

The Better Nutrition

Women's Health Evaluation

Women's health is the lifelong journey from adolescence through menopause, where a woman's body has shifting needs as the demands or her choices and circumstances change. Her total nutrition (food, supplements, beverages) and lifestyle choice need to combine to deliver her body what it needs to run optimally. Other factors, such as what she is exposed to, how she manages stress, her eating habits, her community and time in nature, all combine to impact her health as well.

"Personalizing women's nutrition and lifestyle recommendations is critical for success because most general recommendations are based on research using male subjects and then adjusted for women. We can do better! Women have unique needs through various life stages and can thrive with targeted support." —Ayla Barmmer, MS, RD, LDN

Take some time to answer the following questions about your choices so that we can evaluate and personalize your health plan. Then we will use this as a reference tool to continuously assess your nutrition and lifestyle choices to optimize your plan as life happens.



Section 1a:

How many servings of these foods are you consuming most days (5+ days/week)?

	0	1-2	3-5	6+
Cruciferous vegetables ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked/ 1 cup raw) broccoli, kale, cauliflower, onions, brussels sprouts, cabbage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Starchy vegetables ($\frac{1}{2}$ grilled/baked/roasted) with skin, ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked) potato, sweet potato, beets, winter squashes, corn, peas, parsnips, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-starchy vegetables (1 cup raw/ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked) carrots, cucumber, mushrooms, artichoke, asparagus, peppers, radishes, jicama, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leafy greens (2 cups raw/ 1 cup cooked) lettuces, spinach, arugula, bok choy, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Berries ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, cherries, strawberries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruits (1 or as noted) apple, ($\frac{1}{2}$) banana, ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) melon/pineapple/mango, orange, pear, (2) apricots, peach, plum, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruits that have fat: (5) olives, ($\frac{1}{3}$) avocado	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Herbs & spices ($\frac{1}{2}$ tsp) cinnamon, ginger, turmeric, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fermented foods ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) kimchi, kraut, tempeh, tofu, (1 tbsp) soy natto, (1 tsp) miso, other vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beans & legumes ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked beans/bean pasta, 2 Tbsp dip) beans, chickpeas, lentils, edamame, peas, pasta, dip/hummus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Whole grains ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup raw/soaked) wheat, barley, rye, farro, spelt, rice(s), oats, quinoa, amaranth, millet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flour products (1 slice/~15g total carbohydrate on label) bread, tortilla, pita, ($\frac{1}{2}$) bagel, (~10) crackers, ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) cereal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 1a: (continued)

How many servings of these foods are you consuming most days (5+ days/week)?

	0	1-2	3-5	6+
Nuts & seeds (~10 nuts, ¼ cup seeds, 2 Tbsp nut/seed butter) any nuts, seeds, nut and/or seed butters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fish (3 oz) salmon, cod, haddock, mackerel, swordfish, bluefin/albacore tuna; (1 oz) sardines and/or anchovies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seafood (3 oz) crab, mussels, lobster, (1) oysters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meat (4 oz cooked) beef, bison, pork, lamb, chicken, turkey, (3 oz/1 large) sausage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Processed meats (3 oz/1- 2 slices) pepperoni, prosciutto, lunch meats (ham, bologna, roast beef), (1) hot dog	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eggs (2) whites, (2) whole eggs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dairy & non-dairy foods (6 oz) yogurts, (1 oz) cheeses, (½ cup) ricotta or cottage cheese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Packaged snacks (¼ cup) granola, dried fruit, trail mix, (1 cup/handful) chips, pretzels, popcorn, puffs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bars/meal replacement shakes (1) bar or shake (energy, protein, meal replacement)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Treats w/added sugar (1) baked goods, cookie, slice of cake, (1 oz/serving) candy, chocolate, (2/3 cup) ice cream	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





Section 1b:

How many servings of these foods are you drinking most days (5+ days/week)?

	0	1-2	3-5	6+
Water (8 oz) plain tap, filtered, mineral, spring, sparkling & seltzers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water (8 oz) flavored, unsweetened tap, filtered, mineral, spring, sparkling & seltzers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other waters (8 oz) sweetened (natural, added sugar, non-nutritive sweetener) water, coconut, watermelon, tonic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caffeinated teas (6-8 oz) plain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caffeinated teas (6-8 oz) with added sugar/non-nutritive sweetener, creamer/milk (dairy/non)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coffee (6 oz brewed, or 2 oz espresso) plain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coffee (6 oz brewed, or 2 oz espresso) with added sugar/non-nutritive sweetener, creamer/milk (dairy/non),	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soda (12 oz)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decaf & herbal teas (6-8 oz brewed tea)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decaf coffee (6 oz brewed, or 2 oz espresso)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fruit &/or starchy vegetable juices (6 oz serving)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-starchy vegetable (no fruit) juices (6 oz serving)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milk & non-dairy milk (8 oz)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fermented beverages (4 oz) kefir, (6 oz) kombucha	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sugar-sweetened drinks (8 oz) sweet tea, fruit drink with less than 100% juice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-caloric sweetened drinks (8 oz) diet soda, diet iced tea, diet flavored waters/seltzers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol (1.5 oz shot + mixers) cocktails, (5 oz) wine, (12 oz) beer, (12 oz) spiked seltzer, (1.5 oz) hard liquor, plain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 2:

Tell us about your food and beverage budget, choices, shopping and preparation:

Never Sometimes Most weeks Always

How often is your weekly budget a significant factor in your food choices?

Do you struggle to have your weekly budget cover the food and beverage needs of you and anyone you purchase for?

Do you or anyone you purchase or prepare food for have any allergies, intolerances or preferences that mean you avoid any ingredients or types of foods? Yes No

If yes, please describe what you avoid and why?

What type of fruits do you consume more often? [check any that apply]

frozen canned dried freeze-dried "fresh"/ready-to-eat baked sweetened

What type of vegetables do you consume most often? [check any that apply]

frozen canned dried freeze-dried "fresh"/ready-to-eat in sauce salted
 baked/roasted sauteed boiled

What type(s) of milk do you consume most often? [check any that apply]

cow goat oat almond soy cashew hemp rice coconut

Are your milk choices mostly...? [check any that apply]

Full fat Low fat Nonfat Sweetened





How likely are you to choose organic for:

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
Fruits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Herbs & spices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coffee & tea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Meats	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dairy products	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-dairy products	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eggs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nuts & seeds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condiments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pastas & cereals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beans, bean dips, legumes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Frozen meals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Desserts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chocolate, cacao	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sugars, syrups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Juices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bars/shakes/smoothies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

How often do you choose wild caught/pasture-raised/grass-fed & finished

Meat & meat products	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fish/seafood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eggs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chicken/turkey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lunch meats & hot dogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dairy products	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What do you cook with or add to your food and beverages? (check all that apply)

Oils/Fats:

- Olive Hemp, walnut Safflower, sunflower Coconut, Avocado
 Vegetable (canola, soybean, etc) Cooking spray Butter Non-dairy butter/margarine

Salt:

- Iodized/table Sea salt

Sugar/syrups/sweeteners:

- White sugar Raw (turbinado) sugar Coconut (palm) sugar Agave Honey Maple syrup

Non-Nutritive sweeteners:

- Stevia (Reb A) Sucralose (Splenda) Saccharin (Sweet'N Low) Aspartame (Nutrasweet, Equal)
 Monk fruit Acesulfame Potassium (K) (Sunset/Sweet One) Allulose
 Sugar alcohols: xylitol, erythritol, mannitol, sorbitol etc.

Condiments:

- Ketchup Mustard Dairy creamer Non-dairy creamer Soy sauce Aminos
 Jelly/fruit spread Lemon/lime juice Flavor drops (for water, etc) Pre-made dressing
 Homemade dressing Mayonnaise Hot sauce Vinegars



Tell us about your food preparation habits?

	0	1-2	3-4	5+
How many meals & snacks do you prepare at home most days?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How many meals & snacks do you eat or drink that are ready-made/to-go most days?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How many meals do you eat at a restaurant each week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How many meals or snacks do you eat at a fast-casual/fast-food place each week?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
At what time do you typically consume your first calories in the day?	<input type="text"/>			
At what time do you typically consume your last calories in the day?	<input type="text"/>			
How frequently do you (or the shopper in your home) grocery shop?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1x week <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 times/week <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1x week			
How many people do you prepare meals & snacks for regularly?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 person <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 people <input type="checkbox"/> 3+ people			
Do you meal prep each week?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
Do you enjoy cooking?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No			
How much time do you spend preparing meals daily?	<input type="checkbox"/> < ½ hr/day <input type="checkbox"/> <1 hr/day <input type="checkbox"/> >1+ hr/day			



Section 4:

Tell us about your stress, activity, sleep, & skincare choice(s)

On a scale of 1-10, is your stress level usually >7 (check all that apply)

- On waking Midday At dinner time Before bed

What do you do to manage your stress? (check all that apply)

- Talk with family members Talk with friends Breathing Exercise Yoga Meditation
 Therapy Other

Activity

How do you describe your activity level? (check all that apply)

- I consider myself to be very active - always running around and I make time to exercise most days.
 I consider myself moderately active - I move a lot during the day but also spend at least 3 hours sitting most days, and I may exercise 2-4 times a week.
 I consider myself inactive - I am currently spending most of my time sitting or sleeping and I do not get in regular exercise.

Regarding exercise (check all that apply)

- My workouts are mild (easy walking pace) My workouts are moderate (somewhat breathless)
 My workouts are strenuous (heavy breathing and hard exertion) I am training for a race or other event
 I am injured/recovering from an injury or surgery I work out on days when I may be rundown/fatigued
 I need to exercise most days for my mental and physical health I stress about missing a workout
 I will not workout if I feel I am not well-rested, recovered from prior workout I take planned rest days

Sleep

How do you describe your sleep? (check all that apply)

- Deep, consistently >6 hours I struggle to get 4-6 hours of sleep most nights Restless
 Struggle to fall or stay asleep Regularly interrupted Interrupted by the need to use the bathroom
 A source of stress Something I track with a device

I usually (5+ times per week)...? (check all that apply)

- Go to sleep at the same time Wake up at the same time Sleep in a dark room
 Sleep in a cold room Sleep in a room where my mobile devices are in another room
 Get exposure to sun and fresh air for at least 30 minutes a day

Skincare

Do your beauty/skin/deodorant/cleaning products contain...? (check all that apply)

- Fragrance Phthalates Parabens Sulfates
 I don't know if my products have any of these ingredients

Section 5: Menstrual Cycle

Tell us about your menstrual cycle (check all that apply)

- I currently have a menstrual cycle. I know/track when I ovulate.
- My cycle is between 22-34 days long. I have irregular periods.
- I have recently come off of hormonal birth control. I think I am in perimenopause
- I am post menopause I have had a hysterectomy. I take pain relievers before/during my period.
- I take hormonal birth control to help with period symptoms/regularity.

Most months, I experience... (check all that apply)

- A heavy flow A light flow Spotting Cramps Tender breasts Bloating
- Mood swings Headaches

Mood and your Menstrual Cycle: (check all that apply)

- I experience mood changes throughout my menstrual cycle.
- I am easily frustrated or agitated closer to or during my period.
- I experience bigger highs and lows with my mood closer to or during my period.
- I notice I have more energy (or lack of) at different times in my menstrual cycle.
- My period impacts my social life.



Section 6: Tell us about your current health & history

My greatest health concern(s) today are:

My family history includes:

How much does any aspect of your family's health history concern you?

- It doesn't A little A lot

I have/have been diagnosed with: (Check all that apply)

- Insulin resistance, elevated insulin levels Type 1 diabetes Type 2 diabetes Migraines
- Macular degeneration or glaucoma Gestational diabetes High blood pressure Cancer
- High cholesterol Anemia Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) Low progesterone
- Endometriosis Fibroid(s) Hyperthyroidism Hypothyroidism
- An autoimmune disease (rheumatoid arthritis, celiac, lupus, Grave's, Hashimoto's psoriasis, multiple sclerosis)

Section 6: (continued)

Tell us about your current health & history

Birth/pregnancy history: (check all that apply)

- I have lost 2+ pregnancies. I have a history of preterm birth(s). I have undergone egg retrieval.
 I have been pregnant. I have given birth to a child (children) before.

Mental Health:

- I have been diagnosed or have a history of anxiety and/or depression. I experience anxiety most days.
 I have been diagnosed or have a history with PTS. I have a strong support system that I can depend on.
 I have been diagnosed or have a history of eating disorder(s) or disordered eating.
 I have experienced mental or physical trauma that impacts my daily living.
 I frequently spend time in nature (i.e. hiking, going for walks, foraging, etc.)
 I frequently journal. I practice gratitude journaling. I see a therapist regularly.
 I engage in gentle movement to support my mental health.

I experience skin issues (check all that apply)

- Dark circles Eczema, rosacea Acne Unwanted facial hair growth
 Unwanted hair loss/thinning

I experience digestive issues: (check all that apply)

- Getting up frequently to urinate Loose or frequent/uncontrollable bowel movements
 Bowel movements less than 1 per day Reflux Bloating, gas They affect my quality of life

I experience these symptoms: (check all that apply)

- Before my period All the time Off and on I can't figure out why

I have concerns about my weight: (check all that apply)

- I feel my weight is too low I am trying to gain weight I struggle to gain lean body mass
 I feel my weight is too high I have tried to lose weight I am trying to lose weight
 In the last 6 months, I have had a sudden change in my weight

Other concerns: (check all that apply)

- I am an alcoholic I am concerned about my alcohol intake
 Others have expressed concerns about my alcohol intake
 I smoke or spend most of my time with someone who smokes
 I smoked for more than a year, but quit and have stayed a non-smoker for more than a year
 I am concerned about the air pollution where I live

Personal Care Habits:

- I routinely practice dry brushing I routinely practice grounding - putting my bare feet on the ground in nature
 I engage in a cold plunge frequently I use an infrared sauna at least 1x/month
 I get massages frequently I see a chiropractor I receive acupuncture

I have had a body composition test; the results were

I believe the right daily calorie intake for me is

I have recently made lifestyle changes based on my health goal(s), including

What do your answers tell you and your practitioner about your nutrition and lifestyle choices and your body's needs?

In Section 1:

Does your current nutrition regularly include cruciferous vegetables, berries, spices, and fermented foods?

- Cruciferous vegetables support fertility by providing glucoraphanin - the inactive form of Sulforaphane, a potent activator of the Nrf2 pathway at the heart of the body's antioxidant defense system. Nrf2 controls the production of over 200 proteins that protect your cells from oxidative stress. Sulforaphane also helps support healthy metabolism of estrogen and contributes to overall hormone balance in a number of ways.
- Berries support women's health by providing antioxidants and anti-inflammatory phytonutrients that help protect egg and reproductive tissue. And may be especially important for preventing the growth of cancer cells.
- Common cooking spices like cinnamon and turmeric are also excellent sources of antioxidants and anti-inflammatory phytonutrients. You may be seeing a theme here! For the same reasons as berries, spices are key for women's health.
- Fermented foods support the female body in a number of ways. One is by providing probiotics and enzymes that support healthy digestion. Having a healthy microbial balance throughout the body is key as it helps reduce inflammation, keep immune dysfunction at bay, and protect reproductive organs like the uterus from stealth infections that are difficult to detect.

Does your current nutrition include a rainbow of fruits and vegetables, herbs/spices most days?

- We ask about a rainbow — which includes white (like cauliflower), brown (mushrooms), spices, and teas—because all of the colors in nature, from plants, help your body run better. They are involved in reducing risk of disease, detoxification, and many other efforts. If you are uncertain about whether you get in a rainbow more often, ask your practitioner for a Rainbow Evaluation to help you see where you are at and goal set to make better choices.
- If yes, great job! You can discuss with your practitioner if you should adjust the frequency or quantity of any of these foods based on your health goals.
- If not, make time to discuss with your practitioner how you can adjust your choices to get in a rainbow more often. Your choices should be delicious to you and fit within your budget and dietary choices. Your practitioner may share resources like recipes, menus and guides, as well as use additional evaluations to help you make your better choices more often.

Does your current nutrition include beans (legumes) more often?

- Beans provide protein, fiber and trace minerals all important for women's health at every life stage. Fiber is particularly important for hormone balance in a number of ways including helping your body remove excess estrogen that your liver has neatly packaged up for removal via your stool.
- Legumes as a whole are good sources of fiber, which supports hormonal balance and digestion. Legumes have also been found to lower the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke in women.
- Beans are also a good source of natural folate, which is critical to have adequate supply preconception because among many other functions, it helps prevent serious neural tube defects. Outside of pregnancy, women need folate to help healthy formation and growth of red blood cells, which helps prevent anemia.



Does your current nutrition include whole grains and/or flour products?

- Whole grains are those that have not been processed so they retain all of their nutrients. They contribute vitamins and minerals, carbohydrates, and some provide amino acids or even complete protein (quinoa).
- If you are avoiding gluten, consuming whole grains that are gluten-free can be a great way to get in many key nutrients.
- When grains are refined into white flour two things happen that can impact overall health:
 - Nutrient losses may make these products less good sources of key nutrients and also affect the body's glycemic response (affecting your blood sugar levels).
 - Often these products include fortifications of some nutrients. The sources may not be the same quality or quantity that you would find in the whole grains. Your practitioner will discuss with you whether your flour product choices are better and may use the Pantry Guide to help show you better choices.
- One of the biggest considerations when it comes to food products that contain grain flours is whether or not the food has been fortified with folic acid. If the product is whole grain, fortification isn't necessary because it retains the nutrients. Refined flours require fortification, and thus, have added folic acid. Folic acid is a much less bioavailable form of folate that many people are inefficient at metabolizing. What happens to the folic acid that our body cannot metabolize? It remains as "Unmetabolized Folic Acid" and has been shown to decrease natural killer cell activity and negatively impact methylation. Methylation is a fundamental and crucial metabolic process for any stage of life.
- Your practitioner may share a B Vitamins + Choline Evaluation to help you both see if your current nutrition - including your grain intake - could benefit from adjustments to optimize folate intake as well as other nutrients.

Does your current nutrition include nuts and seeds?

- Nuts and seeds pack healthy fats, fiber, minerals, vitamins, plant nutrients (phytonutrients) and some provide protein to help your body run better.
- Walnuts are a plant-based source of omega-3-fatty acids. Plant based sources of omega-3 fatty acids are less bioavailable than seafood sources however, walnuts are a great way to help boost your essential fatty acid intake. Omega-3 fatty acids are anti-inflammatory and are especially beneficial to menopausal women for the role they play in preserving heart, breast, and bone health. Bonus, Omega-3 fatty acids help manage mood.
- Your practitioner may share an Omega-3 Evaluation to help you both see how your current nutrition meets or needs improvement to meet your body's needs.

Do you consume fish, meat or eggs?

- Getting sufficient protein is essential to help the body run better. Your body can make protein from the amino acids it gets in plants (and as noted above, some plants - grains, beans, seeds provide a complete protein source) as well as from animal sources such as fish, meat and eggs. We will discuss quality considerations for each of these in the next section. Beyond protein, fish, meats, and eggs have unique benefits.
- Fish can provide essential fats as well as other key nutrients that the body needs regularly. Seafood can also be a key source of nutrients. For example, seafood contains the most bioavailable forms of anti-inflammatory omega-3-fatty acids. It also is a great source of iodine, a nutrient that is vital for healthy thyroid function.
- Meats provide choline, vitamin B12, and key amino acids like glycine. These are all nutrients that in plants, cannot be found at all, or in adequate amounts to meet health demands. If you do not consume any proteins from animal sources, you'll need to work with your practitioner to create a personalized supplement protocol to meet your needs.
- Eggs provide key nutrients (like choline and lutein) especially those in their yolks making whole eggs a better choice more often than egg whites. It is much easier to meet your choline requirements if you eat eggs with the yolk daily. Choline also plays a role in liver function and can prevent liver disease in women. There are also some studies that say choline can help reduce the risk of breast cancer, cognitive decline, and dementia.

Do you consume dairy and non-dairy products?

- There is great variety in these products which will determine which nutrients your body gets based on your choices. Your practitioner may provide specific recommendations based on your current health and goals, sharing their Better Nutrition Milk Guide to help you identify better choices for your body today.
- In addition to supporting bone health, dairy products contain conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) which provides anti-inflammatory and hormone-balancing properties. Dairy provides fat soluble vitamins like A, D, E and K, so full fat options optimize nutrient absorption. Dairy is also the primary source of iodine for people who do not consume adequate seafood. As previously mentioned, iodine is vital for healthy thyroid function so your practitioner may suggest the Iodine Evaluation to assess your needs.

Do you consume these snack foods and treats often?

- Our total nutrition should be delicious to us, and having options we can enjoy quickly is also important to making better nutrition doable.
- There is great variety in the quality and quantity of nutrients in these foods so your practitioner will discuss your choices and how they may affect your current health to personalize your plan to reach your health goals.
- As we mentioned with grains and flour products, when the ingredients in these products are refined, nutrient losses occur (as well as often nutrients are added as "fortifications") which will impact how they affect your body.
- Your practitioner may share a Better Nutrition Pantry Guide to discover better choices.

In Section 1B:

Beverages can help us stay hydrated, take in nutrients and escort them into our cells, as well as eliminate waste products— but they can also negatively impact our health goals. In this section, you and your practitioner will see if your choices are better for you, today. Your practitioner may share a Guide to Better Liquid Nutrition, Water and

Caffeine Evaluations and other tools to help educate and personalize your beverage recommendations.

Does your daily water intake meet your body's needs?

- Water plays essential roles in the body including waste removal, hydration and nutrient delivery into the cells. Most of us need at least 40 ounces of water, but we may need more. It is important that you absorb water effectively and don't just pee out what you drink.
- Water quality is important for consideration. Filtration can help to remove what may not be better for you to take in regularly. It also removes key minerals important for hydration so you will want to ensure your other food and supplement choices deliver those nutrients.
- Hydration also helps the body shed the uterine lining fully and efficiently. If your periods start and stop, are scant, you have spotting, or cramping, focusing on hydration prior to and throughout your period may make a big difference.
- Seltzer has increased in popularity and while it does provide hydration, aluminum cans are typically lined with BPA, a potent hormone-disrupting chemical. Choosing sparkling water in glass bottles, and naturally flavoring with your favorite option (mentioned above), is a good way to avoid these issues with cans. Some products labeled as "water" (coconut, watermelon, tonic) may contain added sugar.

Is your caffeine intake affecting your overall health?

- Caffeine is a stimulant and as such impacts hormones, digestion, blood pressure and sleep. It can trigger "energy" highs and lows, which also may affect food choices, mood, motivation and exercise/athletic performance.
- Its effect on our health is multifactorial including the source, quantity, our genetics and current health. Your practitioner will review your choices and may suggest further assessment including a Caffeine Evaluation, to personalize your intake.
- The quality of both caffeinated and decaffeinated sources that you consume regularly affects your overall health. Your practitioner may share a Better Nutrition Guide to coffee or share a guide to discuss organic tea and coffee as well.
- Unlike coffee and tea, soda provides no nutritional benefits and regular consumption is not advised. Discuss better choices with your practitioner.

How is your alcohol intake impacting your overall health?

- While the food sources for alcohols - grapes, grains etc. - can have health benefits (antioxidants etc.), the process of turning them into alcohol changes their health value.
- For women at every life stage, alcohol metabolism requires a lot of nutrients and antioxidants and is an overall burden on our detoxification systems. When it comes to hormone balance, alcohol competes with the metabolism of hormones through the liver and results in a significant increase in estrogen levels. Excess estrogen can negatively impact fertility and put women at risk for estrogen dominant cancers.
- Alcohol intake should be personalized based on health - physical and emotional - goals as well as genetics.
- Your practitioner may discuss ways to reduce your alcohol consumption and replace alcohol with other healthy ways to relax and unwind.
- You can ask your practitioner for Better Nutrition Guides to Wine and Spiked Seltzer for specific suggestions.

In Section 2:

The quality and quantity of your choices matters when it comes to better overall women's health. Your better nutrition goals are an effort to give your body what it needs to run better while reducing what can irritate, overwhelm, and disrupt those efforts. So choosing better quality, especially for what you consume most often, is an important part of your better nutrition. That said, better nutrition needs to be doable within every budget. We can work together to identify where you should allocate your resources to optimize quality and reduce stress associated with not being able to afford "better".

- The quality of your fish and seafood choices matters. Contrary to popular belief, wild-caught is not always better for you than farmed fish. It depends on the type of fish, where it comes from, quality of water, what the fish are fed and more.
- Eggs are a women's health power food and no matter how they are sourced, they are very nutrient dense. Eggs from pasture-raised chickens are even more so. Nutrient analysis studies have shown that eggs from pasture-raised hens are significantly higher in vitamin A, vitamin E, and omega-3 fatty acids. They also tend to be lower in cholesterol and saturated fat.
- Soy can be a nutritious, phytonutrient-rich food source or it can be something to limit depending on the quality. In the U.S. and some other parts of the world, soy is often genetically modified and/or heavily sprayed with pesticides and herbicides of which residues remain. Some of these chemicals, including glyphosate, are known hormone disruptors. Soy also tends to be heavily processed into soy-based food products, compromising the quality of the original food source. The best way to consume soy is to look for organic, whole-food forms like edamame and tofu. This will help you enjoy the benefits of this food without the glyphosate concerns. Soy is a particularly important food to budget more for because the evidence clearly shows the quality can decide if it supports or harms your health.
- Consuming fruits and vegetables is critical for women's health. When reviewing what you consume most often, your practitioner may suggest a Rainbow Evaluation to see if you are meeting your needs from a variety of sources.
- Organic, grass-fed/finished and wild caught can be more expensive, ask your practitioner for a Guide to Better Nutrition on a Budget to help you make better quality choices more budget-friendly like buying frozen versus ready to eat more often.
- Research raises concerns about glyphosate and other pesticides/herbicides used in agriculture and food production. Your practitioner can share guides to Organic and Non-GMO to help you identify your better choices.

What do you frequently add to your foods and beverages?

- Oils/Fats: quality matters, from the source, to processing, to how they are used.
- Saturated fats get mixed reviews (or very strong opinions) related to overall health. Discuss your intake of foods high in saturated fats with your practitioner who can personalize your plan. Foods that naturally include saturated fats and are stored/prepared properly - especially plants - can be included in your nutrition plan in most instances.
- Salt: Iodized salt, in addition to dairy products, is the most common sources of iodine in the diet unless you regularly consume seafood which remains the best source for this important mineral. Iodine is vital to thyroid function and underactive thyroid function is one of the most common reasons for issues with metabolism, weight gain, mood changes, irregular menstrual cycle, dry skin, hair loss, and cardiovascular disease.

- If you do not use iodized salt and instead use sea salt, it is important to be more mindful of getting enough iodine from other dietary and supplement sources.
- Sugar/Syrups/Sweeteners
 - Excess added sugar as well as processed sweeteners do not help your body run better. You and your practitioner can use the Added Sugar Evaluation to review your current nutrition and develop your better choices.
 - Non-caloric sweeteners can add sweet - actually, a lot of it (they are often hundreds to thousands of times sweeter than sugar!) - but do not provide any beneficial nutrients. As mentioned earlier, they can create or worsen a sweet tooth as they are hundreds to thousands of times sweeter than sugar.
- Some sources may be more irritating to your digestive system or raise other health concerns especially with frequent use or high quantities.
- There is always the new "IT" sweetener, like right now you may be hearing a lot about allulose (which is actually less sweet than sugar) and monk fruit as they typically arrive with great marketing. You and your practitioner should discuss your overall health goals to determine your better choices and frequency.
- Sauces & pre-made dressings vary in their ingredient profile which greatly affects how they help or detract from your health goals. Your practitioner may share a Better Nutrition Pantry Guide to help you navigate better choices.
- Lemons and limes add flavor and also provide vitamin C and bioflavonoids which support fertility through their antioxidant actions. Pro tip: make sure to save the peel! It has an even higher concentration of bioflavonoids than the flesh or juice. Citrus zest can brighten up the flavor of any dressing or dish and a strip of the peel brewed with your tea, or added to water will act as digestive bitter.
- Flavor drops do not give your body what it can use to run better.
- While research may not be clear on how much or which ones cause harm, the main point is that plant colors and flavors provide nutrients our body's need to promote optimal health.
- Upgrade your choices to ones that include real, minimally processed foods for color and flavor. Let's see how you currently prepare, serve, and store your food affects your overall health.
- The goal is to make your food delicious (to you) and nutrient-packed. Some methods like boiling or defrosting frozen fruits and vegetables and discarding their "juice" will increase nutrient loss. Grilling animal flesh can increase exposure to carcinogens and high-heat frying can turn healthy oils into less or unhealthy ones. Conversely, sauteeing in healthy fats at lower temperatures may optimize nutrient availability and slow-cooking for beans and grains may make them more digestible.
- When we don't prepare our own food, we may enjoy less work but we lose control of ingredient quality, quantity, and preparation techniques. Discuss with your practitioner how to optimize choices when eating out and ordering. They may share a Better Nutrition Guide to Ordering with you.
- Materials used in pots, pans, cans, wraps, storage containers and on-the-go drink bottles can affect your hormone health.
- Research indicates there are concerns with repeated exposure to BPA, non-stick coating and aluminum so avoiding those most of the time is better. Better choices include glass, stainless steel, copper, and iron.

- The most significant issues with plastic and BPA are heat and acid. For higher acid foods like tomatoes (soup) look for cans that denote BPA-free. Avoid heating food, milk, etc. in plastic containers and keep plastic containers out of direct sunlight, especially in cars.
- Using pods for hot beverages, such as in a Nespresso or Keurig machine can be problematic because it is hot liquid passing through plastic. Anytime plastic is heated, there will be some degree of leaching of the plasticizers into what you are consuming.
- Beyond BPA, a known and potent hormone disruptor, there are many other lesser studied plasticizers that are believed to also be hormone disruptors. Even though pods are convenient, consider switching to a glass French press or another option that your health practitioner recommends.
- While we cannot avoid all plastics, it is best to avoid plastics marked 3 (PVC or vinyl), 6 (polystyrene foam), or 7 (can contain BPA). Choose safer plastics marked as 1, 3, 4, and 5 and use other options, like glass, stainless steel, ceramic, cast iron, or wood for food storage and cooking as much as possible.
- Some people believe that they don't like to exercise. Discuss this with your practitioner so that you can find ways to exercise that are enjoyable.
- Any movement you enjoy doing and can do consistently will help improve circulation which means more oxygen and nutrient-rich blood traveling from your brain to your reproductive organs. This helps with hormone signaling and keeping tissues healthy and nourished.
- Yoga can be a great choice because it is generally gentle and promotes circulation, digestion and mindfulness.
- While it is important to move your body consistently, it is also possible to have too much activity depleting your body of key nutrients. If you are over-exercising, your body will respond by turning up its stress response, and impact your menstrual cycle. Work with your practitioner to ensure your diet and exercise are well balanced.
- Sleep, like movement, is essential for the body to recover and repair while not being engaged in active work.
- If your answers indicate you currently struggle with the quality or quantity of your sleep you want to discuss this with your practitioner to develop a plan to restore better sleep.
- Skincare
 - Many ingredients included in skincare may not nurture your skin and in fact, may be a source of hormone-disrupting chemicals such as phthalates. Thus, it is important to review your skincare - especially the products you use most frequently - with your practitioner who is qualified to help you navigate better choices. They may suggest you review ingredient databases such as MadeSafe or Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep.

In Section 3:

Supplements may be a part of your current nutrition intake as part of your efforts to have a total nutrition plan for better health. Your answers in this section will help your practitioner assess if your current choices help a) prevent nutrition gaps b) address gaps c) therapeutic application. Your supplements and medications need to be evaluated together to ensure they are working to support your health and reduce nutrient gaps.

In Section 4:

Let's see how your stress, sleep, activity & skin care choices impact your health:

- The body is designed to process all types of stress. However, ongoing stress and higher levels of stress can unravel your health. High stress and long periods of stress impair immunity, increase inflammation and cause hormone imbalances. Specifically, your body will increase stress hormone production. Your answers help you and your practitioner identify your sources of stress as well as develop your strategies for effectively reducing and managing stressors.
- When your stress levels hit a 5 or above, it is valuable to pause, process and attempt a strategy for stress reduction. We suggest doing a "stress check ins" regularly and specifically during periods of heightened stress.
- Our bodies are meant to move. When our bodies move, it helps with elimination of waste, metabolism, immunity, and breathing.
- Life can happen and our movement is limited for days, weeks or ongoing periods of time. Discuss any restrictions with your practitioner to identify personal modifications.

What do your answers about your menstrual cycle tell your practitioner?

- The information you shared about your cycle (or that you are not currently or no longer menstruating) will help your practitioner further personalize nutrition and lifestyle choices.
- There are no "right" or "wrong" answers here. The point is for your practitioner to have insights into your health through the lens of your cycle.
- Do not stop doing or taking anything previously recommended or prescribed by a practitioner until you and your current practitioner discuss your results and their recommendations (if it's in their scope). They may refer you to an additional practitioner for further assessment and personalization of recommendations.
- If you have irregular cycles, are not sure if you ovulate, have heavy or painful periods, or are simply unsure how to evaluate your cycle for cues about your health, your practitioner may make specific recommendations for further testing, refer you to another practitioner or resources to help.



Here's what your current health and healthy history tells us to consider:

Your current health, history and family history directly impacts your fertility nutrition and lifestyle plan.

- Chronic disease and health complaints can impact your hormonal health. Sharing this information with your practitioner now shows them how they can help you.
 - Your practitioner will be looking for any possible sources of inflammation, oxidative stress, or other things that could be affecting your absorption and utilization of nutrients. As previously mentioned, the body will always prioritize your health and survival. So it's important to identify any greater need within the body. Similarly, not identifying sources of nutrient depletion and stress within the body can be like filling the bathtub with the drain open; you are making the effort to eat a balanced, nutrient dense diet and perhaps take supportive supplements, but without "plugging the drain", they are much less effective.
 - Your physical appearance - the information you shared about your skin, hair growth (location, amount) and nails - helps your practitioner identify potential nutrient needs and imbalances.
 - Digestion is essential for the body to bring nutrients where they can be used, to eliminate waste, and to alert our immune system to any issues.
 - If your answers indicate that you have digestive problems or complaints these should top your list of better next steps to address with your practitioner. They may suggest a Digestive Evaluation or Tune-Up Program, as well as further testing or assessment.
 - When hormones shift, they can throw your digestion off course. If you noted that your digestive symptoms are related to cycle changes, your practitioner will take this into account to help you optimize digestion as your hormones shift.
- Caution when it comes to taking medications (and OTC ones) to address an ongoing or even short-term digestive complaint as they may make you feel or function better in the moment but cover an underlying issue that needs to be addressed for better prevention.
 - Your weight history (including recent changes, past or current desire to be a specific weight, and how you view your current weight) is important information for your practitioner in developing a personalized plan.
 - Your practitioner may introduce a Better Scale Guide as part of your goal-setting and progress review process.
 - Calories contain vastly different amounts and types of nutrients. If you choose to share your daily caloric intake, your practitioner will review that information as part of developing your personalized plan.
 - Smoking - tobacco in any form contains carcinogens that deplete nutrients and antioxidants that are needed for overall health. There are many support resources that can help and your practitioner can direct you towards options.
 - Air pollution - like most environmental pollutants, there are things we can control and things we cannot. Indoor air quality can be dramatically improved through using HEPA air filters, opening windows, using plants like English ivy, spider plants or bamboo, and most importantly, avoiding candles and air fresheners made with synthetic fragrances and other chemicals. It's time to ditch the Glade plug-ins and car air fresheners! To further improve air quality and exposure to harmful chemicals, it's wise to avoid hands-on home renovation projects that involve demo, paint, glues and flooring materials.



All content here was created for informational purposes only. The content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you have regarding a medical condition. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read on these pages. Reliance on any information provided by The Better Nutrition Program, companies, or professionals contributing content as part of these publications is solely at your own risk. All materials developed and reviewed by Ashley Koff RD at times in conjunction with other leading healthcare practitioners.

Daria Ventura
NUTRITION