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✪ Welcome ✪

I hope you are enjoying each lesson and that you're finding some great ideas for things you can do to increase your fertility each week.

In this lesson I'll show you the benefits of eating fats...healthy fats that help to balance your hormones and create better quality eggs and sperm.

You'll learn about the importance of getting enough iron in your diet, something that 50% of women are lacking, and how this nutrient can help you avoid early miscarriage. I'll give you the recipe for a super nutritious alternative to cow milk,

and I'll answer your #1 question how to balance your hormones. You'll also learn another idea of how to pamper yourself to help reduce your stress, and I'll give you a tip that will help to draw your husband's heart to you.

Tomorrow I'll be sending you another bonus, a fertility menu to get you started on your new way of eating. This plan promotes fertility and allows you to continue into pregnancy with the same, health promoting diet - a diet that will help to support a healthy pregnancy and birth.





Eating To Create life

Essential Fats

Fats are your friend - "good" fats, that is. Essential Fatty Acids are very important for you as you are balancing your hormones and preparing for pregnancy.

What do essential fatty acids do? They are hormone regulators and they are super for brain function – yours and the baby you'll be carrying. Eight out of ten women are deficient in DHA, which is a natural form of Omega-3. Omega-6 helps to maintain components of cell membrane. DHA is useful in the development of follicles in the ovaries each month. You should be sure you are getting enough essential fatty acids at least three months before you become pregnant. This will give your body time to adjust to the processing of the DHA into your system. This in turn will allow for proper synthesis into your baby's system.

When your diet is lacking the good fats it will show up in your body in different ways. Dry skin, cracked lips, PMS and tender breasts are just a few indications that you need more of the essential fatty acids. During the winter I notice that my hands start to get dry, so I increase my essential fatty acids and the dryness goes away. You will want your diet to include foods with clarified butter or ghee, extra virgin olive oil, cultured dairy products in limited quantities, meats, raw nuts, raw seeds and cold water fish like Salmon.

This will ensure that you get both the Omega-3 and Omega-6 essential fatty acids. You are probably aware that fats come in two forms- saturated and unsaturated. Saturated fats are the risky fats. Meaning you should try to eat these as little as possible. They are typically found in animal products like meat, butter and dairy foods. Saturated fats are solid at room temperature. Bacon grease is an example of saturated fat. It is not surprising then to hear that these fats are linked to heart disease, obesity, high cholesterol levels and increased risk of some cancers. We don't have to work to get the Omega-6 fatty acids - we tend to get plenty without even thinking about it.

Unsaturated fats are those naturally found in olive oil, nuts, seeds, and fish. Specific unsaturated fats such as Omega-6 and Omega-3 oils are needed for the brain, nervous system, immune system, cardiovascular system and skin health. When your body has these Omega-6 and Omega-3 oils it uses them to form compounds that are necessary for balancing your hormones. Some of the better sources of these fats are flaxseed oil, pumpkin seeds, evening primrose oil and fish oil like cod liver oil or krill oil. Omega oils are also sold in the vitamin section of your local health or grocery store.

If you anticipate making any changes to your diet, you should inquire with your doctor or a certified nutritionist. Fatty acids are important to your diet and to your baby's health as well. Remember everything is good in moderation and saturated fats are to be used modestly (we don't even have to try to get those - we tend to get plenty in our diets) while your diet should consist of 20-25 percent of unsaturated fats.



The two types of good fats, saturated and unsaturated, are essential to balance hormones, reduce inflammation and blood pressure levels, keep your skin from becoming dry, alleviate PMS and tender breasts, and they transport cholesterol keeping your blood healthy.

Do however steer clear of Trans Fats, which are extremely unhealthy, and can double the risk for infertility even in small amounts.

You probably have heard the words "Omega-3 oils" and "Omega-6 oils" said a few thousand times by doctors and dieticians. Omega-3 oils which contain much needed DHA and EPA, are found in corn, sesame, sunflower, and safflower oils. Omega-6 oils are found in flaxseed oil (also called linseed oil) and fish oils - which is why oily fishes are great for you.

Omega-3 oils are especially helpful in preparing your body for pregnancy as they aid in regulating your hormones which is essential to increasing fertility. Research shows a direct benefit of these oils in safe amounts that helps to avoid low birth weight babies and supports healthy brain development while baby grows in the womb. You really will be eating for two...not just in amount but in quality. And the healthy meals you prepare will keep your husband in a healthy eating lifestyle as well. In fact fish oil fatty acids are extremely important in male reproduction as well. Their anti-inflammatory abilities help to naturally lower blood pressure, aid in a healthy prostate, and increase blood flow to the genitals. This produces strong, healthy, mobile sperm.

Evening Primrose Oil, Flax Oil and Fish Oil are all good sources of Omega-3 Essential Fatty Acids which can be taken in supplement form. But which one is best for you? Let's take a look at each of these in more detail. Evening Primrose Oil increases estrogen levels in the beginning of your cycle. If you've got too much estrogen this likely won't be the Omega-6 Fatty Acids supplement you need. But if you find that your follicular phase is short (meaning that you're ovulating before day 12 or 13 in your cycle) then you may need more estrogen in the early part of your cycle, and Evening Primrose Oil can be an excellent choice.

When taking evening primrose oil, you'll want to take it from the first day of your period until you ovulate. After you ovulate, stop taking it and start taking flax oil or fish oil instead. This is because evening primrose oil can cause uterine contractions and if you conceive you won't want to risk having an early miscarriage due to early uterine contractions. But many, many women have had great success in getting pregnant by taking it in the first half of their cycle.



Drinking plenty of pure water while at the same time taking the Evening Primrose Oil can be very helpful in helping to produce good quality fertile mucus for the sperm to swim in.

EPO has estrogenic properties. It can be helpful for alleviating PMS, which is usually caused by high estrogen to progesterone ratio, taking EPO for long periods of time (years) could aggravate the problems.

If you are not experiencing good quality egg white cervical mucus, try taking EPO for 4-6 months to see if it makes a difference, but for long term use, flax oil or cod liver oil during your entire cycle is a good choice.

Take according to the directions on the bottle, or check with your health care practitioner if you want to take more - more might be better, but it's best to double check first.

Flax Oil or Fish Oil - which is better?

I've seen fish oil in a number of varieties.

- Cod Liver Oil
- Krill Oil
- Salmon Oil
- Fish Oil
- And others...

My doctors have told me to take flax oil every day. Even my nutritionist suggested it. But then my nutritionist suggested that I give my son cod liver oil...and my husband's doctor suggested that he take cod liver oil.

So I started wondering...what's the difference between cod liver oil, or fish oil for that matter, and flax oil?

We know that Evening Primrose Oil is the oil of choice for the first half of your cycle, when you're trying to promote good quality cervical mucus. So if you use EPO up until ovulation, what should you use after ovulation?

The answer would be either Flax Oil or Fish Oil, but is one better than the other? I'd tend to say "yes" and "no".



In order for you to assimilate all the beneficial properties of flax oil, you have to stay away from trans-fats (things like shortening, commercially prepared muffins and cakes, etc.), stop smoking or being around people that smoke, stop all alcohol intake (you'll want to do these things if you're trying to conceive anyway) and you must be sure you are getting sufficient vitamins and minerals. What does this mean in short? You won't get all of the benefits of Flax oil if you're not following a healthy diet full of whole foods and fresh fruits and vegetables or if you're taking supplements that your body isn't able to absorb (low quality synthetic vitamins and minerals).

Fish Oil, on the other hand, does not need to go through the same conversion in the body that flax oil does. But the drawback is that many fish oils, cod liver oils, etc. are high in mercury and other heavy metals, so you'll need to purchase a pharmaceutical grade fish oil that has been tested for these heavy metals. If you can't get a pharmaceutical grade, then there are a couple of brands that are better than the others. But do keep in mind, that when you're trying to conceive, or pregnant, you'll want to be especially careful with the brand of fish oil you take, and if you can't get a pure one that you feel safe with, then flax oil would be the best choice as long as you're eating according to the fertility menu I'll be sending you tomorrow.

Also be careful not to burn your oils while cooking or reuse your oils as they become susceptible to free radicals which are linked to cancers. Try to buy organic oils, like organic extra-virgin olive oil, as they are made without a heating process making them more pure. Organic coconut oil can be heated safely without becoming toxic.

The unsaturated fats should make up approximately 25% of your daily food intake so enjoy those avocados, raw nuts, flax meal and cold water fish like Salmon.

Pregnancy Success Tips

Most women don't get enough of this hormone regulating nutrient in their diets.

Be sure you are supplementing with the right essential fatty acids to help you get pregnant faster.

[You can find them here for a really good price.](#) Do a search for the product you are looking for.



Out On The Town

Eating For Fertility When You're Eating Out

GRILLED CHOICES INSTEAD

Even though almost all of us love to order fried foods, when you are eating out, there are several healthier options to select from. When you are reading over the menu, search for items that are baked, grilled, broiled, or steamed as foods prepared in these ways typically have less oils or fat. To make your selection even healthier, request that the food be cooked in less butter or oil to reduce the unhealthy fat and calories of the dish even further.



BAKED POTATO

If you love baked potatoes, this tip will help you to make better health choices when eating out. Baked potatoes without the toppings are a great choice.

If you would like some toppings, order all of the items on the side. This will allow you to control the quantity that you put on your baked potato. A healthier topping would include salsa instead of butter. I like to open my baked potato, mash it up a bit with some water, and add a little salt. The water gives it moisture and the salt gives it flavor and I don't miss the butter or sour cream as much. Top that with some chopped scallions or green onions for more flavor. Some people even enjoy their baked potatoes with grilled vegetables instead of the typical toppings.

And here's a hint about keeping the carbs low if you have PCOS or diabetes or are just watching your carb intake.

Order an extra portion of vegetables instead of the potato. Yum!



Fertility Enhancing Nutrients

Iron

Think of how many times you've been made aware of the importance of iron for women. In fact, it is estimated that 50% of all women do not get enough iron in their diets. If a woman's body needs iron day-to-day, imagine how much you need it when you are trying to read your body for a baby. First, you need to realize how it impacts your body before you can understand how important it is to your baby's health.

Iron helps the lining of your uterus to develop well, and helps to prevent miscarriage and not having enough iron can cause anemia. You don't need to be hollow and sickly to have anemia. Often times women with anemia will just feel tired all the time.

Anemia occurs when your body isn't getting the right amount of oxygen through its blood cells. Iron helps circulate oxygenated blood through your system, all of which depend on blood flow. Often times Anemia can happen after a very heavy, long menstrual period. Anemia can be caused by drinking too much coffee or tea, taking antacids (I hope you're not doing this if you're trying to get pregnant), eating too many dairy products, not getting enough B vitamins, taking a lot of zinc, and not getting enough iron in your diet. It can also be a factor if you are not absorbing the vitamins and minerals you are taking.

In order to produce new red blood cells you need to be getting the whole spectrum of B vitamins, not just an iron supplement which most doctors prescribe. This includes folic acid, B6 and B12. Vitamin C, Vitamin E and copper can help overcome anemia as well. Plus you'll need to be eating enough quality protein each day. Eating a diet rich in iron would be a diet that includes lots of fruits and dark, leafy green vegetables such as spinach, dark leafy salad greens, chard, kale, broccoli, pineapple and melon. Make sure you either eat lean meats and salmon and/or lots of nuts, kelp and seaweed.

Studies have shown that eating a lot of spinach can cause calcium levels to drop.

I would agree with this because during my first pregnancy, I became anemic late in my pregnancy, and rather than take iron supplements which often cause constipation, I wanted to increase my iron levels naturally.

I knew that spinach was a dark green leafy vegetable and had a lot of iron. So every day at lunch time, I took my block of frozen spinach (10 oz. cooked) and heated it up and ate the entire box.

My iron levels did go up before I gave birth, but after I gave birth I showed signs of not having enough calcium. My back would ache - it really hurt, and I stumbled upon the link between my calcium/magnesium supplements which I was taking to increase my breast milk, and the fact that when I didn't take those supplements, I would





get the painful back aches. My body NEEDED calcium, and likely all that spinach I ate contributed to this problem.

So while I now take liquid chlorophyll to increase iron levels quickly (and you may want to do the same – check with your health care practitioner to find out how much you should take) I would advise against eating 10 ounces of cooked spinach every day for weeks on end.

Instead, enjoy a large fresh spinach salad each week, add some spinach to your smoothies, or enjoy a serving of steamed spinach once a week.

It's important to eat foods rich in both vitamin C and Iron to help your body absorb the iron. Foods rich in both of these nutrients are strawberries, dark green leafy vegetables, potatoes and watermelon.

Pregnancy Success Tips

organ meats (liver)	pumpkin seeds
lean beef	sunflower seeds
eggs	broccoli
fish	oatmeal
chicken/turkey	sardines
molasses	raw nuts
cherries	almonds
apricots	garbonzo beans (chick-peas)
parsley	Nettle Tea
seaweed	
prunes	
green leafy vegetables	
kelp (can get this in tablet form)	
spinach	
parsley	



Pregnancy Success Tips

Almond butter is a great alternative to peanut butter. It has twice the iron, six times the calcium and three times the amount of vitamin E.

You can get roasted almond butter (more flavorful) or raw almond butter (more nutrients because it's not cooked).

Try to get organic when possible.



Food. Glorious Food!

Did you know...

My doctor says I should eat like a King in the morning, like a Queen in the afternoon, and like a Pauper at night (meaning a lighter vegetarian type meal at night).

He says that if I don't have good protein in the morning, my adrenals will pay, and the adrenals are what produce most of the hormones and definitely regulates the stress response and energy levels.

I do feel much better when I have fish or even turkey sausage or a hamburger patty in the morning, along with my vegetables.

Poached Dill Salmon

Last night I noticed some wild salmon in the freezer. I popped it in the refrigerator thinking I would have it to eat for dinner tonight.

Well this morning, one of the packages was completely thawed and I was hungry for protein, so I poached it. I put a pan on the stove, added water, salt, dill and pepper corns (fine for flavoring, but don't eat them). I poached the salmon in that for a few minutes with the lid on - just until it was opaque all the way through.

I'm eating it now, and it is SO good and I'm thinking about the omega 3 fatty acids I'm getting too. I'm going to have a salad next - yum!





Cycles & Hormones & Charting... Oh My!

Hormonal Imbalance

One of the most frequently asked questions I've received is, "How can I balance my hormones?" This question was asked by women who rarely had a period, women who had irregular cycles, and women who had regular cycles, but no sign of ovulation, or if they did conceive, had early miscarriages. So here you are...the answer to your most frequently asked question...

Fertility is often driven by the ideal balance of hormones within both men and women's bodies. Although there are a variety of factors that can negatively influence your hormones, there are many things you can do to proactively influence them in a positive manner. There are several hormones that impact fertility, including estrogen and progesterone.

What Causes Hormonal Imbalance?

There are several common causes of hormonal imbalance in both men and women, including:

- Underlying medical conditions
- Reproductive dysfunction
- The diet
- Lifestyle factors such as smoking or drinking
- Environmental Pollutants

Low Estrogen- A common cause of low estrogen is low body weight. Other common causes are too much exercise, smoking, some antibiotic medications and some hormonal contraceptives when taken over long periods of time (common in women who have been on the "Birth Control Pill").

Common indications of low estrogen include vaginal dryness, irregular periods, hot flashes, painful intercourse, lethargy, dry skin and bladder infections.

If your estrogen levels are too low, you can increase your levels by eating foods high in phytoestrogens. Some of the best food sources of phytoestrogens are legumes (beans), oats, fennel, cabbage, cherries, and broccoli.

If you tend to eat too much fiber, reducing your fiber intake can help, but eating too much fiber is rare. Most of us don't get enough fiber in our diet each day – I know I struggle to.

Low Progesterone- Progesterone is a vital hormone in fertility and it orchestrates the activities of all of the other hormones. Low progesterone is the most common hormonal problem in women and deficiency in this hormone can be linked to miscarriages. Common symptoms of low progesterone are painful and lumpy breasts, headaches during your period, anxiety, irritability, trouble sleeping and unexpected weight gain. Low progesterone can be a bit tricky to diagnose because it might be that progesterone levels are good, but estrogen is too high which would give you symptoms of low progesterone, when in fact it was the estrogen levels that needed to be brought down. If you're going to have hormonal testing done, be sure that both progesterone and estrogen levels are tested so that you can see exactly which is out of balance.



One option to correct low progesterone is using natural progesterone cream in the second half of your cycle. Another option is to use vitamin supplements such as Vitamins B6 and E, Magnesium and Evening Primrose Oil. Lifestyle changes such as reducing stress, moderate exercise and maintaining a healthy body weight have also shown promise in correcting this hormonal imbalance.

My herbalist has me on some herbs to help bring my cortisol levels up, which in turn will help with balancing my sex hormones. She wanted me to stay on those herbs for 3 months and not use natural progesterone cream. Though I've found the natural progesterone cream to be helpful, I also trust my herbalist and have noticed that I haven't had the breast tenderness in this cycle or last, that I had before starting on the herbs. So the herbs seem to be working to balance my hormones.

High Estrogen- Environmental exposures are the leading cause of high estrogen in women. Poor diet is the second leading cause of high estrogen volumes in a woman's body.

Puffiness, bloating, weight gain, breast tenderness, mood swings, heavy bleeding during your period, trouble sleeping, and trouble concentrating are all indications of too much estrogen in the body. The most effective solution used to address high estrogen levels is to change your diet to a low fat, high fiber diet that is also rich in nutrients. There has also been promise among women who have added live bacteria (probiotics) to their regular diets. You can make your own yogurt, you can make your own Kefir (which is like yogurt), or you can take a probiotic of acidophilus, bifidus, primidophilus, salavarius, and all those other healthy bacteria that end in "us". You want a product that is kept in the refrigerator so it will extend the life of the healthy probiotic bacteria.

Lifestyle changes such as reducing stress and maintaining a regular exercise program have also shown promise in addressing this hormonal imbalance.

In general, all hormonal imbalances can be helped with a healthy, baby friendly diet and a lifestyle that promotes happy, healthy relationships, exercise, relaxation and the avoidance of environmental toxins that can literally create hormonal imbalances without you even knowing it.

Keep reading as you're about to learn about how to bring your body into heightened fertility and perfect hormonal balance step by step, week by week as I teach you how to create your baby friendly body.

If you are concerned that your hormones are imbalanced, you can find out through a blood test or a saliva test. Saliva tests are more accurate but doctors typically won't order these unless it's a naturopathic doctor or a doctor who believes in treating the body naturally when possible. You can, however, [buy a saliva hormone test here](#), mail it into the lab, and they will send you your results with an explanation of what the results mean.

You may also want to have your husband's hormone levels tested as well, especially if he shows indications of having a low sex drive or impotence (can't get an erection or can't hold an erection).



You Are Special
Take the Afternoon off

Take The Afternoon Off

Don't tell anyone you are taking the afternoon off (except your boss, of course). Don't schedule appointments, don't run errands, and don't do anything structured.

Let your mood and your interests create your direction for the day. Walk around down town, go into buildings you've never visited, poke your head into shops you wouldn't ordinarily go into, or kill an afternoon in a bookstore or hobby store (scrapbooking, antiques, garden center).

If your schedule has been hectic lately, go home and spend your free afternoon catching up on sleep.

There's nothing like a nap—especially when you “shouldn't” be taking one—to make you feel special.





This Week's Action Items

Essential Fats

Essential Fatty Acids are important in balancing hormones, promoting good quality eggs, good quality sperm and avoiding early miscarriage.

This week buy some flax oil, cod liver oil or evening primrose oil and be sure you're getting enough of this essential nutrient every day.

Hormone Testing

Are your hormones balanced? Doing saliva hormone testing can help you figure out which hormones are not in balance.

Look into having some tests done so you'll have a good idea of what your hormone levels are.

You'll need to test certain hormones at certain times in your cycle, but the test will have directions on when to collect your saliva samples.

Iron

Some women have too much iron, but more often you'll find that women have too little iron.

Check with your doctor if you think you may have a problem with your iron levels.

In the mean time, be sure you're eating at least one salad each day with dark leafy greens.

Take Time Off

Take time right now to plan an afternoon off from work, or something special just for you to do.

I remember when I worked outside the home, full time, I LOVED to have the afternoon off. I would just relax at home and take a nap. It was a special treat for me to do that. Indulge - pamper yourself, and make time just for you this week.





Coming Up Next

Next week we'll take a look at how your weight affects your ability to conceive and what you can do to gain a few pounds or take off a few pounds.

I'll also give you a whole lot of pointers on how to keep sperm alive once they enter your body, and how to keep your husband's sperm count up.

I'll introduce you to "The Queen of Herbs" which has been known to support the reproductive system and balance hormones.

We'll also touch on the chemicals you have around your home that are known to lower fertility, and how you can avoid them or reduce your exposure to them.

I'll also give you another idea for finding your favorite form of exercise, an idea for building your relationship with your husband, another idea on how to keep passion alive during your fertile window, and something fun you can do during your 2 week wait.

See you tomorrow with your fertility menu diet!

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kirstyn Sierra". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and elegant.

Kirstyn Sierra,
Pregnancy Consultant



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