

# SEED CYCLING

HOW TO REGULATE YOUR HORMONES NATURALLY

ACU WELLNESS





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# SEED CYCLING FOR HORMONE BALANCE

Seed cycling is an ancient method of using various seeds to support different phases of our monthly cycles to balance hormone levels, relieve PMS and perimenopause symptoms, stimulate menstruation if it's absent (amenorrhea), increase fertility and support the body in healing more serious conditions like ovarian cysts, PCOS and endometriosis. Seed cycling is an all natural and easy way to support the female body and hormonal system. These tiny but powerful superfoods can have a huge impact on our reproductive and endocrine systems. Cycling refers to the rotation of different seeds between our two main menstrual cycle phases (follicular and luteal), which helps to regulate hormone production within the body and hormone elimination out of the body.

## ABOUT YOUR CYCLE

Our menstrual cycles have two main phases:

- + The follicular phase (phase 1) begins on day 1 of menstruation
- + The luteal phase (phase 2) starts after ovulation

Traditionally, the phases would be on a 14-day rotation of a 28-day cycle, with phase 1 beginning on the new moon, and phase 2 beginning on the full moon. Realistically, a 28-day cycle doesn't always happen, and that's alright. A woman's cycle may range anywhere from 21 to 35 days. With life hectic schedule we have become removed and disconnected from nature can be a contributing factor to our cycles being off from this ancient rhythm, as can experiencing chronic levels of unmanaged daily stress. However, using the seed cycling system can help to set your menstrual phases in sync with what is right for your body. It's also helpful to reconnect with nature as often as possible, spending time outdoors and bring grounding into your life. I mean it ladies, go stick your feet in the sand, on the grass and feel the earth under you. Remember how amazing it feels to sink your toes in the ocean?

Change takes time, and we need to honour the delicate balances and sensitivities of our bodies. This isn't like popping pills (I'm guessing you are tired of doing that anyway, cause that's why you are here). It will likely take three to four cycles before you begin to see noticeable changes, so be patient and allow the power of food medicine to heal your body. It's helpful to continue cycling, even after you have noticed substantial changes.

\*Contact me if you have severe hormonal imbalances & need individualized support.

## HOW TO SEED CYCLE

The cycling uses alternating seeds high in specific oils and nutrients to balance the hormones that are prevalent in each phase. Use this two-stage guide to support hormone balance and regulation.

You will consume one tablespoon of each of the specific freshly ground seeds per day in equal parts (two tablespoons total). Where to start depends on how familiar you are with your cycle and how regular it is. This is where a period tracker or a good old-fashioned calendar can help.

## FOLLICULAR PHASE

The follicular phase lasts about 14 days, starting on the first day of menstruation. In this phase, our estrogen levels start low and steadily increase in preparation for ovulation (the release of an egg) and potential pregnancy. Rising estrogen levels increase luteinizing hormone (LH) levels, while decreasing estrogen levels cause the release of follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) – so there's a fine line between too much and too little estrogen, and imbalanced levels can wreak havoc on these other hormones too. If we keep estrogen levels balanced, LH and FSH levels will follow. Cycling with seeds that contain phytoestrogens will do just that. Phytoestrogens are a plant-based source of estrogen that adapt to the body's estrogen levels. They increase estrogen levels where needed, yet they also can decrease excess estrogen in the body. This is thanks to the lignans they contain, which bind to estrogen receptors and help to modulate estrogen production. Along with phytoestrogens, seeds that are high in omega 3s are also beneficial, as omega 3s help to reduce inflammation in the body, regulate FSH levels and support reproductive membrane function.

Along with the seed cycling, fish oil supplementation during the follicular phase can be a beneficial addition as it's a powerful anti-inflammatory and another great source of omega 3s.

PHASE 1 - (take 1 tablespoon of each flaxseeds & pumpkin seed)  
Start cycling on the first day of your period and continue it for approximately 14 days. If you're aware of your day of ovulation (which can be determined by testing your cervical mucus or using an at-home kit), continue the cycle until this day.

Not having regular cycles? If you have an irregular cycle or if you suffer from amenorrhea (no period), an easy start date is on the first day of the new moon. This allows for a simple date sequence to keep track of and allows you to follow an equal, alternating 14-day cycle.

FLAXSEEDS

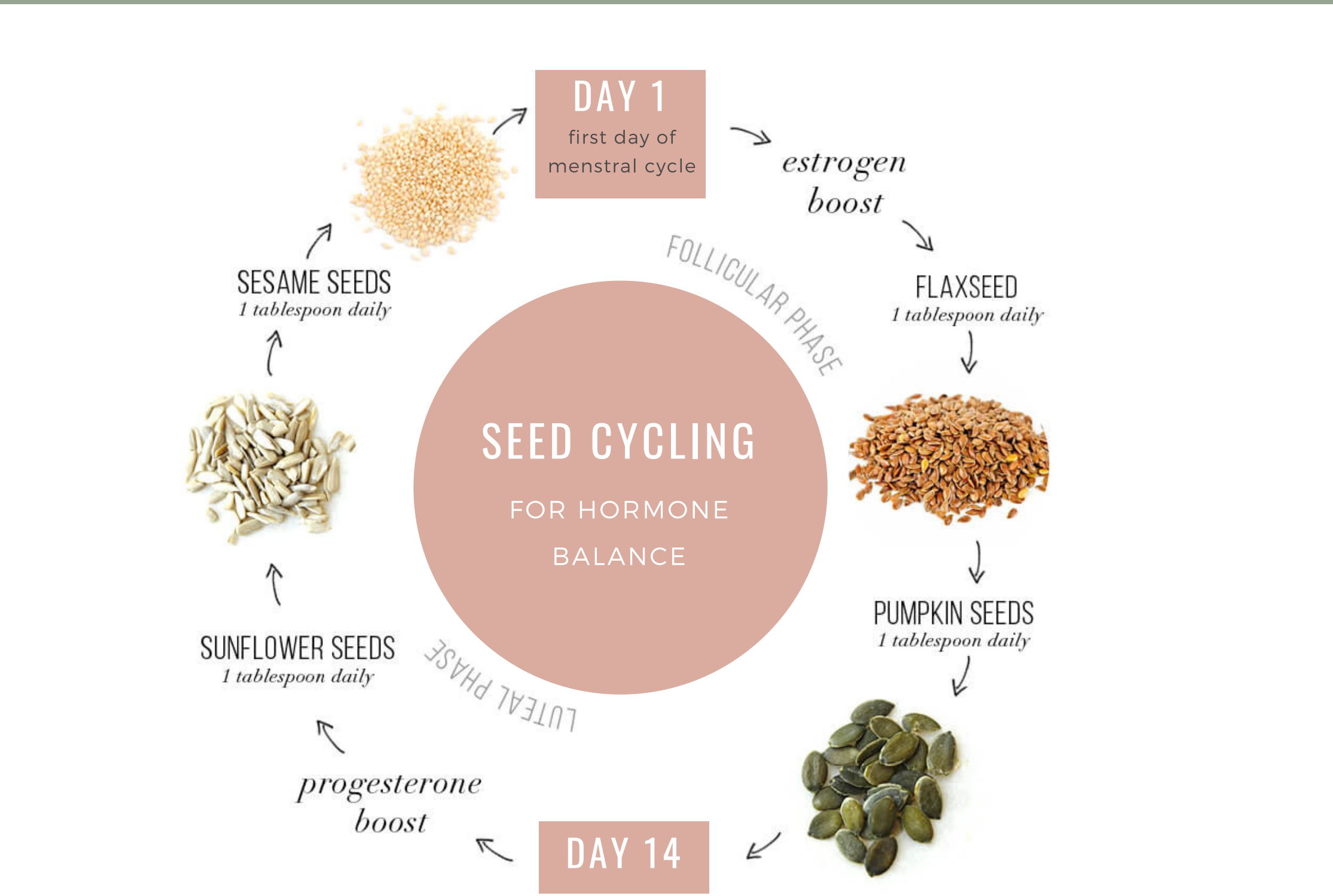
- + High in lignans to block excess estrogen production
- + High in omega 3s

PUMPKIN SEEDS

- + Rich in zinc, which prepares the body for progesterone secretion in the next phase
- + High in omega 3s

FISH OILS (bonus)

- + Contains EPA and DHA, important omega 3 fats found only in cold water fish
- + High in lignans



## LUTEAL PHASE

The luteal phase should last at least ten days, and any less is a clear indicator of low progesterone and possible fertility issues. Progesterone is responsible for enhancing the endometrium (uterine lining) and facilitating egg implantation, and reaching adequate levels of progesterone requires this timeframe. The luteal phase is brought on by the sudden drop in estrogen, FSH and LH, which occurs just after ovulation. This is when progesterone levels should begin to rise steadily. Estrogen levels also increase during this phase, and if they get too high, they're responsible for PMS symptoms and a difficult cycle. Progesterone keeps estrogen in check, and so modulating healthy progesterone levels is vital for reproductive health. In this phase, it's time to focus on omega 6s, which convert into gamma-linolenic acid (GLA) in the body, supporting progesterone levels and reducing inflammation in the body related to PMS.

As an added bonus, taking evening primrose oil (EPO) supplementation during the luteal phase can be helpful, as it's another source of omega 6s and helps to reduce PMS pain and boost fertility.

PHASE 2 - (take 1 tablespoon of sesame and sunflower seeds)

Start phase 2 seeds after ovulation or after two weeks to balance hormones.

Not having regular cycles? If you have an irregular cycle or if you suffer from amenorrhea (no period), an easy start date for phase 2 is on the first day of the full moon. This allows for a simple date sequence to keep track of and allows you to follow an equal, alternating 14-day cycle.

## SESAME SEEDS

- + High in lignans to modulate estrogen and progesterone levels
- + High in omega 6 (which converts into GLA in the body)

## SUNFLOWER SEEDS

- + High in selenium, which supports liver function to prevent clogging from excess hormones, resulting in proper hormone excretion
- + High in omega 6 (which converts into GLA in the body)

## EVENING PRIMROSE OIL (Bonus)

- + High in gamma-linoleic acid (GLA) and other important omega 6 fatty acid



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## TOP TIPS

- + Always use raw (unroasted, unsalted/seasoned) seeds to ensure they have their medicinal properties in full. Use organic seeds when available.
- + Seeds are high in fats and can oxidize when left in the sunlight and warmer temperatures. Try to keep seeds in a cool, dark place – preferably the fridge.
- + Seeds begin to oxidize 15 minutes after they're ground, so grinding fresh is best. If this is an inconvenience or not always available, store pre-ground seeds in the freezer and take the portion as needed.
- + Seeds can be eaten with other foods. Try them in a smoothie, salad, soup, or grain bowl. If you're eating them with warm foods, add them to the dish after cooking to avoid denaturing the nutrients.



TRY 2 OF MY  
FAVOURITE RECIPES...



# GODDESS BOWL

## INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup Greek yogurt (organic, grass-fed) \* or cooked plain steel cut oats
- 1/2 cup blueberries (organic, frozen or fresh)
- 1 tsp bee pollen
- 2 tsp hemp hearts
- 1 tbsp of homemade granola (optional)

## Day 1-14 of menstrual cycle (or new moon to full moon)

- 1 Tbsp. ground raw flaxseed
- 1 Tbsp. ground raw pumpkin seed

## Day 15-28 of menstrual cycle (or full moon to new moon)

- 1 Tbsp. ground raw sesame seed
- 1 Tbsp. ground raw sunflower seed

## DIRECTIONS

Spoon yogurt into a medium bowl. Top with blueberries, hemp hearts, granola and bee pollen.

Grind seeds depending on which phase you are in (I use a coffee grinder).

Sprinkle on top and enjoy!

\* If you have PCOS or endometriosis, use coconut yogurt as a gluten-free and dairy free diet is best.



# POWER BALLS

## Day 1-14 of menstrual cycle (or new moon to full moon)

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup raw pepitas (pumpkin seeds)
- 1 cup flaxseeds (raw or ground)
- 1/2 cup vegan plant protein powder (chocolate or vanilla; I use chocolate shakeology)
- 1/2 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- pinch of sea salt
- 3/4 cup almond butter (or sub any nut or seed butter)
- 2 tablespoons melted coconut oil
- 1-2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1/4 cup filtered water

## Day 15-28 of menstrual cycle (or full moon to new moon)

- 1 cup raw sunflower seeds
- 1 cup sesame seeds
- 1/2 cup vegan plant protein powder (chocolate or vanilla; I use vegan chocolate shakeology)
- 1/2 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- pinch of sea salt
- 3/4 cup almond butter (or sub any nut or seed butter)
- 2 tablespoons melted coconut oil
- 1-2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1/4 cup filtered water

### DIRECTIONS

In a food processor, combine either pepitas and flaxseeds or sunflower seeds, sesame seed, protein powder, coconut and sea salt. Blend until finely ground and crumbly. Add in the almond butter, coconut oil, sweetener and water and blend until well combined and the mixture starts to form into one big ball in food processor bowl. Using an ice cream scooper, gently form into balls; they are too delicate to roll. Refrigerate to firm up for 30 minutes. Store in refrigerator for snacks or alongside your smoothies throughout the week.

\*Note: you could half either recipe and make a fresh batch each week, you could make the full amount to eat 2 per day, or you could make the full amount and eat 1 per day over the course of 14 days – they will stay fresh in the fridge for that long.