

YOUR GUIDE TO

Hormone Harmony

STUDIO BY TIERNEY





WELCOME

Whether you're deep in full-time training, performing professionally, or returning to ballet as an adult, your hormones play a vital role in how you feel and perform. If you've been feeling unusually tired, foggy, moody, or just not quite yourself, you're not alone. Hormonal fluctuations — from monthly cycles to the effects of intense training or stress — can make balance feel out of reach.

This guide is your calm corner in a demanding world. Grounded in whole foods, mindful routines, and practical nutrition strategies, it's designed to help dancers at every stage support energy, focus, and emotional steadiness — both in and out of the studio.

Tierney

Food For Thought

WHAT FOODS SHOULD YOU BE EATING?

As dancers, our nutrition isn't just about staying healthy — it's about performing, recovering, and sustaining energy day after day. Restrictive eating might seem tempting for control or aesthetics, but it usually does the opposite: it drains energy, disrupts hormones, and leads to fatigue, poor recovery, and increased mood swings.

You want to fuel, not fight, your body. The goal isn't perfection or restriction — it's balance. Building steady, nourishing habits is what keeps you strong in class, clear-headed in rehearsal, and calm through performance weeks.

ESTABLISH GOOD FOUNDATIONS

Start by focusing on the fundamentals that support hormone health and performance:

- Choose fresh, minimally processed foods whenever possible.
- Eat enough — under-fuelling is one of the quickest ways to disrupt hormones and performance.
- Include a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables, plus whole grains, legumes, and healthy fats.
- Prioritise lean proteins (fish, poultry, eggs, tofu, beans) to support muscle repair.
- Add omega-3 fats (from salmon, chia, flax, walnuts) to reduce inflammation and support menstrual balance.
- Support digestion — eat slowly, chew well, and include fermented foods like yoghurt, kefir, kimchi, or sauerkraut for gut health.
- Stay hydrated, and don't overdo caffeine — energy crashes and hormone dips often come from dehydration and overstimulation.

There's no one perfect way to eat — your needs will shift depending on your training load, age, and stage of life. What matters most is consistency, variety, and enough nourishment to support your body's demands. Think of your nutrition as part of your artistry — every choice contributes to your strength, balance, and longevity.





Key Hormones

Hormones are our chemical messengers that tell your body how to function – when to eat, sleep, release energy or wind down. There are over 50 in our body but for now we will focus on these specific ones!

PROGESTERONE

A hormone that helps prepare the body for pregnancy and balances the effects of estrogen. A calming hormone that helps with sleep and reducing PMS. It is often depleted by stress.

ESTROGEN

The primary female sex hormone that regulates your menstrual cycle and reproductive system. Builds up your uterine lining and supports mood and skin. Low levels = fatigue, anxiety, dryness.

CORTISOL

Hormones released in response to stress that helps regulate your metabolism and immune function. Too much = blood sugar crashes, weight gain, anxiety.

INSULIN

Your blood sugar regulating hormone by allowing cells to take in glucose for energy. Imbalances = cravings, fatigue and mood swings.

THYROID HORMONES

These hormones drive your metabolism and energy. Low: can increase estrogen dominance, heavier periods, PMS. High: can cause lighter, irregular periods.

Nourishing With Whole Foods

BALANCE BEGINS WITH WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE

You don't need exotic ingredients—just real food that stabilizes your energy and supports hormone production.



PROTEIN

Protein provides the building blocks (amino acids) needed to produce hormones and enzymes that regulate many bodily functions. Consuming enough high quality protein supports the production of hormones like insulin, growth hormone and those involved in appetite and metabolism. It also stabilises blood sugar levels, reducing stress on the adrenal glands and promoting balanced cortisol levels.



VEG & FRUIT

Fibre rich veggies and fruits support hormone balance by aiding in the removal of excess hormones, especially estrogen, through the digestive system. Fibre helps regulate blood sugar levels, which is crucial for maintaining stable insulin levels. Additionally, the antioxidants and phytonutrients in these foods reduce inflammation and support liver function, both essential for hormone metabolism.



CARBS

Carbs provide the body with steady energy and support thyroid and reproductive function. Whole, unprocessed carbs—like legumes and whole grains, help regulate insulin levels and prevent blood sugar spikes, which in turn keeps stress hormones like cortisol in check. They also support the production of serotonin, a mood-regulating hormone, by aiding in the transport of tryptophan to the brain.



FATS & OILS

Hormones are largely made from fat, particularly cholesterol. Consuming good fats such as avocados, nuts, seeds and fatty fish, supports key hormone production such as estrogen, progesterone and testosterone. These fats also help to reduce inflammation and assist in the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins (A,D,E,K) which are vital for hormone health.



Foods & Specific Hormones

"Nourish to Flourish"

HORMONE SUPPORTING FOODS	LIMIT/WATCHOUT FOR
 Estrogen Flaxseeds, lentils, chickpeas, fermented foods	Highly processed foods, refined sugars, excess caffeine
 Progesterone Vitamin B6 rich foods: salmon, spinach, bananas	Stress, low-fat diet
 Cortisol magnesium: pumpkin seeds, leafy greens	High sugar, excess caffeine, late nights
 Insulin balanced meals, cinnamon, low glycaemic foods	refined sugars, white bread, energy drinks
 Thyroid iodine (seaweed or iodised salt), selenium (brasil nuts)	gluten (for sensitive individuals), soy

Seed Cycling

FOR HORMONE BALANCE



WHAT IS IT?

Seed cycling involves consuming specific seeds (pumpkin, sesame, flax and sunflower) at different phases of your menstrual cycle to help balance hormones, particularly estrogen and progesterone, and to support menstrual health, fertility or reduce symptoms of PMS or perimenopause.

EASY WAYS TO ADD IN:

- Mix into smoothies, oatmeal or yoghurt
- Add to energy balls or muffins
- Sprinkle on salads

WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT

- **Supports your body's natural rhythm:** Each half of your cycle has different hormonal needs and those require certain nutrients to support and nourish the phases. Follicular phase where estrogen rises to prepare for ovulation and the luteal phase where progesterone takes over.
- **Delivers key hormone-balancing nutrients:** Flax Seeds have lignans that help modulate estrogen levels. Pumpkin seeds are high in zinc but also support progesterone production. Sesame seeds have more lignans and calcium for mood and PMS. Sunflower seeds are rich in selenium and vitamin E for detox and hormone production.
- **Gentle detox:** Hormone balance isn't just about producing enough hormones, it's also key that your body is able to remove excess (such as used up estrogen). Seeds assist the liver and gut detoxify gently and naturally without harsh cleanses or expensive supplements.
- **Reduces PMS and cycle symptoms over time:** So many women report lighter periods, reduced cramps and mood swings, improved skin and energy, less fatigue and anxiety. It may take 2-3 months of consistently seed cycling to notice such improvements but these are long lasting and natural.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Start on Day 1 of your cycle (first day of your period) or you can follow the moon phases if you're not regular.

DAYS 1-14 (Follicular Phase)

1 tbsp flaxseeds + 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds

- Support estrogen production and detox

DAYS 15-28 (Luteal Phase)

1 tbsp sesame seeds + 1 tbsp sunflower seeds

- Promote progesterone and reduce PMS





SEED CYCLING RECIPES

FOLLICULAR PHASE (DAYS 1-14)

OVERNIGHT OATS

- ½ cup oats
- 1 tbsp ground flaxseeds
- 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds
- 1 tsp honey
- ½ cup milk or yoghurt
- Mix & refrigerate overnight
- Add berries & chopped nuts of your choice

FLAX SMOOTHIE

- 1 cup almond milk
- 1 banana
- 1 tbsp ground flaxseeds
- 1 tbsp pumpkin seeds
- Handful of spinach
- ½ cup berries
- Blend and Enjoy!

HOMEMADE GRANOLA

- 2 cups rolled oats
- ¼ cup ground flaxseeds
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds
- ¼ chopped nuts (optional)
- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- Bake at 325F (160C) for 20-25 mins (stir halfway)



LUTEAL PHASE (DAYS 15-28)

CRACKERS

- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- ½ cup sesame seeds
- ½ cup flax meal (optional binder)
- ¼ cup water
- Salt + herbs of choice (I like rosemary & thyme)
- Mix, spread thin, bake at 300F (150C) for 25-30 mins

ENERGY BITES

- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- ½ cup sesame seeds
- ½ cup oats
- ¼ cup nut butter
- 2 tbsp honey
- Blend, roll into balls and chill

SEED BUTTER

- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- ½ cup sesame seeds
- Roast, blend with a bit of oil and salt until creamy
- Spread on toast, apples or use in smoothies



Hormone Disruptors

Where are they and what can we do to reduce our exposure?

HORMONE DISRUPTOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	WHY IT MATTERS	ALTERNATIVES
Bisphenol A (BPA)	Plastic containers, canned food linings, water bottles	Mimics estrogen, disrupting the menstrual cycle	Opt for glass or stainless less containers and water bottles
Phalates	Fragranced personal care and beauty products, vinyl and soft plastics	Interferes with estrogen and testosterone balance	Unscented or “phalate free” labelled products
Parabens	Preservatives in skincare, makeup and body products	Weak estrogen mimic, linked to hormonal cancrs in some studies	Paraben free cosmetics and natural skin care (check labels properly)
Synthetic fragrances	Air fresheners, scented candles, laundry detergents, beauty products	Contain endocrine disrupting chemicals that accumulate in the body	Choose essential oil based scents or fragrance free options
Pesticides/ herbicides	Non-organic produce, lawn chemicals	Some contain chemicals that mimic estrogen and disrupt thyroid function	Eat organic produce where possible or use dirty dozen clean produce
Ultra processed foods	Deep fried foods, margarine, cakes, microwave meals	Promotes inflammation in the body, blood sugar spikes that impact insulin and cortisol	Eat whole foods as much as possible and healthy fats such as avocado/olive oil
Hormones in animal products	Non organic dairy, meat and poultry	Added hormones can affect our own estrogen levels	Choose organic, grass fed, hormone free sources

LIFESTYLE



SMALL SHIFTS, BIG RESULTS — DAILY RHYTHMS THAT RESTORE BALANCE

SLEEP

Hormones like cortisol, melatonin and insulin all regulate during deep sleep — vital for recovery, focus and hormonal balance. Aim for 7–9 hours where possible, especially during intense training or performance weeks.

MOVEMENT

Prioritise mindful, consistent movement — not just rehearsals, but restorative sessions too. Gentle stretching, Pilates or low-impact cardio help lower cortisol and improve circulation.

HYDRATION

Hydrate consistently throughout the day, especially around training. Add a pinch of salt or electrolytes to support muscle function and hormone regulation.



LOWER STRESS

Gentle yoga, breathwork, journaling, magnesium salt baths, herbal teas are all great to help lower cortisol levels. Chronic stress hijacks progesterone and thyroid function causing mood swings, fatigue and cycle issues.

REDUCE TOXIC LOAD

An environmental cleanse is great to support your hormones and detoxification. Avoiding hormone disruptors, filter your water, upgrade your cookware, ditch the artificial fragrances.

CONNECTION

Connection fuels emotional balance. Surround yourself with people who understand your lifestyle — peers, mentors, or a supportive dance community. Even short, positive interactions help lower cortisol and boost serotonin.



Meal Plan

Monday

BREAKFAST

Chia pudding with almond milk, raspberries, flaxseeds and walnuts

LUNCH

Lentil & sweet potato salad with argues, avocado and tahini dressing

DINNER

Grilled Salmon, quinoa and roasted broccoli with lemon

SNACK

Hummus and carrot, cucumber sticks

Tuesday

BREAKFAST

Avocado toast on sprouted bread with poached egg and hemp seeds

LUNCH

Chickpea and cucumber bowl with olive oil, lemon, parsley and brown rice

DINNER

Turkey meatballs with zucchini noodles and tomato basil sauce

SNACK

Handful of pumpkin seeds and orange slices

Wednesday

BREAKFAST

Green smoothie with spinach, banana, chia seeds, pea protein and almond butter

LUNCH

Wild rice and roasted vegetables bowl (beetroot, kale, sweet potato and red cabbage)

DINNER

Baked mackerel with herby potatoes and steamed green beans

SNACK

Edamame with sea salt and herbal tea

Thursday

BREAKFAST

Overnight oats with flaxseeds, blueberries, cinnamon and almond milk

LUNCH

Quinoa tabbouleh with chickpeas and cucumber-yogurt dressing

DINNER

Stir-fry with tofu, bok choy, shiitake mushrooms, and brown rice

SNACK

Apple with tahini



Meal Plan

Friday

BREAKFAST

Scrambled eggs with sautéed spinach and tomato on sourdough

LUNCH

Roasted veggie wrap with hummus, carrots, zucchini and greens

DINNER

Cod with lentils, roasted carrots, and dill yogurt sauce

SNACK

Brazil nuts (for selenium!) and a few dark chocolate squares

Saturday

BREAKFAST

Buckwheat pancakes with chia seeds, almond butter, and sliced strawberries

LUNCH

White bean and kale soup with whole grain toast

DINNER

Grilled chicken breast, wild rice, asparagus and arugula salad

SNACK

Greek yogurt (or coconut yogurt) with flaxseed and crushed berries

Sunday

BREAKFAST

Miso soup with tofu, greens, brown rice, and sesame seeds

LUNCH

Salmon & avocado nori rolls with cucumber and seaweed salad

DINNER

Stuffed sweet potatoes with black beans, guacamole and cilantro

SNACK

Smoothie with berries, spinach, flaxseed and oat milk



DATE	MOOD
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Daily Journal

YOUR THOUGHTS

GOALS	TO DO

You're on your way!

This guide was created to help you find balance — in your body, your training, and your everyday rhythm. Supporting your hormones isn't about control or perfection; it's about awareness, consistency, and care.

Whether you're preparing for a demanding rehearsal block, navigating performance pressure, or simply learning to tune into your body again, remember that nourishment is part of your artistry. Every meal, stretch, and moment of rest helps you show up stronger — in and out of the studio.



WHEN YOU NOURISH YOURSELF, YOU SUSTAIN YOUR
PERFORMANCE — AND YOUR PASSION.

