

Self-Care Guide To Balanced Hormones

.....
#MeCare



Mindfulness



Sleep



Movement



Social



Pleasure



Growth



Body Care



Diet

SELF-CARE GUIDE TO BALANCED HORMONES

#MeCare

How self-care (or lack of it) affects your hormones?

Healing isn't easy or pretty. You are already exhausted and now you need to get off the couch and do something new for yourself.

At the same time, this quote I once overheard never leaves me:

*In good health, we have a thousand dreams.
In sickness, we only have one dream.*

In many of the interviews I do, I often talk about women I met years ago who had an onset of health issues, mostly seemingly benign such as thyroid nodules, breast lumps, digestive issues and would then call me after all these years saying that have just been diagnosed with thyroid cancer, breast cancer or Crohn's disease and feel shattered, angry, confused, fearful.

- For not having taken action any sooner.
- For not having listened to their bodies.
- For working too hard, for too long.

**Self-care isn't selfish. It doesn't have to be a luxury.
It's your basic right to be, feel and look amazing.**

Self-care and your hormones

On a hormonal level, the right self-care routine can lead to more activated parasympathetic nervous system (that's the one that calms you, allows good digestion, BM, sleep and detoxification), rested adrenals, oxytocin release (which helps with adrenal recovery) and serotonin and dopamine release (both critical neurotransmitters in mood and stable behavior control).

Behavior such as not allowing yourself to sleep in, having no boundaries, taking no time for yourself, allowing stress and toxic people rule your life will be reflected poorly in the quality of your hormones. A jacked up nervous system depletes the adrenals which then pull down progesterone production, throw estrogen metabolism out of balance (making you estrogen dominant), which can then lead to thyroid issues and autoimmunity.

What is #MeCare



What is #MeCare?

Self-care is about doing things that make your body, mind, and spirit feel rested, at peace, and compassionate. We created this guide to help support your journey to self-care. The hashtag, #MeCare, was created as a way to share your stories on Instagram, support other women in their steps to balancing hormones through self-care.

Why should you do it?

Prioritizing yourself is not always at the top of your long to-do list. Many women still need to realize that caring for yourself is crucial for your emotional, physical, and mental well-being. We are the creators of our own destiny. We need to value self-care and self-love for regained health and well-being.



#MeCare is different for everyone. Below are the categories we focus on to get you started:



Diet



Body Care



Sleep



Movement



Mindfulness



Social



Pleasure



Growth


 Diet

Eating more organic	Reduce toxicity and inflammation, get more nutrient-dense food into your body.	Start with EWG's Dirty Dozen and Clean 15 foods .
Drink more water	60% of hunger is due to thirst. Proper hydration helps detoxification and cellular rejuvenation.	Drink half of your body's weight in ounces. eg: if you weigh 120 pounds, drink 60 ounces. Be sure to get filtered water, free of chlorine and fluoride.
Start the Elimination Diet	Food sensitivities are the underlying cause of inflammation and so many "mysterious" symptoms we don't connect back to food. You may experience immediate results when you cut out specific food offenders.	Learn how to do the Elimination Diet by either taking the free online workshop How to Use Food to Rebalance Hormones or get my protocol cookbook Cooking for Hormone Balance .
Try seed rotation	This extremely simple but effective method uses different seeds to help you rebalance your hormones. Can be used by both menstruating (helps PMS, get back period, make it regular, start ovulating) and peri-/menopausal women (helps hot flashes, night sweats).	Download the Seed Rotation Start Kit and start right away.
Reduce alcohol to 3 drinks a week	Alcohol consumption has been associated with worsening estrogen dominance (including breast lumps and cancer), thyroid function and sugar balance. Alcohol can also disrupt sleep.	Limit to 3 drinks per week. If you need to drink, pick wine, vodka and whisky over beer and sugar-loaded cocktails. Opt for virgin cocktails or just sparkling water with a dash of bitters.
Reduce coffee to 3 coffees per week or none	Coffee and caffeine overactivate your adrenals, make you acidic and can disrupt sleep.	Opt for herbal teas, mushroom "coffees" or herbal coffees.
Add 3 new hormone balancing herbs	Herbs are beautiful and caring allies that can help bring our body to a state of balance. Make it a point to make them a daily routine.	Make it a ritual to have a morning or evening herbal drink that feels nourishing to your body. Pick herbs that speak to you. If you are new to herbs, take the free online workshop "How to Use Herbs to Rebalance Hormones." to learn basics on herbs for hormones.
Plan out your weekly meals	Not planning is planning to fail. Read it again. Plan your week ahead so you don't slip and go back to take-out and unhealthy frozen dinners.	Get my protocol cookbook Cooking for Hormone Balance and use the various meal plans.
Try new recipes, new foods or ingredients, get a cookbook	Challenge yourself with a new recipe. We tend to cook the same things over and over. Adding new foods, or trying new recipes will make you feel proud of yourself and you will nourish your body with more nutrients.	Browse Amazon or a book store for anti-inflammatory cookbooks that speak to you. If you want to try my cookbook, get Cooking for Hormone Balance

 Body Care
Dry brushing (skin)

Dry brushing is believed to stimulate the lymphatic system and move the lymphatic fluids along. This is critical as the immune system partly resides in the lymphatics. You will feel rejuvenated.

Watch the [video](#) where I'm showing how to do dry skin brushing. I am using these [natural brushes](#).

Oil pulling (teeth and gums)

Oil pulling is an ancient Ayrvedic dental hygiene method. It naturally helps to whiten the teeth and restore the mouth microbiome (bacterial profile) which is responsible for preventing cavities, receding gums and many gum diseases.

Watch this [quick video](#) where I'm demonstrating how to do oil pulling.

IR sauna routine

IR sauna has a long list of benefits (read the [full article here](#)) including detoxification, rejuvenation, helping autoimmune conditions and chronic pain.

Watch my [quick video](#) showing you my sauna routine and my favorite sauna unit.

Magnesium flakes or Epsom salt baths

Magnesium relaxes you, helps with pains and aches, improves sleep, can help with detoxification and bowel movement. Many women report feeling calmer and more hormonally balanced when they use magnesium. [Topical magnesium](#) is a great way to replenish magnesium reserves by bypassing digestion.

Take a 15 to 20-minute hot or warm bath to absorb magnesium. Purchase only clean Epsom salts (nothing added to them) - [I use this brand](#).

If you don't process sulfur (feel "off" after Epsom salts), use magnesium in chloride form. I like [Ancient Minerals](#) or add 1/2 cup of [Hormone Balance Nutritionals Quick Magnesium](#).

Get a massage

Pick a form of massage that works for you - this form of relaxation will put your nervous system in a parasympathetic (calm) state, support your adrenals, and progesterone production.

Pick a massage technique that you like: deep tissue, swedish, shiatsu, lymphatic massage are just some examples. If you don't have the budget to pay for a massage, post on a local forum to trade services - offer something in exchange for a massage session.

Try hypnosis to quit smoking or deal with addictions.

Addictions can create a vicious self-destructive cycle that affects your life and health. I personally dealt with them as well and found hypnosis a great tool to try - I quit smoking with one hypnosis session.

Find a skilled local hypnotist (online reviews can help!) to guide you through the process. Or, try an online hypnosis resource such as [Hypnosis Downloads](#).



Sleep

Power down two hours before bed

Electronics such as a cell phone, TV, and computer monitors emit blue and yellow light which can interfere with the pineal gland's ability to produce melatonin - the neurotransmitter that puts you and keeps you asleep.

Opt for reading a book (using a red light), meditate, use a sauna or red light device, or make a call to a friend (without looking at the screen). If you must use electronics, get the **True Dark** glasses as a once-in-a-while solution.

Take a 15-minute nap without guilt

Circadian rhythm doesn't just apply to going to bed at night and waking in the morning. We also have a day cycle and powering down for 15-minutes mid-day is healthy for you. Short "power" naps have been shown to rejuvenate the adrenals, support the mitochondria, improve brain function and appease the nervous system. Research shows that 15 minutes is optimal - longer naps might interfere with night sleep.

Find a quiet place, get an eye mask ([I use this one](#)) and snooze with no guilt.



Movement

Commit to a yoga routine

Yoga offers countless benefits from flexibility, strength, and calmness to mindfulness. There are various forms of yoga (vinyasa, ashtanga, yin or kundalini are just a few) and there is no right or wrong ones; pick what resonates with you. Yoga is a preferred form of exercise for women with adrenal issues.

Sign up for yoga classes in a nearby studio; prepay and enter it into your calendar so you don't miss a class. If you have no studio access or prefer not to travel, sign up to yoga mobile apps such as YogaGlo, Alo Moves, Yoga Studio, Daily Yoga or Down Dog.

Garden

Gardening offers not only a physical activity but can be a meditative time away from electronics and daily stress. Getting dirty in the soil offers medical benefits as well - by introducing a more diverse bacterial flora.

Take time in your garden, plant your own vegetables, or plant a beautiful tree that will blossom in the spring. If you have no garden, start a vertical garden or keep herbs on the window sill.

Spend time in nature

As one banner cleverly said about getting outdoors: "You will find a different kind of connection" - comparing it with the internet. In Japan, shinrin-yoku which means "forest bathing" has been studied to show significant health benefits. Given that 93% of time Americans spend indoors, it's time to get out.

No need for running, jogging in the forest or on the beach - a mindful presence in the outdoors is already beneficial. Take in the sounds, smells and textures. Hug a tree. Slow is good.

Resistance training

If you feel like you need a more dynamic form of exercise and want to sweat, I recommend resistance training over aggressive cardiovascular exercise such as running or biking. The latter are a real strain for women with adrenal issues and tend to cause many injuries. Resistance training helps to improve metabolism, bone development and density (great for women with osteoporosis), weight loss (especially visceral fat), brain function, improves insulin sensitivity (it's great for women with pre- and diabetes) and decreases blood sugar levels (HA1C) and LDL ("bad" cholesterol).

Be sure to work with a gentle and skilled practitioner who can adjust a workout plan to your fitness level and current strength. Do not overdo it, push yourself excessively and always listen to your body's signals of what is enough. It's better to exercise gently and often rather than aggressively and for a long time - the chances of injury and adrenal burnout are significantly lesser. Alternatively, find online programs to follow, live or DIY format.



Mindfulness

Deep abdominal breathing

Deep abdominal breathing activates the vagus nerve which is a nerve that runs from the base of your brain to the bottom of your spinal cord; connecting many organs. When activated, this nerve activates the parasympathetic (calming) part of your nervous system - responsible for keeping you calm, giving you good sleep and unobstructed bowel movement.

Allocate 10 minutes daily for deep abdominal breathing. Breath in to the count of 4 seconds, hold your breath for 4 and exhale for 8. When inhaling, let your diaphragm expand and your belly get filled in with air. This is different from the regular breathing you do which expands the lungs. I like to do my deep abdominal breathing when using the IR sauna.

Practice meditation

This ancient practice is now acknowledged by Western medicine to be a powerful tool to reduce stress, improve sleep, reduce body inflammation, control anxiety, enhance self-awareness and enhance kindness and forgiveness.

There are various forms of meditation - from chanting, fire watching, silent, walking to guided meditation. Join a local yoga or meditation center to try a few, or start with an online app - I like Insight Timer, Calm, Headspace and 10% Happier.

Create a vision board

Visualization is like "tricking" your brain into thinking that what you want has already happened - and subconsciously work towards your goals and dreams. Creating a vision board is a powerful way to allocate time and attention to get crystal clear on the various aspects of your life such as family life, relationships, health, diet choices, career, personal development or where you want to live. Vision board creates a clear intention that can help focus our thoughts and actions, often subconsciously, for our dreams to manifest.

There are many free online resources showing how to create a vision board - one I like is one from [Jack Canfield](#). I've had a powerful experience with creating my own vision board and seeing a number of my dreams manifesting - such as living in a mountain house, being close to nature, and running a successful business that improves women's health.

Get up a gratitude journal

Do you sometimes or often think about the things you do NOT have, about experiences that did not happen or people who have not come to your life? It's normal - we focus most of our energy on things that are missing rather than things, people and events that are great. Bringing attention and gratitude to what we have takes away this catabolic attention, anxiety and stress from what we do not have. Practicing gratitude calms the nervous system, supports the adrenals and can help rebalance your whole endocrine system.

It's as simple as either spending 5 mindful minutes each day thinking about what are the things you are grateful for, or writing them down. Writing can be very healing and I would encourage that. I often fill up my gratitude journal when in the sauna.

Unclutter

Uncluttering allows you to let go of things that are potentially blocking you. In feng shui, uncluttering is seen as a way to welcome new energy flow into our lives; to move freely and in abundance. You know that feeling when the house has just been cleaned - that delightful sense of freshness and flow?

What can you unclutter and let go off this weekend? Clothes that you hope to wear but you haven't for the past 3 years, that one earring you still haven't found, these piled-up garage boxes? What can you let go off to create new opening and flow?

Say "no" and set new boundaries

Most women have a fear of saying "no" to things because they don't want to be unpopular, unloved or rejected. This constant need to comply infringes our boundaries, makes us exhausted and steals time from doing things that serve us well. Many of us regret having said "yes" and later feel resentment, anguish and anxiety for being overstretched, exhausted or broke. Learning to say "no" and setting clear boundaries will cultivate self-love, self-respect and give you the needed time to rest and heal your body and mind.

Create a list of recent events and people that you wish you had said "no" to and set stricter boundaries. Then, write down how this would have benefited you (in terms of time, health, energy, money). Next, write down how will you create new boundaries or say "no" to things that are upcoming in the next few weeks.

The interesting truth is: People with boundaries are more respected than those who are people pleasers and have no backbone to say "no." Think of a person you know who has clear boundaries (but isn't selfish) - do you respect or dislike this person?



Social

Meet with friend, once a month/ week

Call or text a friend once a day

Have lunch, coffee or drinks with a friend one-on-one

Volunteer your time

Tell someone you love them

Give hugs

Let go of toxic people in your life

Unfollow negative people on social media



Pleasure

Re-charge batteries alone (bubble bath, facial, massage, walk in nature)

Diffuse essential oils

Buy some flowers for yourself or an air purifying plant

Sex, intimacy

Hug a tree

Walk barefoot on the grass (earthing)

Himalayan salt lamp



Growth

Creative outlet: pottery, adult coloring book, drawing or painting class,

Learn to knit

Learn something new: take a free course online or at the community college

Digital detox

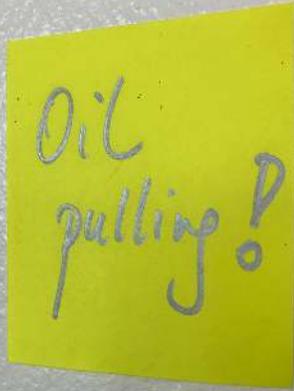
Start a journal

Drop self-criticism

How our Hormones & Balance team does #MeCare

We believe that taking care of yourself is key to your health and overall well-being. Join our team on their daily #MeCare routines.

Magdalena's Routine:



Oil-Pulling

I typically do this 3-4 times a week but some people do it every day. I place a reminder on my wall and take 15 minutes to swish one tablespoon at a time of raw, organic sesame oil mixed with coconut oil. It is important to "pull" the oil through your teeth for maximum health benefits.

[Click here to watch the video >>](#)



Dry Brush

I typically do this in the bathroom without the bathing suit on. There is a lot of dry skin that comes off using a soft and harder bristle brush, but this type of skin brushing is said to stimulate the lymphatic system and move the lymphatic fluids along. I always feel rejuvenated afterwards.

[Click here to watch the video >>](#)



Sauna

In cold months, I truly look forward to doing this daily if not multiple times a day. I take time to meditate and reflect while in the sauna. The sweat feels great after about 40 minutes and my mind feels clearer.

[Click here to watch the video >>](#)



Courtney's Routine: Project Manager



Exercise Challenge

As a mother of three little kids, I barely have time to go to the bathroom on my own. Making time for me was important and something I need to do more often. I committed to a 30-day workout challenge, which gives me a fresh workout routine that I really enjoy. I like the idea of trying and learning something new for 30 days.



Hydrate

I drink water through the day but never pay attention to how much. I decided to take the time to focus and increase my daily water intake. I found a glass travel bottle on [Amazon](#) that I love, it encourages me to drink my goal of 75 oz each day. I am also drinking warm lemon water each morning to kick-off my hydration goals.

Astrid's Routine: Customer Support Manager



Outdoor Activity

When I spend too much time working at the computer without a break my brain starts to "hurt". My remedy is to ride my bike up the hill into the mountains. Sometimes I ride fast, sometimes slow. It depends on what my body wants.



A Journey to Grey

This year I decided to remove things that caused me significant stress on a regular basis. I realized that coloring my hair every 2-3 weeks was a real source of anxiety for me, even though I had been using only henna and indigo for at least 10 years. I feel liberated to have finally let go of this fear-based ritual I was going through. I now see more and more women doing the same.

Jennifer's Routine: Customer Support Team Member



Yoga Care

My yoga practice is my stabilizer, my mind restorer, and my balance. One of my favorite practices is on my front porch, in the warm sun with my dog near by. It could not be more grounding for me. My practice has changed a great deal over the years, and I now focus on a very gentle practice, with restorative elements, and commonly end in yoga nidra.



Creative Arts

I've loved stepping back into the art world, its something both my heart and mind have missed very much. Im relearning pottery on the wheel, and its been a humbling, challenging and gratifying practice all at the same time. Its also helping me soften my perfectionism tendencies!



Take some time to write down your **#MeCare** routine and how it will make you feel. Post these where you can see them each day to give you the friendly reminder to make time, for you.



Example #MeCare

This morning I will:

Practice Meditation

And I will feel:

calmer, relaxed for my day

Morning #MeCare

This morning I will:

And I will feel:

Morning #MeCare

This morning I will:

And I will feel:

Afternoon #MeCare

This afternoon I will:

And I will feel:

Afternoon #MeCare

This afternoon I will:

And I will feel:

Afternoon #MeCare

This afternoon I will:

And I will feel:

Evening #MeCare

This evening I will:

And I will feel:

Evening #MeCare

This evening I will:

And I will feel:

Evening #MeCare

This evening I will:

And I will feel:

Anytime #MeCare

Today I will:

And I will feel:

Anytime #MeCare

Today I will:

And I will feel:

Anytime #MeCare

Today I will:

And I will feel:

