

THE WOMAN'S GUIDE TO EMPOWERED HEALTH



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The Woman's Guide to Empowered Health is a simple guidebook focusing on the key areas that will bring your health to optimal levels. It is specifically designed for women and focuses on the major components that help you feel great from day to day. This book offers guidance and tips to the most prevalent issues that affect a woman's health.

I hope that you find the information included in this book useful and that you will be able to implement some of the tips into your daily life.



About the Author:

Hi! I'm Sabrina Sarabella, M.S. and I want to help you live a happier and healthier life. As a nutritionist and personal trainer I have worked with thousands of women. Over the years I have coached them through many different health issues and helped them to feel their very best.

I wrote the Woman's Guide to Empowered Health because I have a strong desire to help educate women so that they can make smart and informed choices about their health. I believe that we all deserve to live a life that is abundant and filled with happiness and good health.

If you are interested in living a happier and healthier life and being on the fast track to feeling great every day email me directly at info@SabrinaSarabella.com

Sabrina Sarabella, M.S. is a clinical nutritionist and personal trainer. She is the author of The [5 Day Detox](#), [4 Week Jump Start](#), [Fit to Be Wed Program](#) and [numerous cookbooks](#) and [workout programs](#). You can find them all at her website www.SabrinaSarabella.com

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SECTION I

Understanding Your Blood Test

Knowing what is going on inside your body is important for your overall health. Analyzing your blood work is the best way to figure out what is going on with our internal chemistry.

THE PROBLEM:

When our doctors test our blood as a patient we often times don't have the knowledge to understand what our blood work is telling us.

Usually when we go to the doctor for our annual physical they draw blood from us. The doctor calls us within a few days if something is out of normal lab range and is a red flag for our health. Most of us don't really know what those numbers mean and doctors may not alert us if our numbers are within normal range, but outside the functional limits.

A doctor's job is to help cure us when we are sick rather than helping us feel our absolute best every day unfortunately. Often times they don't always have the time to spend with us that we may need to optimize our health. We must take control of our own health by understanding how to analyze our blood work to identify hidden messages that tell us what is happening with our body.

There are some key things to look at in our blood work when we are feeling low energy and/or having struggles with weight loss, that may give us the answers. t

When looking at your blood work there is a difference between out of lab range and out of functional range. The lab range is used to diagnose disease; the functional range is used to assess risk for disease before the disease develops. When blood work is analyzed by a lab or doctor they are most concerned with blood work that is out of lab range and can be in the disease state.

Preventative health care practitioners, like myself, look at blood work that is out of lab range, but also out of functional range. When these numbers are out of functional range, it tells us that we should take preventative measures so they don't become out of lab range and cause a disease state in our body. We can use different techniques including nutrition and lifestyle modifications that can help us have optimal health and keep our numbers within functional range.

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Here are some key areas to be concerned about in our blood work when trying to identify factors that are affecting our health, such as energy and fat loss.

CORTISOL: A hormone produced in the adrenal glands that is released in response to stress and a low level of blood glucose. Its primary functions are to increase blood sugar, suppress the immune system, aid in the metabolism of fat, protein, and carbohydrates.

Cortisol is measured through blood and saliva tests:

- Blood tests (usually done after 12 hours of fasting and first thing in the morning) measures the level of cortisol in the blood.
- Saliva tests measures your cortisol output rhythm throughout the day.

THYROID: A gland found in the neck that controls how the body uses energy, makes proteins, and controls many other hormones in the body. Hormonal output from the thyroid is regulated by thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH).

Blood tests check how well the thyroid gland is working. A full panel includes -TSH, total T4, Free T4, T3 uptake, total T3, Thyroid antibody. However, doctors often only test a subset of these, which can miss many thyroid issues.

IRON: A mineral that carries oxygen from our lungs throughout our body and helps our muscles store and use oxygen.

Iron is another mineral to look at if you are feeling tired and run down. If you are iron deficient it is important to figure out why. If you take an iron supplement and your iron levels go up, then you were probably iron deficient. However, if you are taking an iron supplement and your levels do not improve you could have some sort of absorption issues going on in your body.

Food sources for iron: meat, fish, poultry and plant foods (nuts, fruits/ veg, grains, tofu) and dairy (milk, eggs).

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VITAMIN D: A fat-soluble vitamin that is responsible for enhancing intestinal absorption of calcium, magnesium, phosphate and zinc.

Vitamin D plays an important role in the metabolism of calcium. Decreased blood levels can interfere with bone development and strength, while elevated levels can be toxic. Consequently, the serum level needs to be determined and monitored to effectively provide dietary supplementation or treatment. More recently, low vitamin D has been associated with non-skeletal disorders such as: cardiovascular disease, diabetes, allergies, celiac disease, IBS, weight gain and lethargy.

Vitamin D is a fat soluble vitamin which means it gets absorbed in the fat of your body, not like Vitamin C and other that are water soluble and get excreted through urine. We get Vitamin D from the sun, it hits our skin and then it activates a hormonal cascade to make Vitamin D.

Lab levels identify Vitamin D deficiency happens below 30-35 (depending on what lab you use). Functional levels actually say you should be between 50-80 and even up to 100.

When supplementing with Vitamin D, you may want to increase your dosage in the winter months. If you are deficient in D you may need to take higher doses at first to get your Vitamin D levels back up to normal ranges and then taper back down.

When the sun is out, go outside for at least 15 mins without sunscreen to get the benefits of Vitamin D.

Food Sources of Vitamin D: Liver, beef, veal, egg yolk, dairy, and saltwater fish (herring, salmon, tuna, sardines)

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GUIDANCE:

Now that you know what to look for from your blood test results, you will be able to better analyze those results. In an upcoming email I will be sending you a list of what blood tests to ask your doctor to perform and also what everything on your blood tests mean. It's like a little cheat sheet for you! (It is to be used for educational purposes only and not for diagnosis. Please see a qualified health care practitioner to interpret).

Armed with this knowledge, you can now feel confident when your doctor reviews your blood tests with you. I also recommend asking for a copy of your results for your own records.

If you find out that you are deficient in one of these key areas, it could be what has been what's been holding you back from your weight loss goals or optimizing your health. When you are able to identify these deficiencies you can use quality supplements to help repair the body and get the nutrients it needs to be in optimal health.

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SECTION 2

HORMONES

THE PROBLEM:

Hormones seem to be the buzz word lately; everyone is talking about how hormones affect your health and your weight. Hormones, in the simplest terms, are messengers within your body. They send different signals to your body to tell it what to do. Ensuring hormones are balanced and functioning properly is extremely important. Hormone imbalance and improper functioning can cause problems such as: low energy, low libido, stress, weight gain or weight loss resistance, depression and many other issues.

When need to understand that the things we eat or do to our body, like not sleeping enough hours or being inactive, can throw off those hormones and cause many different health issues.

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CORTISOL: The hormone that controls your cravings, sleep and wake patterns, physical activity and helps you cope with stress. As with any of the other hormones, there is a delicate balance of where you want your cortisol levels, never too high and never too low. When hormones are out of range, whether it be too high or too low, it can be damaging to your body.

GUIDANCE:

High Cortisol:

If you are constantly stressed and believe you have high cortisol, one of the best ways to address it is to try and lower cortisol levels by doing activities like yoga, meditation, or leisure walking.

Low Cortisol:

If you have low cortisol, which usually occurs after you have long periods of high cortisol, the protocol consists of limiting caffeine and alcohol, balancing your diet, and taking quality supplements like fish oil, Vitamin B, and L-tyrosine.

Learning to manage stress and how the body perceives stress, eating enough of the proper foods, doing the right amount of exercise and practicing calming techniques will all help to control cortisol levels in your body.

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ESTROGEN

THE PROBLEM:

Hormone levels in women play a key role in many biological processes. Sex hormones like **estrogen** and **progesterone** control breast growth, ovulation, menstruation and pregnancy. The foods a woman eats can affect her body's overall health, and consuming certain foods can affect the hormone levels in her body. You need a constant balance of estrogen and progesterone to sensitize each hormone.

Estrogen in high amounts can cause many problems for women such as slowing down the thyroid. Also, estrogen dominance can be the cause of fibrocystic breasts, ovarian cysts, uterine fibroids, endometriosis, hot flashes and breast cancer.

It is important that we keep our hormones in balance. Below are some suggestions to help keep our bodies healthy and functioning at optimal health.

GUIDANCE:

Avoid additional sources of estrogen by doing the following:

- Eat organic and avoid estrogenic pesticides and growth hormones.
- Use natural cleaning products. Chemical cleaners contain toxins and estrogen mimicking compounds.
- Some parabens mimic estrogen and have been found in breast cancer tissue. They are present in small amounts of most cosmetics and personal items, for example shampoo and body wash.
- Use natural personal care products (shampoos, conditioners, face/body wash etc.) Avoid for DBP, DEP, DEHP, BzBP, and DMP in the ingredients; all are chemical estrogens.
- Avoid plastic containers for food and water. Use glass for storing food and a stainless steel water bottle. Plastic contains contain BPAs and mimic estrogens.
- Use paper or cloth bags when shopping.
- Never microwave or heat plastic. BPAs are most easily transferred from plastic to foods in high temperatures.

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ELIMINATE OR DECREASE THE CONSUMPTION OF:

Sugar- Candy and sweets containing concentrated sugars affect the levels of hormones in women. Sugar is ingested into the bloodstream which will increase the release of insulin from the pancreas. When women eat candy and sweets on a regular basis they have high levels of insulin in their bloodstream which can lead to insulin resistance, weight gain and even diabetes.

Soy- Soy products such as tofu, soy milk, tempeh can affect hormones in a woman's body. Soy products contain chemicals called isoflavones which have been said to mimic estrogen. Soy products can affect perceived hormone levels by mimicking estrogens in the body, so tissues within the body perceive a higher level of estrogen in the blood than is actually present. If you are eating soy, you want to only eat moderate levels in your diet and stick to fermented soy products. Also, most non-organic soy contains GMOs (genetically modified organisms) which have been said to cause cancers and other illnesses. If you choose to consume soy, make sure it is organic to ensure that it does not contain GMO.

Dairy- Milk products come from a lactating cow who is producing large amounts of hormones. Along with the hormones it produces on its own, many cows are injected with an abundance of additional hormones. When you consume dairy products from an animal, you also consume the hormones they have in circulation in their body leading to increased amounts of estrogen and growth hormones in your body. Reduce the amount of dairy in your diet by changing to almond, coconut, or hemp milks. Also, if you include dairy in your diet switch over to organic milk to lower the toxic load of hormones in dairy products.

Alcohol- Alcohol increases estrogen levels in both men and women and can also decrease testosterone. The one exception is wine. Wine is rich in resveratrol or trans-resveratrol which has been shown to inhibit aromatase (the enzyme that turns testosterone into estrogen) therefore lowering estrogen levels. Sardinian and Spanish wines are rich in antioxidants that help remove estrogens, Pinot and Merlot are also good choices but should be consumed in moderation.

Non grass fed/non organic meats- Non organic/non grass-fed meat also contain excessive amounts of hormones. Eating large amounts of these meats can increase your hormone levels and cause hormone imbalances and illness. Look for grass-fed/organic meats when shopping.

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INCREASE THE CONSUMPTION OF:

Fresh Fruits and Vegetables- Including fresh fruits and vegetables in your diet will help you to stay healthy. Vegetables will also help you to detoxify estrogens in your body and provide adequate fiber. Fruits and vegetables also increase antioxidants which will help to abolish free radicals produced by excess estrogen.

Omega 3 Rich Foods- Salmon, Sardines, Walnuts, and Grass-Fed/Organic Eggs are all foods high in omega 3s. Omega 3s have many benefits to the body including the ability to help detoxify excess estrogens. Studies have also shown that increased omega 3 intake in women can reduce breast cancer risks.

Grass Fed/Organic Meats- Eating adequate amounts of lean proteins and vegetables will help to keep body fat percentages down. By lowering body fat and increasing your muscle mass, you decrease cancer risk and increase estrogen elimination. Grass-fed/organic meats do not contain excess hormones and have proper ratios of omega 3 to omega 6 fats.

Cruciferous vegetables- Cauliflower, broccoli, kale, brussels sprouts and bok choy contain a compound called DIM that is very effective in promoting estrogen detoxification.

Green Tea- Green tea also has estrogen metabolizing/detoxifying principles and is high in antioxidants.

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THYROID

THE PROBLEM:

Thyroid problems are one of the most common problems women face, yet they are the most under diagnosed. The standard testing doctors do for your thyroid is just measuring your TSH (Thyroid Stimulating Hormone). This only gives us one small piece of the puzzle. We are still missing so much information about the thyroid that we need to make changes to help our body perform optimally.

The thyroid gland is in charge of secreting hormones and regulates almost every cell within our bodies. It regulates how we burn calories, maintain our metabolism and control other hormones like estrogen and cortisol.

When our thyroid is not functioning properly you feel lethargic, have brain fog, your digestion is off, and your weight is not manageable. We may feel exhausted and burnt out and an under functioning thyroid is a major reason why we may feel this way.

The major problem with thyroid testing is that most, not all, doctors only test for TSH and are under-informed about what is really going on with the thyroid. Many doctors dismiss feeling burnt out and exhausted and do not treat it as a real problem.

Many women are told that being tired all the time, feeling burnt out, and experiencing hair loss is a normal part of aging. Or worse they are told there is nothing wrong or that it is all in your head. We need to take control of our own health and figure out if there is a real thyroid problem and how we can treat it so that we can live a vibrant thriving life.

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GUIDANCE

When getting your blood work done you, want to ask to get a full panel thyroid test. The following is included in a full panel thyroid test:

- TSH
- Total T4
- Free T4
- Total T3
- T3 Uptake
- Free T3
- Reverse T3
- Thyroid Binding Globulin
- Thyroid Antibodies

Knowing your numbers and finding a medical professional that can help you manage your thyroid is key to helping to improve your thyroid health.

Here are some suggestions to help improve thyroid health:

- Control blood sugar swings by consistently eating high quality protein throughout the day balanced with the proper amount of carbohydrates and fat.
- Blood sugar swings not only affect the thyroid gland but also indirectly affect the adrenal gland function which is highly connected to thyroid physiology.
- Alkalize your body by eating more fruits and vegetables.

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INCREASE THE CONSUMPTION OF:

Fruits and Vegetables: Cooked kale, mustard greens, turnip greens or collard greens

Whole Grains: oats, quinoa, and wild/brown rice

Alkalizing Complex Carbs: Sweet potatoes, yams, lentils

High quality protein: organic/grass-fed meats; beef, buffalo, lamb, chicken

Fish with low mercury; salmon, tilapia,

Eggs-organic and free range

Dairy products that are organic (minimal amounts)

Nuts and seeds; almonds, pecans, and walnuts

Legumes

Foods Rich in Iodine: sea vegetables, kelp, seaweed, shellfish, fresh fish, haddock, cod, eggs, fish oils, onions, iodized salt, artichokes and pineapple

Coconut Oil

Selenium Rich Foods: wheat germ, beef liver and kidney, seafood, shellfish, eggs, mushrooms, garlic, kelp, onions, sesame

Essential Fatty Acids: salmon, flaxseed, walnuts, pumpkin, chia and sunflower seeds

DECREASE THE CONSUMPTION OF:

Gluten: Gluten has been shown to negatively affect the thyroid. Therefore, going gluten free is important if you have or suspect you have a thyroid condition. Gluten free grains include the following; corn, rice, taro, arrowroot, wild rice, buckwheat, quinoa, and amaranth.

Soy

Dairy

Coffee

Halogens in water- Always choose to drink filtered water.

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SECTION 3

BRAIN CHEMISTRY

Not many people talk about it but when your brain chemistry is off you can feel fatigued, lack motivation to exercise, experience memory loss, cravings and weight gain among other health problems. When the brain loses its ability to do its job we lose motivation and passion in our lives, which can cause us to lose our stamina. When our brain chemistry is unbalanced, it can affect our weight and energy levels.

Our brain is the powerhouse of our body, it is what gives signals to the rest of our body to do the things we need it to do. As the brain ages or if it is unbalanced we start to lose proper function which can cause unwanted weight gain and/or reduced health.

Here are some problems with brain function and how to support your body to be at full potential.

THE PROBLEM:

Brain Circulation- Blood flow and circulation are critical for brain health. Blood supplies oxygen and the necessary things needed for the brain to perform optimally. When you have poor brain circulation you may have a decrease in attention span, difficulty staying focused and become dependent on caffeine to stay mentally alert.

GUIDANCE:

Doing high intensity workouts helps to not only increase blood circulation to the body but also the brain. Doing an intense early morning workout helps to improve brain function throughout your day because of the increase of blood to your brain. Natural compounds like Gingko, Vinpocetine, Butcher's Broom, Feverfew, and Capsaicin can also help to increase circulation to the brain.

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THE PROBLEM:

Unbalanced Blood Sugar- As our body depends on glucose to function, our brain especially needs glucose to function. Up to one third of the body's glucose is used by the brain. When your body has unbalanced blood sugar from lack of proper nutrition you can feel irritable, nervous, shaky and light-headed. You may have difficulty eating large meals in the morning, have a decrease of energy in the afternoon, crave sugar and sweets and depend on caffeine to make it through your day.

GUIDANCE:

You want to balance your blood sugar throughout the day. This means eating balanced meals of a proper ratio of carbohydrates, fats and proteins. If you suffer from hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) it is important to not skip breakfast. Eat a breakfast high in protein and fiber, avoid sweets and juices and eat every 2-3 hours. If you tend to run more hyperglycemic (high blood sugar) you will want to avoid sweets and starches, increase physical activity, decrease portion size and large amounts of starches to avoid fatigue after meals, and eat a diet high in fiber and protein.

THE PROBLEM:

Stress and the Brain- Stress can cause havoc on the body and the brain is no exception. Chronic stress can impact normal brain function and also lead to atrophy and degeneration of the brain. When your brain feels the effects of stress you can feel like you never have time for yourself, for sleep or rest, or even regular workouts.

GUIDANCE:

If it is an acute stress that is affecting you then you will want to remove the stressor. You will also want to learn how to deal with chronic stress, adding things like meditation, yoga, and leisure walking to your routine. Nutritional supplementation that can also help includes botanicals like Ashwagandha, Holy Basil Leaf Extract, Rhodiola, and Panax Ginseng.

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THE PROBLEM:

Nutrition and the Brain: When the brain doesn't have the proper nutrition it needs to function there are multiple consequences that can occur. When we don't eat enough essential fatty acids we tend to have more dry and unhealthy skin, have difficulty consuming fats and have issues with the fluidity of our cell membranes. When communication between the brain and gut is compromised blood flow to the gut will cause digestive issues and bloating and gas. Did you know that 50% of the brain's mass is made up of immune cells? If the the brain's immune cells are compromised by either head trauma or consumption of inflammatory foods you can experience brain fog, inflammation, brain fatigue and slowness in mental speed. Gluten sensitivity can also be an issue for some people.

GUIDANCE:

Some simple solutions in regards to nutrition and brain health would be to include foods that are high in essential fatty acids (EFA) into your diet. Foods such as salmon, sardines, and walnuts are high in EFA. If you are unable to consume foods containing EFA, then including a quality fish oil supplement into your day is essential.

Eating a diet low in inflammatory foods and cleaning up your gut lining will help with digestion and increased blood flow to the gut. You want to focus on eating foods such as organic vegetables, fermented foods, low glycemic fruits, and coconuts. Some foods to avoid would be sugars, grains, gluten containing foods, dairy, eggs and processed foods. Doing an elimination diet that removes inflammatory foods from your body along with including a gut repair protocol will help to repair the gut and improve health and well being.

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THE PROBLEM:

Neurotransmitters- The brain is comprised of major neurotransmitters that are responsible for many different functions in the brain.

Serotonin allows us to perceive joy and pleasure. When we are deficient in serotonin we tend to have depression or sadness for no reason. It can also manifest as cravings for starches and salt.

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that helps to keep us energized and motivated. When you have low dopamine levels one tends to have low energy levels, poor focus and may find it hard to stick to a schedule like a meal plan or exercise routine.

Acetylcholine is involved in the processing speed of the brain. People who are low in this neurotransmitter tend to have memory lapses, decrease in creativity, and crave foods high in fat since they are choline deficient.

GABA helps us to relax and shut down. People that are deficient in GABA tend to feel anxiety and a restless mind. Emotional eaters tend to have low levels of GABA.

GUIDANCE:

If you believe you have low **Serotonin** levels try eating more foods rich in Tryptophan like turkey, cocoa, pork, duck and chicken. Supplements like St. John's Wort, 5-HTP, Yohimbe and Bosweillia may also help.

When you are low in **Dopamine** try eating foods like beef, cheese, chocolate, eggs, fish, oats, pork and turkey. Supplementation with Tyrosine, Phenylalanine, B6 and Glutathione.

When you are low in **Acetylcholine** you want to eat more healthy fats like fish oil, olives, egg yolks, nuts and avocados.

If you have a **GABA** deficiency you want to supplement with Valerian Root Extract, Passion Flowers, Manganese, Zinc and Taurine.

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NUTRITION AND DEPRESSION

Important Points:

- Brain chemistry can affect depression
- Did you know that your gut makes about 90% of the serotonin in your body?
- Fact: your digestive system makes more neurotransmitters (NT) and has greater NT receptor density than the brain.
- Brain health as well as gut health is important.

DECREASE THE CONSUMPTION OF:

Sugars, processed foods, sweets and snacks

- Can cause moods swings, sugar highs and lows.
- Blood sugar imbalances.
- Can cause inflammation which can cause more stress on the body.
- Can cause weight gain which can affect your self-esteem and lead to more depression.

Alcohol

- Drinking too much alcohol can increase depression.
- Usually after being drunk the next day you are more likely to be depressed.
- Can deplete important nutrients in the body.

Caffeine

- Caffeine can raise stress hormones and interrupt sleep, which can lead to fatigue and feeling overwhelmed. This in turn can worsen the symptoms of depression.
- Can cause highs and lows of energy levels.
- Drink moderate amounts of caffeine and don't rely on it as a source of energy.

Gluten (found in breads, pastas, grains, wheat)

- People with Celiac disease have been associated with an 80% increase in depression.
- Celiac disease is widely under diagnosed in the USA.
- Gluten causes digestive issues, diarrhea, constipation, bloating and mood fluctuations.

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INCREASE THE CONSUMPTION OF:

Fresh fruits and Vegetables

- Having a balanced diet will help to keep blood sugar stabilized and avoid mood swings.
- Increase antioxidants help your overall health and happiness.

Foods high in Omega 3s- sardines, mackerel, herring, salmon and walnuts

- Omega 3s can increase the production of serotonin and dopamine, the feel good hormones, and can keep your brain healthy.

Eat healthy fats- coconut oils, avocado

- Hormones like Serotonin and GABA (used to help keep brain healthy and working properly) require essential fatty acids to be produced.

Foods Rich in Folate- Broccoli, spinach, chickpeas, cabbage, and wheat germ

- People with lower levels of folate have been shown to be more likely to suffer from depression.

Foods Rich in Selenium

- Beans and legumes
- Lean meat (lean pork and beef, skinless chicken and turkey)
- Low-fat dairy products
- Nuts and seeds (particularly brazil nuts)
- Seafood (oysters, clams, sardines, crab, saltwater fish, and freshwater fish)
- Whole grains (whole-grain pasta, brown rice, oatmeal, etc.)
- A correlation between poor levels of selenium and poor mood have been shown in some people.

Foods high in Tryptophan

- Protein rich foods such as meat, fish, beans and eggs
- Serotonin is made in the body and brain from an amino acid named tryptophan.

Cocoa-

- Cocoa and chocolate have the reputation of making people euphoric and happy.
- There is a wide array of chemicals in cocoa that cause euphoria, including phenylethylamine (PEA), serotonin, tyramine and anandamide. One of the most well-known is PEA which helps the body release its own opium-like compounds, called the endorphins, and also boosts levels of the neurotransmitter dopamine.
- Endorphins and dopamine gives one a sense of well-being and can act as an anti-depressant.

****It is important to note that foods high in these specific nutrients are foods that are healthy and should be included in our diets****

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SECTION 4

FOOD SENSITIVITY

THE PROBLEM:

Hidden food sensitivities can cause inflammation, weight gain, and poor health.

You are eating all the right things, lots of lean protein, plenty of organic vegetables and only sticking to the cleanest carbs like quinoa and sweet potatoes but you still aren't losing weight and you feel lethargic all the time. So what gives? Well, along with some other things that may be going on, one thing that may be an issue for you is that you are not eating the foods that are right for your body.

You may have what we call a sensitivity to some foods. This is different than an allergy to foods. When you have an allergy to a food, the food will cause an extreme reaction in the body like an anaphylactic reaction. This is what is tested for when you do a food allergy skin prick test. This is the most common test that doctors will do to test for food allergies.

However, this is not the only way your body can react to foods to which it may have an allergy or sensitivity. When you eat a food that your body may not agree with it can cause inflammation inside of the body, something that you can't see or feel and to which you may not have an immediate reaction.

When the body tries to digest food that it is sensitive to it can cause an adverse immune response that can end in fatigue, GI issues, weight loss resistance and chronic disease.

When eating foods that your body has a sensitivity to over and over again it starts to create a low grade chronic inflammation in your body. This is detrimental to weight loss because inflammation causes you to hold on to extra water weight in your body. Inflammation can cause problems that can weaken the gut lining resulting in malabsorption. When your body experiences nutrition insufficiencies from malabsorption your body tends to start to store fat to help combat the lack of nutrients it is not getting.

Inflammation in the body can also cause you to feel lethargic and exhausted which can lead to the excess use of sugars and caffeine you need to help to make it through the day. Depending on sugar and caffeine to help with energy causes a cycle of crashing blood sugar, more exhaustion, and weight gain.

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GUIDANCE:

Take a look at what foods you are eating on a daily basis and how those foods are making you feel after you eat them. Start a food journal and keep track of what you are eating, what time you are eating and then how you are feeling immediately after you eat those foods and then 24-48 hours after.

Start an elimination diet by taking out any of the high inflammatory foods like dairy, gluten, and processed foods. Eliminate these foods from your diet for at least 4-6 weeks and start to note how you are feeling. Focus on eating green leafy vegetables, lean proteins, low glycemic fruits and healthy fats. If you start to feel better, have more energy and feel less bloated you probably have a food sensitivity to one or multiple foods that you have eliminated.

After you have eliminated these foods for 4-6 weeks you can start to challenge the foods by putting them slowly back into your diet. Choose one food to add back into at a time. For example, if you choose dairy, have yogurt, cheese and ice cream in a day (or any other dairy products you are used to eating). Wait 3 days and see how you are feeling. Do you have your old symptoms back? If your symptoms don't come back then you can add this food back into your diet. Continue to add a new food back in every three days and monitor progress.

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SECTION 5

VITAMINS AND SUPPLEMENTS

THE PROBLEM:

You don't know what supplements to take, you don't know where to buy them. What to take for fat loss?

One of the most common questions women ask me is, "Do I really need to take vitamins?" And my answer is always yes. No matter how clean your diet is, how many fruits and vegetables you eat, taking just a few additional vitamins that I recommend is like an insurance policy for your body.

Below are some of the most important supplements that I think every woman should take on a daily basis.

GUIDANCE:

MULTIVITAMIN/MULTI-MINERAL

Choose a multivitamin/Multi-Mineral with the following: (You can look on the label for the amount of each vitamin in mineral in each pill)

- High potency B vitamins that include: B6, B2, B1, Riboflavin, Niacin, Thiamin, B5 (pantothenic acid), Biotin and Folate.
- Vitamin E in mixed tocopherol (mainly gamma)
- Magnesium (100-300 mg) of magnesium glycinate
- Calcium (best form is calcium citrate). Look for a 2:1 ratio of calcium to magnesium (i.e. if you take 100mg magnesium, you want 200 mg calcium). FOR OPTIMAL HEALTH: 200 mg magnesium glycinate & 400 mg calcium citrate.
- Chromium (helps with blood sugar metabolism) 200-400 micrograms
- Alpha Lipoic Acid (helps with blood sugar metabolism) 100-600 mg
- Zinc around 15-30mg

SUGGESTED BRANDS: [Designs for Health](#), [Apex Energetics](#)

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OMEGA 3

Our body can not make Omega 3's so it is important to incorporate a supplement into your diet. We get Omega 3's from good quality fats like salmon and walnuts. If you don't eat large amounts of these foods daily you should buy a good quality supplement. Omega 3s can help with fat burning, brain health, heart health and have been shown to help your mood.

Choose based on the following:

- 1-3 grams of TOTAL Omega-3s daily
- 500-600mg EPA
- 250-400 mg DHA

****this should be per serving & it is important to look at the serving size. Ideally these amounts should be in 1-3 capsules.**

SUGGESTED BRANDS: [Nordic Naturals & Carlson's](#)

VITAMIN D

Vitamin D is a very important vitamin. You need this vitamin to absorb calcium for bone health and for many other important body functions. Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to cancers, heart disease, depression, and weight gain among many other things.

Functional ranges for Vitamin D should be 50-100 ng. Many of us are deficient in this vitamin especially since we have long cold winters. Depending on your blood levels you should supplement accordingly.

- Test for this with your doctor- (serum 25 hydroxy test)
- Optimal ranges should be 50-100 ng/ml
- If your levels are in the right range, suggested dose is 2000-5000 IU daily (in addition to sun exposure)
- If you are deficient in Vitamin D then you should take 5000-10,000 IU daily (in addition to sun exposure)
- Take vitamin D with Vitamin K to aid absorption.

SUGGESTED BRAND: Any quality pharmaceutical grade brand

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PROBIOTICS

Probiotics are a supplemental form of beneficial bacteria that can be used to bolster the micro biome, balance immunity and can be used for specific conditions.

Probiotics can help regulate bowel function and aid in digestion of proteins and amino acids.

What to look for?

- Has Lactobacilus and Bifidobacter strains in it.
- Has 20 billions CFUs (Colony Forming Units)
- Have only probiotic in it, not mixed with a prebotic

Suggested Brands: [Jarrow](#), [Mercola](#), [Designs for Health](#) and [Xymogen](#)

Make sure all your vitamins are gluten free, dye free, filler free

One thing that I am extremely adamant about is that you buy high quality pharmaceutical grade vitamins and supplements. Vitamins and supplements that you find in any store are not held to the same standards as when you get them from a health care practitioner or a supplement company that only sells to health care practitioners.

As careful as you are about putting the proper foods into your body you should be as careful about putting high quality supplements and vitamins into your body. To be sure you are getting the best quality, look for companies that only sell to health care practitioners.

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HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

ONE ON ONE CONSULTATIONS

I offer one on one consultations where we will review your health history, current nutrition and lifestyle plan and do a comprehensive review of your hormones. I will then put together a comprehensive plan to help you reach your health goals. See more details at www.SabrinaSarabella.com

BLOOD CHEMISTRY ANALYSIS

As a clinical nutritionist, I have studied blood chemistry extensively and in my initial consultations analyze your recent blood work and work on a nutrition and supplementation plan to help get your body into optimal health. If you are interested in learning more about your blood work and setting up a consultation email info@SabrinaSarabella.com

BALANCING YOUR HORMONES (DO IT YOURSELF)

One of my signature programs, the [4 Week Jumpstart](#), is a program I designed to help balance hormones and give your body a jumpstart it needs to lose fat in 4 weeks. When you focus on eating lean protein, the proper balance of carbohydrates and participate in strength training exercise you are able to balance your hormones so that you can properly burn fat, have more energy and live a healthier life.

DETOX PROGRAM (DO IT YOURSELF)

I have designed a do it yourself program that will take the guesswork out of your elimination diet. In my detox program all inflammatory foods are taken out of your diet and I give you meal plans and quick and easy recipes to help make this time of elimination and detox easy for you to navigate. [You can get the program here.](#)

FOOD SENSITIVITY TESTING

I also administer food sensitivity testing through ALCAT labs (this can all be done remotely). This test will test for exactly what foods are sensitive to your body and causing inflammation. You can get more information about these testing and book a consultation with me by emailing info@SabrinaSarabella.com

ORDERING QUALITY SUPPLEMENTS

You can sign up for my on line dispensary where you can get guaranteed high quality supplements at [Health Wave](#). Once you have signed up you will be able to order these supplements and get them delivered right to your door. If you are interested in a mini consultation and a recommendation of what vitamins you should take send an email to me at info@SabrinaSarabella.com and we can set it up.

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