# 7 HORMONE HACKS

(FOR WOMEN OVER 40)

www.happyhormones.info

Happy Hormones HAPPY LIFE

# Hi There!

Thank you so much for downloading your "7 Hormone Hacks for Women Over 40" guide. These healthy hormone tips might sound simple, but they work! They provide a foundation for your body to rebalance itself and hopefully you will experience the difference in how you feel. It's not about perfection, but about getting better every day.

Why am I so passionate about these 7 hacks as a foundation for health? Simply put, I am on a mission to put an end to women suffering needlessly with debilitation symptoms as their hormones shift. In many of my clients I see fatigue, anxiety, PMS, hot flashes, sleep issues, and a frustrating inability to lose weight.

Stress hormone and sex hormone imbalances are all tightly interconnected to these symptoms. The prevalence of female hormone imbalance is skyrocketing, and what most women don't know is that the foundation for health in perimenopause and beyond starts decades before. But it's never to late to put these hormone hacks into action to begin the process of rebalancing.

These hacks are not fussy, but will have a profound impact on the optimal hormone balance. Consider adding a new hack every week so it's not overwhelming, and go at your own pace. As you read more through the guide, I'll explain why these hacks will help improve your hormones naturally. And of course, if you need more in-depth support on your journey, please reach out.

In health,

Stacey Board Certified Holistic Nutritionist Certified Dietary Supplement Specialist

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All information contained within this manual is for informational purposes only. Health information changes rapidly. We do not assume any liability for the information contained within this manual, be it direct, indirect, consequential, special, exemplary, or other damages. The information provided is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any health problem – nor is it intended to replace the advice of a licensed medical practitioner. No action should be taken solely on the contents of this manual. Always consult your licensed medical professional on any matters regarding your health or on any opinions expressed within this manual.

Holistic nutrition and functional wellness philosophies work in a complimentary fashion to medical treatment, and does not diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Laboratory testing is used as a "guide" to identify nutritional deficiencies, hormone imbalances, vitamin needs and the best nutrition and lifestyle program for you. Lab testing is not meant to "diagnose, cure or treat" any medical condition.

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Please see your physician before changing your diet, starting an exercise program, or taking any supplements of any kind.

# Hack #1: Eat Real Food

With all the diet confusion out there, many women don't know where to turn or which diet is best for them. And while it's true that testing hormones and genetics will get you the quickest answers for which diet your body will respond to best, everyone thrives on natural, unprocessed foods as their baseline. Following a natural, whole foods diet sends messages to your genes and hormones on how to properly communicate. Eating real food will bring your hormones back into balance.

Simply begin by shopping the perimeter of the grocery store, or frequent your local farmers' market. In the summer where I live, I purchase weekly produce boxes from my local farmers. I am then forced to try new fruits and vegetables and incorporate many more freshly picked, nutrient dense foods into my weekly menus. Your plates should be filled with foods that don't come in boxes or bags and that were not made in factories. Instead think colorful vegetables, fruits, cage-free eggs, wild-caught fish, pasture-raised meats, dried beans and legumes, raw and sprouted nuts and seeds, and heart healthy olive oil.

What's magical about eating real food is it crowds out the fake stuff which wreaks havoc on your hormones. As women approach menopause, they can handle less and less simple carbohydrates like refined grains, sugars and alcohol. In essence our cells become insulin resistant and we turn those carbs more readily into fat.

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### HORMONE SUPPORTING FOODS

#### Eliminate or reduce foods that disrupt hormone balance

- **Alcohol**: increases estrogen, promotes insulin resistance, increases hot flashes and contributes to stubborn weight sticking around.
- **Conventional dairy**: #1 source of dietary estrogen (synthetic!).
- Fast food: lots of salt, sugar, artificial additives and inflammatory oils.
- Gluten & Processed Grains: proinflammatory and high in refined carbohydrates.
- **GMO Food:** proinflammatory and likely high in pesticides.
- **Plastics:** unnecessary hormone-disrupting chemicals.
- **Refined Sugar & Artificial Sweeteners:** messes with hormones, increases hot flashes, appetite and weight loss resistance.

#### Eat Foods that support hormone balance and gut health

- Fermented & Probiotic Foods (organic of course!) kombucha, coconut kefir, cultured vegetables, and beet kvass.
- Healthy Fats: MCT Oil, olives and olive oil, grass-fed butter or ghee, organic free-range eggs, omnivore fats from pasture-raised animals (lard, tallow, duck fat, and chicken fat), raw & unrefined coconut oil, avocados & avocado oil, raw seeds and nuts.
- Ocean Vegetables: spirulina, chlorella, kelp, nori, etc.
- Organic Fruits: favor low-sugar fruits such as blueberries, raspberries and strawberries.
- Organic Vegetables: all vegetables especially cruciferous to support hormone detox and balance. Vegetable are also full of fiber.
- Organic, Grass-fed, and Pasture-raised: chicken, turkey, beef, pork, lamb,

bison, and other wild game.

• Wild-Caught Low-Mercury Seafood: salmon, trout, sardines, clam, shrimp, crab, and scallops.

#### Ensure Adequate Protein

Protein is extra important because as women age, they lost muscle tissue over time. Eating adequate high-quality protein at every meal is key to maintaining muscle mass. In addition, a higher protein diet can help you feel fuller longer, increases calory burn, and helps to repair and build your neurotransmitters and immune system antibodies. Without enough protein our bodies cannot function well. The recommended amount is about the size of your palm per meal, or about .8 grams of protein per pound of body weight.

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# Hack #2: Address Digestion

Hippocrates warned us, "bad digestion is the root of all evil". The root cause to many hormone imbalances goes many layers deep. Hormones and many of neurotransmitters are made in and by the digestive system - so if it's not functioning optimally, everything downstream won't be either. For example, you cannot best balance female hormones, without first addressing gut health. You can't build a house on sinking sand!

The reality is that poor digestion really does affect your health on all levels. If you can't digest the food you eat, you won't absorb its nutrients. Every cell of every tissue of every organ in our bodies relies on those nutrients for proper structure and function. "But how do I know if I'm properly digesting my food" you ask? Burping, upset stomach, heartburn and reflux, gas and bloating, diarrhea, constipation, food reactions...these are NOT normal! These are your body's way of letting you know that the digestive track has run off the track. Ignoring or putting a Band-Aid like an antacid over them will only lead to bigger issues in the future.

Digestion only occurs when we are in a relaxed state. Stress completely shuts down digestion. Think about it, if you're being chased by a moose, do you want your brain sending messages telling the digestive system to organize the breakdown of the meal you just consumed? Or do you want it to ignore that stuff and send those resources to your heart, lungs and muscles to give you the energy to get the heck out of there!?! The brain, as amazing as it is, cannot differentiate between the stress of a moose charge and the stress of our modern lives. So, when you are grabbing breakfast on your way out the door, eating dinner while stuck in traffic on the way to the ball game, working through lunch

or mindlessly shoving popcorn down while watching a TV show...you probably aren't digesting.

Lastly, if you are not pooping every single day, you are essentially recirculating toxins and hormones that should be eliminated. This further causes hormones imbalances and increases your risk for unwanted hormone related cancers.

If you are suffering from gastrointestinal symptoms on a regular basis, it's so important to get to the bottom of it – I am here to help and have access to amazing functional testing to pinpoint exactly what's going on. Some initial tips include:

REST TO DIGEST – create a relaxed mealtime routine. Sit down to eat your meals, and commit to avoid eating on the go. Your body cannot digest and be on high-stress alert. They are physiologically incompatible. Use breathing techniques to "come down" from the stress of the day. Take time to appreciate and savor your food.

CHEW your food thoroughly – try putting your fork down between bites! Chewing for longer before swallowing, allows the digestive enzymes in your mouth to do their job and takes the load off your stomach.

LISTEN to your body tell you it's full. It takes about 20 minutes for your body to tell you that you're full, which is why eating slower helps. Cup your hands together and examine the space inside your hands you just made. That's the size of your stomach. Don't overeat.

DON'T drink a lot of fluids right before or during meals – this can dilute stomach acid.

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DRINK WATER – that's half your body weight in ounces per day of filtered water to provide your body with the nutrients it needs to produce stomach acid. Avoid drinking water out of plastics.

AVOID UNHEALTHY FATS (hydrogenated, trans, canola, soy) and low-fat diets – these lead to gallbladder dysfunction and issues with fat absorption. They also raise inflammation inside the gut. Stick with butter, and olive, avocado, and coconut oils.

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# Hack #3: Prioritize Sleep

Rejuvenating sleep is a critical piece to hormone health, and all too often poor sleep is patched with addictive sleep medications that deplete our bodies of critical nutrients and the deep restorative part of sleep. It's not always clear cut why some women have trouble falling or staying asleep but there is a known intricate relationship to hormones.

Hormone imbalance due to perimenopause, menopause and stress creates sleep problems, which in turn worsens hormone imbalance. It's a bit of a chicken and egg scenario. Poor sleep habits weaken the immune system, increase hunger hormones, and can increase risk of serious diseases.

Surprisingly, in my practice, when women eliminate alcohol, their sleep quality improves dramatically. Alcohol greatly impairs the body's ability fall and stay asleep, and causes blood sugar imbalances in the middle of the night that leads to night waking.

When simple sleep strategies fail, we can uncover some reasons for sleep by measuring imbalances in thyroid, melatonin, cortisol (stress hormone), and blood sugar. Once these become more balanced, sleep issues tend to resolve.

#### Some tips on better sleep include:

Establish regular sleep hours. The body prefers to go to bed and wake at the same time every day. Be asleep by 11 p.m. Your adrenal glands recharge between the hours of 11 p.m. and 1 am.

Sleep in complete darkness to maintain optimal melatonin output.

Ensure adequate daily exposure to daylight. This helps to regulate the natural cycles of the brain. Try not to nap during the day.

At night, do not work past the point of feeling drowsy, go to bed.

Do not eat 2 hours before doing to bed, so that digestion is completed beforehand. If waking in the middle of the night, try a bite of nut butter before going to bed to stabilize blood sugar throughout the night.

Avoid caffeine after lunch. Avoid alcohol which causes sleep interruption.

Use blue light glasses at night to optimize melatonin production.

Take Epsom salt baths with lavender essential oils to relax at night before bed and raise your body temperature which helps you fall asleep quicker.

Drink chamomile or Sleepy Time tea to help you fall asleep.

Try a supplement like Sleep Factors, which contains herbs and nutrient cofactors for melatonin production.

Avoid the "too much melatonin" pitfall. While most people think that taking more melatonin will help them, this is not the case. The human body only makes the equivalent of about 1.5 mg of melatonin, which is about all you need in supplement form. Taking more than 3 mg can backfire causing sleep disruptions. This can also happen if melatonin levels are adequate - in which case it's probably something else causing your sleep interruptions.

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# Hack #4: Exercise Appropriately

Before diving into the importance of exercise, it's critical to understand that it is impossible to exercise your way out of a bad diet. No amount or type of exercise will help you if you don't first get your diet cleaned up. Regular exercise, especially weight training and high intensity interval training (HIIT) can naturally balance hormone levels. Exercise has a direct impact on insulin, estrogen, testosterone, hunger hormones, and growth hormone. It also increases beneficial levels of neurotransmitters in the brain.

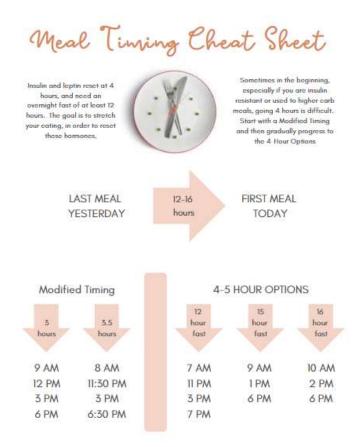
For women in perimenopause and beyond, shorter bursts of more intense exercise that involves a component of resistance training and muscle building is best. Long, strenuous aerobic exercise will inhibit weight loss and increases stress in aging women.

Unfortunately, many well intentioned exercisers get caught up in the "eat less, exercise more" weight loss model. Severe calorie restriction leads to loss of lean tissue and slows metabolism. The body needs lean muscle to burn fat and energy, and adequate calories. It's what makes up those calories that will tell the body whether to store or release fat – which is back to Hack #1 – eating whole foods, from the earth, and limiting processed carbs that the menopausal body can no longer handle.

If you already exercise, change your routine. Perhaps you're stuck in a metabolic roadblock. In order to get your stubborn fat cells to release their load, you have to confuse them a little. Try a different exercise routine that recruits other muscles. For the best metabolic boost, try 30 minutes of High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) 4-5 times a week combined with weight training.

### Hack #5: Fast

Please throw all past advice about "frequent snacking boosts your metabolism" out the window. You can blame that person for your current hormones being less than optimal – you were misguided! Eating frequent meals causes your "I'm full" hormone (leptin) to be turned off, and your "store fat" hormone (insulin) to be turned on. Insulin and leptin receptors only reset after 3.5 to 4 hours - thus eating small meals or grazing throughout the day is one of the biggest sabotages to resetting your hormones. This is also why intermittent fasting can be an effective weight loss tool for many women. Keeping a food diary of the time that you ate, will help you to know when you can eat again.



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# Hack #6: Incorporate Hormone Superfoods and Supplements

Just as you cannot exercise your way out of a bad diet, you cannot override hormone imbalance just with supplementing or medicating. While it's true that adding specific hormones like estrogen or progesterone can almost immediately improve symptoms, they don't address the root cause of imbalance. It has to start with diet first, then add in some influencing superfoods. Properly chosen supplements, in the right therapeutic doses can also be helpful to speed up the healing process.

Supplement quality is also very important. If you are going to invest in supplements, please do so on quality products that will be absorbable and in the right forms. Otherwise, they body cannot utilize what you are taking. By using a holistic practitioner, I can help you identify the exact form of a supplement that your body needs and in what quantities.

#### ISOFLAVONES IN SOY

Isoflavones in soy have been shown to reduce menopausal symptoms in a dose dependent manner (100-160 mg daily after) after several months of consistent daily use. These can be found in soy milk, tofu, tempeh, edamame and roasted soy nuts. Please remember to use only organic soy - as all the rest is GMO. I personally use Phytoestrogen Herbal by Vitanica in my smoothies.

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#### FLAXSEED and CHIA SEEDS: SUPER SOURCE OF LIGNANS, FIBER AND OMEGA 3

Flax and chia are great sources of anticancer and phytoestrogen compounds known as lignans, which bind to problematic estrogen so it can be excreted by the body. This is also a great alternative to soy for women that need to avoid it. Flax benefits colon flora, which also helps to eliminate cancerogenic forms of estrogen from the body. They are also both very high in omega 3 fatty acids which help lower inflammation in the body. I recommend using ground flax at about 1/4 cup three to seven days a week, and adding chia to your smoothies.

#### CRUCIFEROUS VEGETABLES

Cruciferous vegetables help the body make Diindolylmethane (DIM) which helps the breakdown of estrogen into a non-cancerous form. The also contain sulfur, needed for many other detox processes in the body. These are found in broccoli, cauliflower, kale, arugula, collard greens, cabbage, radish, Brussel sprouts, watercress, mustard and wasabi.

#### OCEAN VEGETABLES

Sea vegetables provide much needed iodine for the thyroid gland, breast tissue and energy production. You can add kelp sprinkles to food, add spirulina to smoothies or take chlorella tablets.

#### SEEDS

Seeds are the perfect hormone food. Seeds have lignans which bind up excess hormones to they can be removed from the body. As well, they are high omega 3 fats which help with hormone production. Pumpkin and flax seeds contain estrogen promoting properties. Sunflower and sesame seeds contain lots of zinc

and Vitamin E, which promote progesterone production. The suggested amount is 2 tbsp of seeds daily.

#### PROBIOTICS AND CULTURED FOODS

Research is emerging demonstrating a connection between the gut microbiome and hormone balance. Researchers now believe that certain microbes in the gut secrete and modulate hormones to such an extent that the gut microbiota should be classified as part of the endocrine system! To cultivate a robust gut microbiome, you should incorporate cultured foods such as (low sugar) kombucha, cultured vegetables, sauerkraut, beet kvass, sugar-free nondairy yogurt and kefir waters. I prefer Therbiotic Women's Formula for a highquality probiotic. It is often good to alternate with Microbiome Labs MegaSpore Biotic.

#### OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential for healthy cell membranes and for controlling inflammation in the body. Great sources of Omega-3's include fatty fish like salmon and sardines, cod liver oil, walnuts, chia seeds, hemp seeds, grass-fed beef, eggs, and natto. For those of you with known inflammation issues, up to 4 grams of Omega-3 is recommended per day (which usually means a supplement form is recommended, such as Biotics Research Biomega 1000).

#### PHYTOESTROGENS

Phytoestrogens found in whole foods are not steroid hormones! They do not cause estrogen excess like Xenoestrogens in the environment do. Studies show they may protect women from stronger estrogens such as estradiol.

Phytoestrogens appear to down-regulate the activity of some estrogen receptors prominent in breast and uterine tissue, thus protecting women from stronger estrogens. Foods highest in phytoestrogens include flax, soy, sesame seeds, garlic, sprouts and sunflower seeds.

#### ASHWAGANDHA

Ashwagandha is an adaptogenic herb that supports and balances stress, balances blood sugar, and encourages hormone health at the cellular level. Studies show that when taken at 300 mg twice a day, it can boost the endocrine system and increase thyroid production. Add ashwagandha powder to smoothies, or take as a pill. It is not stimulatory, nor sedative - it helps stabilize you depending on where you are. It's an amazing stress busting superfood.

#### BONE BROTH

Bone broth is helpful for liver detoxification and for immune modulation because it contains essential amino acids that are turned into powerful detox substances in the body (glutathione!). Bone broth also contains glutamine which is essential for healing the lining of the gut.

#### MACA

Maca is a cruciferous root vegetable with adaptogenic properties, known to give energy and vitality. Most importantly it's been shown to modulate and regulate hormone dysregulation. Add it to smoothies for a nutty, malty flavor. A special form of maca, sourced from Peru, is used in the maca product known as Femmenessence which is a powerful and effective supplement for women at various stages of aging.

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#### MAGNESIUM

If you are only going to take one supplement, Magnesium should be it. It's miraculous and has many benefits to all hormones and neurotransmitters. It also helps regulate blood sugar, helps muscles relax, and improves sleep. Magnesium glycinate is the recommended form at about 400 mg per day.

You may read or hear about other supplements such as DIM (Diindolylmethane), Calcium-d-Glucarate or herbs like Vitex (Chaste Berry), Dong Quoi, Black Cohosh, Fenugreek, and others. While these can be beneficial it is VERY dependent on the individual and the type of hormone imbalance that is occurring. We highly suggest working with your holistic practitioner to determine what's right for you to avoid further imbalances.

Grab all of these supplements at discounted prices by getting a free account at <u>https://us.fullscript.com/welcome/happyhormonesprograms</u>.

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# Hack #7: Test Don't Guess

Without truly knowing what's going on under the surface, let's face it – it's a crap shoot. You can do all the "right" things, take all the latest supplements and still feel poorly because they may not be exactly what your body needs. Without using testing as a guide, it can be very difficult to see results without lots of long trial and error. If you have tried multiple things, and have changed your diet, it's time to strongly considering testing. Functional testing panels measure a wide variety of biomarkers, beyond standard blood panels in conventional medicine, taking you deeper into understanding what your body truly needs.

#### THE DUTCH COMPLETE HORMONE AND ADRENAL TEST

This urine test is the new industry standard for understanding sex and adrenal hormones, and how they are metabolized. When hormones are out of balance for any reason, this is a great place to start. This test helps answer questions like:

- > What are your sex hormone levels, and are they in balance?
- How is your estrogen being metabolized? Do you have a propensity towards turning estrogen into the more cancerogenic kind?
- Is your testosterone too high or too low, and do you convert it into the more androgenic kind?
- What is your 24-hour pattern of cortisol? Is your stress to high and contributing to stubborn weight or sleep issues? Are your adrenals underfunctioning and contributing to your fatigue?
- What is your melatonin level, and could this be contributing to the inability to fall asleep?
- Are you potentially deficient in Vitamin B6 and B12, critical for mood and energy?

#### Here's a Bonus Recipe to Get You Started:

#### HAPPY HORMONES PROTEIN SMOOTHIE

1 cup non-dairy milk (carrageenan free!) 2 scoops chocolate collagen protein powder (Biotics Research Collagen Powder is fluffy, smooth and amazing!) 1 tablespoon coconut oil Handful of kale or spinach leaves 1 tsp chia seeds 1 tsp ground flax 1 tsp spirulina powder 1 tbsp maca powder Optional extra cacao powder for more chocolate and energy! Blend in a high-speed blender with ice. Enjoy.

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# Let me help you make your hormones happy again!

- Understand your unique biochemistry
- Learn how and when to eat to reset your hormones
- Control portion sizes and cravings
- Feel more energetic
- Clear brain fog
- Have fewer PMS symptoms
- Have fewer hot flashes
- Get better looking skin
- Sleep deeper and more restfully
- Stabilize moods
- Address other nagging or long-term health concerns

I combine the best of both worlds – an integrative holistic nutrition and functional wellness approach. Explore <u>www.happyhormones.info</u> and get started on your road to feeling your best after 40.

Do you have additional questions? Want to look deeper into your hormones? Please reach out to me at <u>stacey@happyhormones.info</u> and I'd be happy to help you start your journey.

I can't wait to meet you! Here's to hormone bliss......

~Stacey

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