



Health, fitness, lifestyle

TAYLAKFITNESS MENSTRUAL CYCLE GUIDE

Workout because you love your body, not
because you hate it.

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INTRODUCTION

Hey lovely, I'm so glad you're here! 🌸

This guide was created to help you feel more in tune with your body, your energy, and your needs throughout the month. Instead of pushing through fatigue, ignoring cravings, or feeling like you're failing when motivation dips — this is about learning to flow with your cycle, not against it.

By understanding your natural hormonal rhythms, you can start to move, eat, and rest in ways that feel good and actually work for you. Whether your goal is improved performance, deeper self-awareness, or just feeling more balanced — you're in the right place 🧡🌟

This journey is all about self-awareness, self-respect, and flexibility — not rules. There's no "perfect" way to cycle-sync. You're here to get curious, try new tools, and make them your own. Let's get started 🌱🌟

A GENTLE DISCLAIMER

Not everyone's cycle looks or feels the same — and that's completely okay. Some women feel relatively stable across all four phases, while others notice big shifts in energy, mood, or appetite. Your experience is valid, no matter what it looks like. The tools and guidance in this guide are here to help you explore your own rhythms — not to put you in a box.

Cycle phases also vary in length for each individual. While this guide breaks things down week-by-week, the actual timing of your own follicular, ovulatory, luteal, and menstrual phases may differ from the 'average.' Use this as a flexible framework — not a rigid rulebook.

Also, please remember that I'm a personal trainer, not a medical professional. Everything shared here is for informational and supportive purposes only, and not medical or nutritional advice. If you're ever unsure or experiencing irregular cycles, always check in with a qualified health professional.



UNDERSTANDING YOUR MENSTRUAL CYCLE

🕒 UNDERSTANDING YOUR MENSTRUAL CYCLE

(It's more than just your period!)

Your menstrual cycle is a natural monthly rhythm made up of four distinct phases — each influenced by shifts in hormones that can affect you:

- 🧡 Energy levels
- 🧠 Mood and motivation
- 🍏 Cravings and appetite
- 🛌 Recovery and rest needs
- 🏃♀️ Performance during exercise

🌟 EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT

No two cycles are the same — and that's okay!

Some people feel great during their period, while others need extra rest. Some feel a dip in energy around ovulation, others feel strongest then. There's no right or wrong — the key is tuning into your body.

💡 WHY IT MATTERS

By getting to know the natural flow of your cycle, you can:

- ✓ Train smarter (not harder)
- ✓ Fuel your body with more intention
- ✓ Give yourself permission to rest when needed
- ✓ Reduce guilt, pressure, and burnout
- ✓ Feel more in tune with your body

This isn't about following strict rules or schedules.

It's about noticing patterns, working with your body — not against it — and creating more freedom, flexibility, and trust in your fitness and food routines. Ready to learn more?

Let's explore each phase together ➔



MENSTRUAL PHASE

🌸 PHASE 1: MENSTRUAL PHASE

(Day 1–5 of your cycle — when your period starts)

This is the beginning of your cycle — and when hormones like estrogen and progesterone are at their lowest. Your body is shedding the uterine lining, which can leave you feeling tired, bloated, or just not quite yourself. And that's okay



🌟 WHAT YOU MIGHT FEEL:

- Lower energy or motivation
- Cramps, headaches, or digestive changes
- Mood swings or a need for more rest
- A natural pull inward — emotionally and physically

🏃 MOVEMENT TIPS:

- Gentle is powerful here. Focus on light movement like:
 - Walking 🚶♀️
 - Stretching or yoga 🧘♀️
 - Easy bodyweight circuits (if you feel up to it)
- Don't be afraid to take a full rest day — **recovery matters!**

🍴 FOOD & FUEL:

- Focus on iron-rich foods (e.g., spinach, lentils, tofu) to replenish lost nutrients
- Warm, grounding meals like soups or stews can feel extra nourishing 🍲
- If cravings hit, it's okay — just try to pair treats with protein or healthy fats to keep you fuller longer

🛌 SELF-CARE FOCUS:

- Listen to your body — rest when needed
- Heat packs, baths, and magnesium can help with cramps
- Be kind to yourself — this is not the time to push hard

🌟 **Reminder:** Some people feel energised during this phase — that's okay too! Your experience is completely valid either way. Just keep tuning in and doing what feels right for you.



FOLLICULAR PHASE

PHASE 2: THE FOLLICULAR PHASE (DAYS 1-14)

This phase starts right after your period ends and lasts until ovulation. Hormones like estrogen are on the rise, making you feel more energetic, clear-headed, and generally more motivated.

ENERGY & EXERCISE:

- You might feel stronger and ready to tackle more intense workouts like strength training, HIIT, or cardio.
- Your body can handle more exertion, so it's a great time to try those new fitness challenges or increase the intensity of your workouts!

NUTRITION:

- As your energy and mood improve, your appetite might be lower compared to later in your cycle. You'll likely feel more inclined to eat lighter meals, but it's still crucial to keep protein and fiber in the mix for sustained energy.
- Focus on nutrient-dense foods — like lean proteins, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats — to fuel those workouts and recover afterward.

HOW TO MOVE:

- Your energy is optimal in this phase! It's the best time to go for more challenging exercise like running, lifting weights, or trying new forms of movement. Your muscles and joints are more flexible, making it easier to push through.
- This phase also supports endurance activities, so don't be afraid to increase your mileage or intensity if you enjoy cardio.

FOODS TO FOCUS ON:

- High-protein foods (like chicken, tofu, beans)
- Fiber-rich veggies (like broccoli, spinach, kale)
- Healthy fats (like avocado, nuts, olive oil)
- Fresh fruit (like berries, citrus fruits, apples) to support energy and hydration.

WHY IT'S GREAT:

This phase is a time of peak energy and potential — take advantage of this momentum, feel good about your workouts, and nourish your body with wholesome foods that support your goals.



OVULATION PHASE

🕒 PHASE 3: THE OVULATION PHASE (DAYS 14-17)

The ovulation phase occurs right around the middle of your cycle, typically around day 14. It's when your body releases an egg and your hormones (especially estrogen) are at their peak! You're likely to feel your most energetic, confident, and social during this phase. It's often when people feel like they can conquer the world!

🔥 ENERGY & EXERCISE:

- During this phase, you're at your peak strength, and your body can handle higher intensity exercises. Your hormone levels support increased performance, and your body is more primed for strength training or intense cardio.
- It's a great time for personal bests or really pushing your limits in the gym or in any physical activity you enjoy. If you're into HIIT or competitive sports, this is your moment to shine!

🍴 NUTRITION:

- While your appetite may still be relatively stable, it's important to maintain a balanced diet to support the increased energy demands of your body.
- Focus on lean proteins (like chicken, turkey, fish) and fiber-rich foods (like vegetables, fruits, and whole grains) to keep your energy steady and muscles strong.
- You may crave more healthy fats (like avocados, nuts, seeds), which can help support your hormonal balance during this phase.

★ HOW TO MOVE:

- Since you're feeling energized, it's a great time to try a challenging workout or even outdoor activities like hiking, biking, or a group fitness class. Your stamina is high, so push yourself a little further during this time.
- If you're into yoga or Pilates, your body will likely feel more flexible and can handle more advanced poses, so take advantage of that fluidity.

🍷 FOODS TO FOCUS ON:

- Lean proteins (such as chicken, turkey, fish, tofu)
- Healthy fats (like avocados, olive oil, nuts, seeds)
- Fruits & vegetables (like berries, leafy greens, tomatoes)
- Whole grains (like quinoa, brown rice, oats)

⚡ WHY IT'S GREAT:

Ovulation is when you feel your best self physically and emotionally. It's a great time to push yourself in your workouts, feel amazing, and eat nutrient-dense foods to fuel your energy and recovery.



LUTEAL PHASE

📅 PHASE 4: THE LUTEAL PHASE (DAYS 18-28)

The luteal phase follows ovulation and lasts until your next period. This phase can be a bit of a rollercoaster, with hormones like progesterone rising, preparing your body for a possible pregnancy. If pregnancy doesn't happen, progesterone drops, and your body starts to prepare for menstruation.

You may notice that your energy starts to decrease during this phase, and you might feel more tired or irritable.

👩 ENERGY & EXERCISE:

- You may not feel as energetic or strong as during the ovulation phase, and that's completely okay! Your body is preparing to rest, so it's the ideal time for gentler forms of exercise like yoga, walking, or swimming.
- Low to moderate intensity workouts are better, as intense exercise during this phase can cause extra stress on your body, which can throw off your hormone balance.
- Listen to your body—this is a great time to focus on mobility work, stretching, and recovery.

🍴 NUTRITION:

- During this phase, your appetite may increase slightly, and you may crave carbs or more comforting foods (hello, chocolate and pasta! 😊).
- Focus on complex carbohydrates (like sweet potatoes, whole grains, and legumes) to stabilize your energy, along with healthy fats and protein to keep you feeling satisfied and support hormone balance.
- If you're craving something sweet, opt for dark chocolate or fruits to satisfy those cravings while keeping your nutrition in check.

★ HOW TO MOVE:

- Your body might feel more fatigued, so embrace the slower pace of exercise. Gentle yoga or even some light stretching can be great to ease tension.
- Consider incorporating restorative practices, like deep stretching, foam rolling, or relaxing walks, which can help relieve any discomfort and prepare your body for the next cycle.
- Avoid pushing yourself too hard; let this be a phase where you allow your body to recover and recharge.

🍏 FOODS TO FOCUS ON:

- Complex carbohydrates (like sweet potatoes, brown rice, oats)
- Healthy fats (like avocados, nuts, seeds, olive oil)
- Lean proteins (like chicken, turkey, tofu, legumes)
- Dark chocolate or berries for when you're craving something sweet 🍫🍷

👩 WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

The luteal phase is all about honoring rest and recovery. It's a time to nurture your body, slow down, and eat foods that will support your changing hormones. It's okay to feel tired or crave comfort foods—embrace these moments and give your body what it needs!



MOVEMENT THROUGH YOUR CYCLE

Your body's energy and motivation to move fluctuate throughout your menstrual cycle — and that's completely normal. Tuning into these natural rhythms allows you to work with your body, not against it, helping you stay consistent, avoid burnout, and find joy in movement.

🌸 ADAPT YOUR FITNESS WITHOUT GUILT

You don't need to train hard all the time to make progress. Some weeks you'll feel like lifting heavy, others you might prefer gentle walks or rest. Listening to your body is the key to long-term results.

★ JOYFUL MOVEMENT IDEAS BY ENERGY LEVEL:

- High Energy Days (ovulatory phase): Running, HIIT, strength training, circuits
- Moderate Energy Days (follicular/luteal phases): Steady-state cardio, weight training, Pilates
- Low Energy Days (menstrual phase): Walking, yoga, stretching, mobility

💧 REST DAYS & ACTIVE RECOVERY

Rest doesn't mean doing nothing — active recovery supports your body with gentle movement like:

- 🌿 Light yoga or stretching
- ☀️ Short walks outdoors
- 🚲 Easy cycling or swimming
- These can reduce stiffness, support mood, and aid muscle recovery.

👋 WHEN TO PUSH VS. PULL BACK

Ask yourself:

- *Do I feel physically energised or mentally drained?*
- *Am I working out to feel good or to "make up" for something?*
- *Would movement help my mood today, or do I need rest?*

There's no gold star for pushing through exhaustion. Your body is not going to change if you take a days rest due to your body telling you it's tired. Strength comes from knowing when to move and when to slow down.



EATING THROUGH YOUR CYCLE

Learning to nourish your body through each phase of your cycle can support your mood, energy, hormones, and cravings — without needing to track or restrict. ✦

🌱 FOLLICULAR PHASE (AFTER YOUR PERIOD):

Energy is rising — this is a great time to enjoy lighter, fresh meals. Think lean proteins, leafy greens, fermented foods, and slow-digesting carbs. Your digestion tends to be stronger, so experiment with new meals if you feel inspired!

🍷 OVULATORY PHASE (MID-CYCLE):

You might feel your best here — strong, social, and energetic! Your appetite may dip slightly, so focus on nutrient-dense meals: lean protein, complex carbs, healthy fats, and hydration. Keep meals light but satisfying.

🌸 LUTEAL PHASE (PRE-PERIOD):

Your metabolism increases slightly — meaning your body may burn more calories and crave more fuel. This is a great time to include more fruit, fibre-rich carbs, and grounding meals like oats, root veg, and warming stews. Honour those cravings without guilt — your body is working hard!

😊 MENSTRUAL PHASE (YOUR PERIOD):

Your body needs rest and replenishment. Focus on iron-rich foods (like spinach, tofu, lentils), anti-inflammatory choices, and comforting meals. Warm soups, teas, and gentle snacks can feel nourishing here.

🍏 KEY NUTRIENT FOCUS BY PHASE:

- Protein & fibre support balanced blood sugar and appetite regulation
- Fruit & complex carbs help manage cravings — especially pre-period
- Iron & magnesium can reduce cramps and fatigue during your bleed
- Healthy fats support hormone production and satiety throughout the month

💡 TIPS FOR EATING WITH INTUITION

- **Meal prep with flexibility:** Batch-cook nourishing meals you enjoy, but allow space for what you feel like too
- **Honour cravings without guilt:** All foods can fit — listen to what your body's truly asking for
- **Hydration matters:** Water, herbal teas, and juicy fruits like oranges or watermelon help with bloating and energy
- **Stay protein-aware:** Without tracking, just make sure most meals contain a source like tofu, beans, tempeh, seitan, lentils, or edamame if plant-based
- **Fibre is your friend:** Helps with digestion, fullness, and mood (think veggies, legumes, whole grains, fruit)

MANAGING PMS & PERIOD SYMPTOMS NATURALLY



PMS and period symptoms are very real — and you don't just have to “*put up with them.*” With a little extra self-care and attention, you can support your body in feeling more balanced and comfortable.

COMMON SYMPTOMS

- Bloating, headaches, mood swings, fatigue, irritability, cramps, food cravings
- These symptoms can range from mild to intense — and they can change cycle to cycle. Be kind to yourself ❤️

👩🏻♀️ LIFESTYLE TIPS THAT HELP

- Stress: Try gentle breathing, journaling, stretching, or saying “**no**” when you need space
- Caffeine: Too much caffeine can heighten anxiety, irritability, or worsen cramps — try reducing intake or switching to herbal teas
- Alcohol: Can increase bloating, disrupt sleep, and mess with mood. Moderation helps, especially in the luteal phase
- Sleep: Aim for 7–9 hours. Your body needs extra rest during this time

🧴 GENTLE NATURAL REMEDIES

- Teas: Peppermint for bloating, chamomile for relaxation, raspberry leaf to support the uterus
- Warm baths: Soothe cramps and help you relax — Epsom salts can help too
- Supplements: Magnesium, B6, and omega-3s may ease mood and physical symptoms (always check with your GP or health practitioner before starting new supplements)
- Heat packs: Placed on the lower abdomen can provide quick relief for cramps

MIND-BODY AWARENESS

- Your symptoms aren't a sign of weakness — they're signals from your body. The more you tune in and respond with compassion, the more empowered you'll feel ❤️

SELF-CARE RITUALS PER PHASE



SELF-CARE RITUALS PER PHASE

Your emotional, physical, and social needs shift through each phase of your cycle. Self-care isn't selfish — it's smart. When you support your changing needs, everything flows more smoothly (literally and emotionally!).

🩸 MENSTRUAL PHASE (DAYS 1-5)

Your energy is at its lowest. Think retreat, rest, and reflection.

- **Rest routines:** Early nights, naps, cozy time with a book or comfort show
- **Journaling prompts:**
 - “What do I need less of right now?”
 - “How can I show my body more kindness?”
- **Boundaries:** Say no to plans that feel draining. Choose stillness over pressure
- **Gentle movement:** Yoga, stretching, short walks

🌱 FOLLICULAR PHASE (DAYS 6-13)

Your energy and mood start rising. Time for planning and play.

- **Self-care rituals:** Try something new, explore creative outlets, organise your space
- **Journaling prompts:**
 - “What am I excited to explore this month?”
 - “What goals feel good right now?”
- **Social needs:** You may feel more sociable—plan catch-ups or fun activities
- **Movement:** Experiment with new workouts or return to favourites

🌀 OVULATION PHASE (DAYS 14-16)

You're at your peak physically and socially. Use this magnetic energy wisely!

- **Self-care rituals:** Get outside, schedule big tasks, dress in a way that boosts confidence
- **Journaling prompts:**
 - “What do I love about how I show up in the world?”
 - “What am I proud of lately?”
- **Social needs:** Great time for teamwork, dates, or public speaking
- **Movement:** Push a little harder if it feels right — your body's ready

🌙 LUTEAL PHASE (DAYS 17-28)

Your energy begins to drop — it's time to wind down, soothe, and simplify.

- **Self-care rituals:** Declutter mentally and physically, take screen breaks, prep for your period
- **Journaling prompts:**
 - “What's been draining my energy?”
 - “How can I support myself before my next cycle?”
- **Social needs:** You might crave solitude — listen to that
- **Movement:** Choose flow over force — walks, yoga, light strength training

Use these rituals as gentle tools to support your unique rhythm. ❤️



PERIOD AND CYCLE MYTHS

Let's clear up the confusion! So many of us grew up hearing half-truths (or total nonsense) about our cycles. It's time to clear up some confusion!

✗ Myth: "You're just lazy on your period."

✓ Truth: Your body is working hard behind the scenes! Hormone levels drop, energy is naturally lower, and rest is essential for recovery and well-being. It's not laziness — it's biology.

✗ Myth: "You should train hard all month."

✓ Truth: Your performance, strength, and stamina fluctuate throughout your cycle. Some phases are perfect for pushing, others are better for pulling back. Listening to your body = smart training, not slacking.

✗ Myth: "PMS isn't real — you're just moody."

✓ Truth: PMS symptoms are caused by hormonal changes and can be very real — from mood swings to physical discomfort. You're not "overreacting" — you're responding to natural shifts.

✗ Myth: "You can't work out on your period."

✓ Truth: You can — and sometimes light movement like yoga or walking actually helps relieve cramps and boost mood. But it's also okay to rest if that's what your body's asking for.

✗ Myth: "Cycle syncing is too complicated."

✓ Truth: It doesn't have to be! Even just noticing your energy and adjusting your plans slightly is a form of cycle syncing. You don't need to get it "perfect" — just being aware is powerful.

✗ Myth: "Cravings mean you're weak."

✓ Truth: Cravings often show up in the luteal phase due to real changes in hormones and energy needs. It's not about weakness — it's about learning to nourish yourself with kindness and balance.

Your body isn't unpredictable or broken — it's working in cycles, like the moon, tides, and seasons. That's a strength, not a flaw.



WEEKLY FITNESS AND FOOD PLAN

Support your cycle, not fight it. Here's a gentle example of how to sync your workouts and meals with each phase.

● MENSTRUAL PHASE (DAYS 1-5)

Focus: Rest, warmth, gentle movement

Movement:

- Light stretching or yoga
- Short walks
- Rest days with focus on recovery

Meals:

- Warming, iron-rich meals: lentil soup, tofu stir-fry, dark leafy greens
- Hydration with herbal teas
- Comfort food with gentle fiber (e.g., oats, bananas, stewed fruit)

↓ FOLLICULAR PHASE (DAYS 6-13)

Focus: Energy builds — great time to try new things

Movement:

- Strength training
- Cardio bursts (running, circuits)
- Group fitness or trying a new class

Meals:

- Fresh, vibrant meals: whole grains, citrus, lean proteins
- Add fiber + protein: chia pudding, quinoa bowls
- Great time to load up on fruit for energy 🍓

🌻 OVULATION PHASE (DAYS 14-17)

Focus: Peak energy & performance

Movement:

- High-intensity workouts
- Heavy strength days or longest runs
- Enjoy social workouts or challenges

Meals:

- Light, energizing foods: smoothies, colorful salads, berries
- High-protein snacks to fuel intensity
- Hydrate extra if training hard 💧

🌙 LUTEAL PHASE (DAYS 18-28)

Focus: Slow down, prep for your period

Movement:

- Moderate-intensity strength training
- Pilates, slower runs, or long walks
- Wind down as needed

Meals:

- Warm, grounding meals: roasted veg, whole grains, dark chocolate
- Magnesium-rich foods to reduce PMS: pumpkin seeds, spinach
- Honour cravings, but pair them with protein & fiber

📌 This is just a sample! Your cycle might be shorter, longer, or change month to month — that's totally okay. Use this plan for ideas, not rules.

FINAL THOUGHTS



ENCOURAGEMENT & FINAL THOUGHTS

You are not broken.

You are not inconsistent.

You are not lazy.

You're simply living in a body that moves through natural rhythms — and now, you're learning how to work with them 🌟

This journey isn't about perfection — it's about progress, presence, and power. When you stop fighting your body and start listening to it, everything changes. You'll notice...

- More energy without burnout
- Strength without stress
- Nourishment without guilt
- Movement that feels like freedom
- A cycle that works with you, not against you

You are your best coach.

Your body knows what it needs.

Trust yourself — you've got this 🙌💜

A Reminder From Taylakfitness:

As a personal trainer, I'm here to support your strength and mindset — but I'm not a nutritionist. All food-related guidance in this guide is shared to empower you to tune into your body — not to act as a professional meal plan or nutritional prescription.