ayurvedic principles of digestion to optimize digestive function for myself and the women I coach.

Ayurveda is the traditional system of holistic medicine that originated in ancient India and includes both dietary and lifestyle principles. This ancient wisdom teaches us not only what to eat but *how to eat* to properly digest and assimilate the foods we consume.

This includes favoring warm, cooked foods over cold or raw foods. Warm, cooked foods are easier to break down and assimilate, so consume most of your meals warm when possible. You can enjoy a few cold or raw foods in your diet, as long as they don't cause digestive distress. Just be sure to favor *mostly* warm, cooked foods in general. For example, if you eat a salad, top it with a warm bacon vinaigrette or sip a cup of warm ginger tea during or after your meal to keep the digestive fire strong.

Also pay attention to *how* you eat: take time to sit down and enjoy your meal instead of eating while distracted or eating on the run. Chew your food well. These simple habits can make a big difference in how well you digest your meal- and that can make a world of difference for your hormones as well!

These three principles are foundational for eating in a way that helps you regain your energy, balance your hormones, and also keeps your weight and your mood steady.

7 DAY MEAL PLAN

Quick Breakfast Ideas

Applegate Farms Chicken Sausage links sauteed with onion and cabbage in ghee

Breakfast Sweet Potato Bowl*

Whole-fat, unsweetened, non-dairy yogurt (try SoTrue Coconut milk yogurt), topped with berries, nuts and a little raw honey (stir in collagen powder for protein!)

Paleo flatbread topped with ghee and any of the following: berries, smoked salmon, fried egg, or sunbutter*

Cauli-Carrot Soup*

Breakfast Casserole*

Easy Grain-Free "Oatmeal" *

Quick Lunch Ideas

Salmon and Spinach Salad with Cranberries and Walnuts*

Savory Sweet Potato Bowl*

Charcuterie*

Deli turkey meat and veggies wrapped in coconut wrap or lettuce leaf (add chopped onions, olives, Primal Kitchen Green Goddess dressing, etc)

Healing Chicken and Wild Rice Soup*

Cauli Rice Buddha Bowl*

Paleo Salmon Patties*

Quick Dinner Ideas

Asian Stir Fry with Cauliflower Rice*

Paleo Pizza*

Italian Sausage with Zoodles*

Lemon-Turmeric Salmon with Kale Pesto and Spaghetti Squash*

Beef & Liver Meatballs with Marinara and Zoodles*

Easy Roast Chicken with Vegetables

Sausage, Kale, and White Bean Soup*

Snacks

Golden Milk*

Easy Cashew Cranberry Granola*

Avocado slices wrapped in organic turkey deli meat with mustard

Chocolate-Covered Cherry Smoothie*

Pumpkin Coconut Custard*

Small handful of macadamia nuts and an apple

** denotes recipe is provided*

BREAKFAST RECIPES

Breakfast Sweet Potato Bowl

- ½ cup sweet potato, cooked and mashed (or butternut squash)
- ¼ cup canned coconut milk
- 1 to 2 teaspoons raw honey, if desired
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon collagen powder
- 1 teaspoon ghee or coconut oil

Add any of the following:

- dried cranberries (unsweetened) or currants
- Chopped pecans or walnuts
- Hemp seeds
- Shredded, unsweetened coconut

The sweet potato can be cooked and mashed the day before to make this a quick breakfast! Place the cooked mashed sweet potato in a small saucepan over medium heat with coconut milk, honey, salt, cinnamon, collagen powder and ghee. Stir or whisk to combine. Additional ingredients can be stirred into the mixture as it cooks or added at the end as toppings. Find your favorite mix of toppings and make it your own!

Tip- You can find frozen sweet potato or butternut squash at the grocery store. Place frozen chunks in saucepan with coconut milk and heat over medium heat until softened enough to mash with a fork. Continue with the recipe.

Paleo Flatbread

- 1 cup cooked, mashed sweet potato or butternut squash
- ½ cup cassava flour
- 2 tsp gelatin from grass-fed beef
- ¼ tsp Real Salt

Combine cassava flour, gelatin, and salt in a bowl. Add sweet potato or squash and mix until combined. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

Divide the dough into 8 equal pieces and press or roll into a round tortilla shape. Place on baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes. Flip tortillas over and cook for 3 to 5 minutes more.

Serve with toppings of choice. Topping ideas include sunflower seed butter, scrambled eggs, berries, smoked salmon or avocado.

Ginger Carrot Soup

Soup is seriously one of my favorite things to have for breakfast! It's especially nice in the winter. I adapted this recipe from the *Wahl's Cooking for Life Cookbook*, one of my favorite whole-food cookbooks.

- 1 head cauliflower, cut into pieces
- 3 large carrots, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 (¼ inch) piece of ginger, chopped
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 teaspoon dried kelp flakes
- 2 teaspoons salt
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons ghee
- 4 cups chicken broth

Place the ghee in a stock pot and melt over medium high heat. Add chopped vegetables, garlic and ginger to the pan and saute until slightly softened, about 5 to 6 minutes. Add the other seasonings and chicken broth and bring to a boil. Turn down heat and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, until vegetables are softened. Use an immersion blender and blend until smooth. You can also transfer to a blender to blend, working in small batches and allow to cool slightly before turning on the blender to avoid spills.

Breakfast Casserole

This recipe takes a little extra time to prepare, but it's worth the effort. Try this breakfast casserole for a comfortable weekend breakfast or brunch, or make ahead and reheat for hurried mornings.

- 1 lb pork sausage, naturally-raised and nitrite-free
- 1 large sweet potato or Russet potato, chopped into ½ inch pieces, or shredded
- 6 eggs
- ¼ cup unsweetened almond milk, or coconut milk
- ¼ cup green onions, both white and green parts
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Cook sausage in a skillet until browned, about 7 minutes. Drain if needed. Whisk eggs in a bowl with almond milk and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease a 9 x 13 baking dish with olive oil or butter. Spread the potatoes across the bottom of the baking dish. Top with sausage and then green onions. Pour egg mixture evenly over top and place baking dish in oven. Bake for 45 minutes, or until eggs are set and potatoes are cooked through.

Easy Grain-Free “Oatmeal”

¼ cup of shredded, unsweetened coconut

¼ cup chopped nuts (your choice, use a mixture such as pecans, walnuts, almonds, cashews, etc.)

1 tablespoon dried fruit, such as cranberries, raisins, currants or dates, chopped

1 small apple, cored and chopped into small pieces

¼ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon cinnamon

¼ cup coconut milk (optional)

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and stir to combine. Top with coconut milk if desired. Can also be eaten warm by combining all ingredients in a small saucepan with coconut milk and heating briefly.

To make ahead: Combine all ingredients except apple and coconut milk and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator until ready to serve.

LUNCH RECIPES

Salmon and Spinach Salad with Cranberries and Walnuts

1 filet of salmon, baked, OR ½ can wild caught salmon
2 cups baby spinach
Red onion, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon dried, apple juice sweetened cranberries
1 tablespoon chopped walnuts
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
Salt and pepper

Combine spinach and red onion in a bowl. Top with salmon, cranberries and walnuts. In a separate, small bowl combine olive oil, apple cider vinegar, salt and pepper. Whisk together with a fork and pour over salad. Serve.

Savory Sweet Potato Bowl

1 small sweet potato, baked until easily pierced with a knife
Protein: chopped ham, leftover cooked chicken, ground beef, etc
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tsp ghee or Primal Kitchen Green Goddess Dressing

Toppings (Choose any of the following)

Chopped green onions (red onions are also a good choice)
Olives
Kimchi
Sautéed spinach or other greens

Cut sweet potato in half and place in a bowl. Add salt, pepper, and ghee or Primal Kitchen Dressing. Mash sweet potato lightly with a fork and top with protein and desired toppings. Enjoy!

Charcuterie Plate

Charcuterie refers to a platter of cured meats and complimentary condiments, such as olives and cheeses. Here's a way to make a simple charcuterie platter with healthier, hormone-friendly ingredients.

1 organic beef summer sausage, or naturally-raised deli meats
Black olives
Grape tomatoes
Sliced cucumbers
Simple Mills almond flour crackers
Pickles (look for an organic variety)
Sauerkraut or kimchi
Myokos garlic and herb cheese wheel (dairy free)

Place everything on a plate and enjoy!

Healing Chicken and Wild Rice Soup

This is a great recipe to use up some leftover chicken. If you don't have leftover chicken, just chop up some boneless, skinless chicken breast and cook in 2 tablespoons of olive oil.

1 cup chopped, cooked chicken
1 cup chopped fresh mushrooms (any variety)
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 carrot, chopped
1 rib celery, chopped
6 cups chicken broth
1 bay leaf
2 tsp thyme
Salt and pepper, to taste
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup wild rice
1 cup chopped kale or chard
1 tablespoon olive oil or ghee

Heat olive oil or ghee in a stock pot over medium high heat. Add onions, garlic, carrots, and celery to stock pot and saute until softened, about 5 minutes. Add chopped mushrooms, thyme, salt, and pepper, and cook for 2 more minutes.

Add broth and chicken and bring to a bowl. Add wild rice and cover. Turn down heat to medium-low. Add chopped kale and simmer for 20 minutes, until rice is tender.

Steak and Cauli-Rice Bowl

1 package flank steak, about 8 oz

1 T water

¼ teaspoon baking soda

2 tablespoons coconut aminos

2 teaspoons coconut sugar or honey

1 teaspoon arrowroot starch

3 cloves garlic, minced

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

Salt and pepper, to taste

1 tablespoon olive oil or butter

½ head of cauliflower, riced in a food processor

Red pepper, sliced thin

Shredded carrots

Green onions, chopped

Kimchi

Marinate the Steak:

Cut steak into thin slices, ¼ inch thick. (Place in the freezer for 30 minutes prior to slicing to make the steak easier to cut). Place ¼ teaspoon of baking soda and 1 tablespoon of water in a bowl and combine. Add steak and toss to coat. Let sit for 5 minutes. Combine coconut aminos, coconut sugar, arrowroot starch, garlic, ginger, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Add to beef and toss to combine.

Cook the Steak and Cauliflower Rice: Heat butter or olive oil in a 12 inch skillet over high heat. Add steak evenly to pan and cook, without stirring, for 1 minute. Continue to cook for 1 minute more, stirring occasionally. Remove steak from pan and set aside. Turn heat down to medium-high. Add more oil or butter to the pan if needed and place riced cauliflower, red pepper, and carrots in pan. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes.

Assemble the Bowls:

Place a portion of cauliflower rice in each serving bowl, along with a portion of steak. Top with desired toppings, such as green onions or kimchi.

Paleo Salmon Patties

1 can wild-caught salmon, drained

1 egg

¼ cup almond flour

2 scallions, chopped

Salt and pepper to taste

Coconut oil or olive oil

In a bowl combine salmon, egg, almond flour, scallions, and salt and pepper. Form mixture into patties. Heat coconut oil in a large skillet over medium heat and add patties. Cook for 10 minutes on each side. Serve with Primal Kitchen Garlic Aioli mayo or any Primal Kitchen dressing for dipping.

DINNER RECIPES

Asian Stir Fry with Cauliflower Rice

- 1 lb ground pork
- 2 tablespoons coconut aminos, divided
- ½ teaspoon grated ginger
- 2 green scallions, chopped (green and white parts)
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 red pepper, sliced into thin strips
- 1 carrot, diced
- ½ cup frozen peas
- 1 head cauliflower, cut into pieces

Place cauliflower in a food processor and process until cauliflower has the consistency of rice grains. (You can also find riced cauliflower in the frozen vegetable section of the grocery store). Set aside.

Combine ground pork, coconut aminos, ginger, salt and pepper and green onions in a large bowl. Mix to combine. Add 1 tablespoon olive oil or avocado oil to a large skillet and heat to medium high. Add pork and cook until no longer pink, breaking up with a spoon. Add onion and garlic, red pepper, and carrots and cook 5 minutes more. Add riced cauliflower and peas. Add 2 tablespoons Primal Kitchen Sesame Ginger Marinade and 1 tablespoon coconut aminos. Turn heat to low and cook until heated through and sauce has thickened, about 5 minutes.

Paleo Pizza

Pizza without cheese? Yes, please! Throw on plenty of your favorite veggies and protein and trust me, you won't even miss the cheese. Make this meal super-simple by buying pre-made paleo pizza crust.

- 1 grain free pizza crust (see note)
- 1 jar organic pizza sauce
- Protein- Canadian bacon, chopped chicken or Italian sausage
- Chopped veggies: olives, mushrooms, red onion, basil, tomatoes, artichoke hearts, etc.
- Nutritional yeast, optional

Preheat oven according to directions on pizza crust package. Top pizza with sauce and add your favorite toppings and cook according to package directions, about 15 to 20 minutes.

Note- There are a lot of options for grain-free pizza crust available! Capello's and Caulipower and are two options. Just be sure to read the ingredients and avoid refined flour, grains, dairy, or additives. You can also use the Paleo Flatbread recipe in this guide as a crust for your pizza. Nutritional Yeast will lend a "cheesy" flavor to your pizza, if desired.

Italian Chicken Sausage with Zoodles

- 1 package chicken Italian sausage (gluten-free, organic)
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 lemon
- ¼ cup chicken broth
- 1 medium zucchini, spiralized
- 2 tsp thyme
- Salt and pepper

Cut chicken sausages into small, ½ inch pieces. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add sausage, onion, garlic, and cherry tomato and saute until onions and tomato are softened. Add bone broth, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and zest of lemon, as well as thyme, salt and pepper. Stir to mix and add spiralized zucchini and cook until sausage is heated through and broth is reduced to a thickened sauce, about 5 to 8 minutes.

Lemon-Turmeric Salmon with Kale Pesto and Spaghetti Squash

This recipe is much easier than it sounds. It's also delicious! in fact, this is one of my favorite meals!

- 2 to 3 wild-caught salmon filets, thawed
- 1 jar Primal Kitchen Lemon-Turmeric Marinade
- 1 small spaghetti squash

For the Pesto:

- 1 bunch kale, stems removed and chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup raw walnuts
- ¼ cup nutritional yeast
- Salt and pepper to taste

½ cup olive oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Carefully pierce the spaghetti with a sharp knife 2 to 3 times. Place spaghetti squash in a small baking dish with 2 tablespoons of water. Place in oven and cook until done, about 30 to 40 minutes. The spaghetti squash will be easy to pierce with a knife when done. Remove spaghetti squash from oven and carefully cut into halves. Scoop out the seeds and discard. Scrape the flesh of the spaghetti squash with a fork to form noodles.

Place the salmon in a baking dish, skin side down. Pour ¼ to ½ cup of Lemon-Turmeric marinade on the salmon and bake in a 350 degree oven for about 20 minutes, or until salmon flakes when pierced with a fork.

For the Kale Pesto: In a food processor, combine the kale, garlic, walnuts, salt, pepper, lemon juice, and nutritional yeast. Process until combined, about 3 minutes. With the food processor still running, stream the olive oil into the mixture. Scrape down the sides and process until well combined.

Serve the baked salmon with the spaghetti squash, topped with pesto.

Notes- If you don't have Primal Kitchen Lemon-Turmeric Dressing, simply combine ½ cup of olive oil in a small bowl with the juice of 1 lemon, ½ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper, and ½ teaspoon turmeric.

Beef and Liver Meatballs with Zoodles

If the thought of eating liver makes you gag, don't despair! When paired with ground beef and a rich marinara sauce, the flavor of liver is mellowed, and gives the dish a nice, umami flavor. Liver is such an incredibly nutrient dense food that it's worth incorporating into your meals on a weekly basis. Give this recipe a try- I think you'll be pleasantly surprised. My kids even like this one!

1 lb grass fed ground beef
4 ounces beef liver, thawed
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ yellow onion, minced
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
2 tsp Italian seasoning
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large or 2 small zucchini
1 jar organic marinara sauce (no sugar added)

1 bunch chopped kale

In a food processor, combine ground beef, liver, garlic onion, salt, pepper and Italian seasoning. Process until well combined. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Form beef and liver mixture into small meatballs and drop into the hot oil, cooking about 5 minutes on each side before turning. Move the meatballs around in the pan until they are cooked through.

Spiralize the zucchini using a spiralizer. Add to the pan with the meatballs. Add the chopped kale. Allow to cook for 4 to 5 minutes. Add the marinara and cover, stirring occasionally, until sauce is warmed and meatballs are done, about 8 to 12 minutes.

Easy Roast Chicken with Vegetables

I make this chicken every Sunday for dinner. Slow roasting the chicken makes it much more flavorful and tender. It's easy to serve with a vegetable on the side and the leftover chicken is great to throw into a salad for lunch or a quick soup for dinner (Try the Mushroom and Wild Rice Soup above.) The spice seasoning makes enough for 2 chickens. You can roast two chickens at once so you have plenty of leftovers, or save the other half of your seasoning mix for the next time you make this recipe.

1 organic chicken
2 onions, quartered
2 sweet potatoes, peeled and quartered
1 red bell pepper, chopped

For the Rotisserie Seasoning (enough for 2 chickens)

4 tsp salt
2 tsp paprika
1 tsp onion powder
1 tsp thyme
1 tsp white pepper
½ tsp cayenne
½ tsp garlic powder

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Place chicken, breast side up, in a baking dish and rub spice mix on inside and outside of the chicken. Place one onion inside chicken. Place the remaining vegetables in the baking dish around the chicken and roast in the oven for 5 hours. Remove chicken from oven and let sit 15 minutes before serving.

Note- You can season the chicken up to 24 hours before roasting to infuse the meat with flavor, however it isn't necessary. If you are only making one chicken, save the remaining seasoning mixture for next time- you will definitely want to make this one again!

Sausage, Kale and White Bean Soup

Soup is the perfect food, in my opinion. It's not only warm, and comforting, but it's easy to digest and assimilate the nutrients in soup. Bone broth provides amino acids that aid in gut healing and tissue repair. Add an abundance of vegetables and season generously for a nutrient boost.

- 1 lb. naturally raised Italian pork sausage, casings removed
- 1 can cannellini or Great Northern beans
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 large carrot, chopped
- 1 rib celery, chopped
- 1 roma tomato, chopped
- 1 bunch kale, chopped (or another green, such as chard or spinach)
- 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning

In a stock pot heat olive oil over medium high heat. Add sausage and cook for a few minutes, using a wooden spoon to break apart. When sausage is almost done, add garlic, onion, carrot and celery and cook for 3 to 5 minutes more, until vegetables are tender and sausage is no longer pink. Add tomato, chicken broth, salt and pepper, and Italian seasoning. Bring to a simmer, reduce heat to medium low and cover. Add kale and beans and allow to simmer for 15 to 20 minutes before serving.

SNACKS

Golden Milk

Golden Milk is a delicious alternative to hot cocoa and contains anti-inflammatory spices such as ginger, cinnamon and turmeric. It's delicious and warming and so good for you! I like a little honey in my golden milk, but feel free to leave it out.

- 1 tsp Gaia Golden Milk mix
- 1/8 tsp cinnamon
- 8 oz unsweetened almond or coconut milk
- 1 tsp ghee
- 1 tsp honey, optional

Heat almond or coconut milk in a small saucepan add Golden Milk mix and whisk to combine. Add ghee and whisk. Add honey if desired. Pour into a mug and serve.

Easy Cashew-Cranberry Grain-Free Granola

½ cup raw cashews (whole or pieces)
¼ cup dried apple juice sweetened cranberries
½ cup coconut chips, unsweetened
2 tablespoons maple syrup
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
Pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and mix. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and spread mixture evenly on baking sheet. Bake for 12 minutes, stirring once. Remove from oven and cool. Break into pieces and store in an air-tight container. Recipe can be doubled.

Chocolate-Covered Cherry Smoothie

1 cup almond milk or coconut milk
1 scoop chocolate protein powder (try Ancient Nutrition Bone Broth Protein Powder)
1 tsp ghee
¼ cup frozen cherries
Dash of cinnamon

Throw everything in a blender and blend away! Enjoy!

Paleo Pumpkin Custard

1 (14 oz) can of pumpkin
1 (14 oz) can coconut milk
1 Tablespoon grass-fed beef gelatin
1 tsp vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
¼ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons raw honey

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan over medium heat, whisking constantly. When the mixture is warm, but not simmering, remove from heat and pour into individual ramekins. Refrigerate until firm, about 4 hours.

MORE TIPS & TRICKS TO EATING FOR HORMONE BALANCE

- **Add some spice to your life.** Herbs and spices such as thyme, oregano, garlic, cinnamon, parsley, and others not only add flavor to your meals, they are also packed with nutrition! Many spices are high in antioxidants and trace minerals. They also have antimicrobial benefits, helping to keep your microbiome in balance. When cooking for hormone balance, be generous with the herbs and spices!
- **Keep some (healthy) convenience foods on hand.**
 - I like the Primal Kitchen dressings because they are avocado oil based, made with clean ingredients, and are great to add to dishes like salads, stir fries, baked chicken or fish (for dipping), or sweet potatoes. Several of the dressings make a great marinade for fish, chicken or pork (See my *Lemon-Turmeric Salmon* recipe for one of my favorites!)
 - Bone broth is one of the most nutrient dense foods you can add to your diet, but can be time consuming to make. Both *Bonafide Provisions* and *Kettle and Fire* bone broths are great options for making a quick simple soup. Simply add some protein (cooked chicken, beef or pork) and veggies along with salt and seasonings and you can have a delicious, nutrient-dense soup ready in minutes. Kettle and Fire also offers some pre-made soup options which are great for easy lunches or a quick dinner. Try their Thai Curry or Butternut Squash Soup!
 - Keep some easy protein options on hand. I like *Applegate Farms* chicken sausages, which can be sauteed with veggies for breakfast or a quick dinner. *Applegate Farms* gluten-free chicken strips are also great to keep on hand. *Tribali Foods* makes 100% grass-fed beef patties or free-range chicken patties, with clean ingredients. Keep these in your freezer for when you need a quick meal.
- **Hone your sense of adventure.** I'm convinced one reason some women "hate cooking" is because it's easy to get stuck in a rut of eating the same things over and over (boring!) and not knowing what to cook. Don't be afraid to experiment and try a new dish. Even if you aren't an adventurous cook, try adding something new to an old recipe. Can you try a new flavor of marinara on your zoodles? Add some chopped fresh basil to give a kick?
- **Learn to love the process.** I find chopping vegetables or stirring a simmering soup to be therapeutic. It's an act of love for both yourself and your family, to deeply nourish at both a physical and emotional level. I'm convinced cooking can be enjoyable when you see it this way, and take the time to prepare foods that are both delicious and nourishing.
- **Meal Plan.** *Failing to Plan is Planning to Fail.* I'm sure you've heard this quote before and it's never rang more true than when it comes to meal planning. Take a few minutes at the beginning of your week to plan out your meals. If you know you've got a busy day

ahead of you or a trip coming up, it's important to plan your options ahead of time so you aren't stuck with poor food choices that will derail your efforts to eat (and feel) better.

- **If you don't buy it, you can't eat it.** This may seem obvious, but if you are struggling to let go of certain foods that aren't serving you, then it's best not to buy them. I say this because we often tell ourselves we will grab something for guests or for another family member and then end up eating the food ourselves. (This is a true story about me and salted caramel cashews, so I know all the tricks we use on ourselves!) If you know a certain food is a problem for you, just don't buy it. If it's a food another family member loves, ask them to keep it somewhere out of sight so you won't be tempted to indulge in a food that will only make you feel worse later.
- **Be patient with yourself.** Resetting your hormones and recovering your energy is a journey that often doesn't happen as quickly as we want it to. Realize that changing your eating habits is a process and keep moving forward.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

There are a few tools that are helpful when it comes to eating for hormone balance.

[This mini crock-pot](#) is a lifesaver for me. It's great for taking soups or leftover stir-fry to work or school for both myself and my kids.

[A thermos](#) is another option if you don't have access to electricity and want to take along something warm. I love that there are stylish options to choose from these days, instead of boring gray.

[A quality water bottle](#) is something I also make sure I always have with me. Staying hydrated is important, but we often neglect to drink enough water when we get busy. Make sure you always have water with you to avoid this problem.

It might feel like a throwback to your grade school days, but an [insulated lunch box](#) can be a good option. Don't just pull this out when you need to take lunch to work. Going to be out of the house for kid's activities or errands? Pack some healthy snacks or quick meal options so you aren't caught on the run without healthy options to sustain you.

For longer trips, pack a cooler with easy to prepare foods, such as cut up veggies, hard boiled eggs, fruit, nuts and seeds, deli meats, etc. It can be especially tough to stick to a clean eating routine while traveling, so planning ahead and packing your own food are a must. When traveling, you can also search online for restaurants in the area you are visiting that have healthier options. Look for eateries that offer a gluten-free menu, or that serve organic options.

TOP 10 FOODS FOR HORMONE HEALTH

1. Salmon
2. Beef liver
3. Bee pollen
4. Green tea
5. Nuts and seeds
6. Avocados
7. Leafy greens
8. Brightly colored fruits and vegetables
9. Fermented vegetables
10. High quality dark chocolate

TOP 10 FOODS TO AVOID

1. Refined sugar
2. Processed foods (crackers, candy, cookies, etc)
3. Processed seed oils (soy, corn, canola, vegetable oils)
4. Soda (including Diet Soda!)
5. Alcohol
6. Coffee
7. Gluten-containing grains
8. Refined grains (bread, pasta, pastries, etc)
9. Dairy products
10. Artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives