

Hormone Balancing Diet for Women

The Hormone Diet as described by *Dr. Sarah Gottfried, MD* in her book of the same name is a 6-week program that severely limits certain foods or food groups. I have reviewed it and added a few of my personal practice insights based on successes in helping people become healthier with better nutrition and chiropractic care. This is a simplified study guide that even men can follow if they choose to eat better for their bodies'.

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Phase 1

This part of the diet involves a 2-week “detoxification” process. You avoid eating:

- gluten-containing grains (wheat, rye, etc.)
- dairy - products made from cow's milk
- most oils (avocado, olive and flaxseed oil are allowed in small quantities)
- all alcohol
- caffeine (coffee, black and green teas, chocolate)
- peanuts, cashews and soy
- added sugar
- artificial sweeteners
- red meat
- citrus fruits, grapes, bananas, dried fruits

Foods you can eat during this phase include:

- naturally gluten-free grains and starches
- most vegetables
- apples, pears, berries (organic non-GMO)
- beans
- almonds, pistachios, pine nuts, and SOME sunflower seeds (unsalted)
- poultry
- fish
- lamb, venison
- eggs (try duck eggs over chicken when you can get them)
- plant milks

- sheep or goat milk and cheeses

This phase also involves taking nutritional supplements. These include probiotics, L-Arginine and L-Carnitine (amino acids), magnesium and anti-inflammatory products, like antioxidants, bebeerine, turmeric and fish oil.

Phase 2

In this phase, you incorporate some foods back into your diet while paying attention to how your body responds to them.

However, the diet recommends an ongoing avoidance of “hormone-hindering” foods. These include:

- refined sugar
- fish with high mercury levels (tuna, shark, swordfish, “big fish”).
- non-organic meats
- non-organic coffee
- raisins
- dates
- peanuts
- soy (tofu)

The second phase also involves ridding your diet of highly processed or manufactured foods, which include:

- processed foods (any ready to microwave meal in box)
- refined grains, wheat and rye products
- foods that contain nitrates, such as cured meats like lunchmeats and commercially made sausages and hotdogs

The “Glyci-Med” approach. This means she takes some aspects of a glycemic index diet (which is based on foods that don’t spike your blood sugar quickly) and the Mediterranean diet. The Mediterranean diet is a heart-healthy diet modeled after the traditional, olive oil-rich diet eaten in the Mediterranean.

Phase 3

The third phase focuses on entire physical and mental wellness through cardiovascular exercise and strength training. The diet plan of the second phase continues on into the third phase.

Both Phase 2 and Phase 3 allow some wiggle room for foods that don’t strictly adhere to the program, but the book details that you should be making Hormone Diet-approved choices at least 80% of the time.

Does it work for weight loss?

You would likely lose weight on The Hormone Diet. Two of the key goals of The Hormone Diet are to reduce inflammation and insulin resistance, both of which are associated with obesity.

In fact, there's some evidence to suggest that [highly processed foods](#) — which are off-limits on this diet — contribute more to weight gain than whole, [unprocessed foods](#). They are more calorie dense, and they may also indeed cause dysfunctions in hunger hormones that lead to weight gain.

Highly processed foods may contribute to insulin resistance, a condition in which the body starts to ignore the hormone insulin — which helps regulate blood sugar levels.

This can lead to weight gain as insulin levels increase to compensate for their diminished effectiveness since insulin also triggers fat storage.

More, these foods can contain large amounts of added sugars. Consider limiting them in your diet whenever possible.

Other Benefits

The diet takes a solid stance on weight loss and overall health, promoting natural, nutritious foods and regular exercise.

Also, the focus on mental health, stress management, and adequate sleep are all important components that can help you optimize your health, and that may also have effects on body weight-regulating hormones.

For example, high levels of the hormone cortisol are linked to increased abdominal fat. Cortisol is known as the stress hormone because it becomes elevated with stress.

Focusing on mental health, improving your sleep, and managing your stress may help reduce cortisol levels.

However, you would need to have your cortisol tested before and after to know for sure.

It also de-emphasizes the importance of counting calories, which may make it seem more freeing than other diet programs for some people. It encourages you to eat often to prevent excessive hunger, and to eat to satiety.

Because it's not unnecessarily restrictive in regard to calories, you may not experience rebound weight gain or a reduced metabolic rate (number of calories burned at rest) when you discontinue the diet — unlike some other programs that severely restrict calories.

Even without following The Hormone Diet specifically, eating whole and nutritious foods, limiting processed foods, and getting regular exercise will help you manage your weight not only in the immediate future but also long term.

Potential Issues

However, there are some downsides to The Hormone Diet. Its focus on timing and testing may be unnecessarily burdensome for certain people.

Some people might not be able to keep up with a schedule of eating in intervals and constantly paying attention to their hormones. Having hormones tested is a complicated process that requires visits to the doctor, blood draws, and saliva tests. It costs both money and time.

Additionally, The Hormone Diet recommends several dietary supplements and advocates for only consuming organic meat and organic coffee. The cost of these items can add up, placing a financial burden on some people.

Before taking any dietary supplements or starting a new diet, be sure to consult a healthcare professional. You can reach out to *Life Enhancing Wellness Centers, LLC* with your questions and set up a free 20 minute

Telehealth or Telephone consultation with the doctor. www.DrDSays.net or call, **434-481-2012**

Summary

Because of its focus on eating whole, minimally processed foods and getting adequate sleep, physical activity, and mental health care, The Hormone Diet may help you lose weight.

It may even have some positive effects on your hormones, although you would need to have them checked before and after the diet to know for sure.

However, the diet can be over-restrictive and burdensome for many people.

For optimal health, you can take the best parts of this diet — like focusing on whole foods, moving more, getting plenty of sleep, and working on your mental health and stress management — and incorporate them in a sustainable way that works for you.