

THRIVING

Helping Women Become Stronger, Healthier, and More Balanced

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THRIVE
PROACTIVE HEALTH

Thrive Proactive Health offers holistic and innovative solutions to create thriving wellness and resiliency in your life.

For many families, women are the gatekeepers of health and wellness. But so often, women neglect their own health to take care of others. We want to help change that.

This issue of Thriving Magazine is all about women's health and wellness, and how taking care of yourself and understanding the importance of balance influences everything you do.

If you're a woman, Thrive Proactive Health wants to help you find ways to restore, revive and optimize your self care and wellness no matter where you are on your health journey.

Acupuncture

- Improves blood flow to the reproductive organs in order to regulate the menstrual cycle; this can be helpful if you experience heavy periods with cramping and clotting, very light periods, or irregular periods.
- Helps to flush cortisol, temporarily reducing the stress hormone produced by the adrenal glands that may be interfering with your energy and libido.
- Targets major energy points during your sessions to assist with female health and general vitality.

Chinese Herbalism

- Helps regulate the menstrual cycle and flow, manages cramps, and even supports ovulation.
- Helps balance reproductive hormones and assists with female health and conception.
- Manages symptoms related to perimenopause hormonal changes (hot flashes, night sweats, insomnia, mood imbalances, fatigue, etc).

Energy Healing

- Calms a dysregulated nervous system to manage stress.
- Soothes the sense of being overwhelmed and anxious.
- Results in more energy, better sleep, and more joy.

Physical Therapy

- Physical therapists work with women of all ages from young athletes to postmenopausal women. With our specialized understanding of the postural, mechanical and muscular balances of the body, we evaluate and treat the musculoskeletal disorders that may occur at any stage in a woman's life.
- As women age, the pelvic floor muscles can become weakened, tight or spastic for a number of reasons. It's easy for the pelvis to become misaligned due to asymmetrical habits around our daily lives, jobs or sports. When this happens, the core can become misaligned and out of sync with your arms and legs causing unwanted tension and poor bladder control. We can help!

Massage

- Helps with hormones, eases menstrual cramps, promotes good gut health, and assists with overall wellness.
- Reduces stress, helps recover from injury, relieves sore muscles, reduces aches/pains, and promotes healing, all which help to improve energy.
- Essential oils with your massage can help improve circulation, reduce inflammation, reduce anxiety, relax senses, and reduce overall pain/tension.
- Reflexology opens up energy flow within the body, clearing up stagnation and improving nerve transmission and efficiency in the body.



Chiropractic Care

- Assists with proper alignment of the hips, sacrum, pubic bones, and spine, and can increase proper circulation and function of the reproductive organs for easier periods.
- Helps the body for optimal alignment and functioning in order to conceive without any structural interference.
- Helps align the spine, allowing signals from the brain to flow more easily to all parts of the body, thus boosting energy and sexual response.

Naturopathy & Functional Medicine

- Helps address nutrient deficiency issues such as anemia, or use of supplementation to treat symptoms associated with PMS such as depression and anxiety.
- Checks on hormonal fluctuations with testing, and makes sure hormone levels are optimal throughout your cycle. This is a great place to start to make sure hormones are working appropriately and to try to correct them naturally if they are not, before seeking more invasive medical intervention in order to conceive.
- Addresses the causes of lack of energy or lack of libido to help boost these areas through a customized supplementation program.

Nutrition & Health Coaching

- Empowers you to take control of your health by implementing nutrition and lifestyle changes that will contribute to the achievement of personal wellness goals.
- Assists in the understanding of how food and lifestyle affect hormones and overall health.
- Provides education on blood sugar balance to help you understand what foods to pair together. This will fuel your body properly for more energy; improve sleep; improve skin; provide fewer cravings; provide a happier, calmer mood; and balance hormones.

Fitness Training

- Helps you to be pain free and move well by integrating functional breathing patterns and posture into an individually-programmed workout.
- Promotes moving better, in order to improve energy, power, and physical vitality during all seasons of life.

THRIVE
PROACTIVE HEALTH

WAYS TO INTEGRATE SELF CARE ACROSS YOUR ENTIRE SELF

Stress is something we all experience—money worries, work deadlines, family pressures, and health concerns can weigh on anyone. But for women, the load often feels heavier. Between caring for children or aging parents, keeping up with work, and juggling endless family responsibilities, it can seem like there's never enough time in the day.

When life gets this busy, it's easy to put everyone else's needs first and let your own fall to the bottom of the list. Sometimes the stress is so constant, you might not even realize what your needs are anymore.

Here's the good news: It doesn't have to stay that way. To show up as your best self—for your loved ones and for you—it's important to start making space for self care.

That's where the six pillars of Thrivestyle Medicine come in: Mindset, Sleep, Stress Resilience, Community, Exercise, and Nutrition. Each one plays a powerful role in shaping your health and well-being.

Let's take a closer look at how small changes in these areas can make a big difference—and give you the resilience to live a happier, healthier life...



MINDSET



Your feelings follow your focus. When you're focused on the negative, you will feel negative. On the other hand, when we focus on the positives in our lives, we feel better. Your focus also follows your feelings, which can then lead to a feedback loop that can be positive or negative.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Write down three things that went well today and why they went well. Share these positive thoughts with a family member or friend.



SLEEP



Getting adequate sleep can always feel like a challenge. But we need to prioritize sleep, considering we spend about a third of our lives sleeping. It does not take long for a lack of sleep to start to impact our health. This includes decreased response times, decreased performance, and increased moodiness. Chronic sleep dysfunction increases the risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and premature death.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Avoid use of screens and electronics for at least one hour prior to bedtime. Try reading a book, taking a bath, meditating, or listening to calming music.



STRESS RESILIENCE



Even though stress is an unavoidable part of life, how we think about it and how we respond to it makes the difference in how it impacts our self care and health. The stress response is a cascade of physiological events that can lead to improved health and productivity, or to anxiety, depression, obesity, immune dysfunction, and poor health outcomes.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Get outside and get your body moving for at least 30 minutes each day, or take 10 minutes each day to sit in silence to meditate or be mindful.



COMMUNITY



We are wired to connect with others through feelings. We truly are social beings, and need to be connected with others to be emotionally well. Research shows that positive relationships are key to our well-being, and are as important to living a long life as not smoking!

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Do something intentional each day to show someone in your social network that you care for them. Give a genuine compliment, share a meal with someone, or have an honest conversation with a friend.



EXERCISE



Research overwhelmingly shows that movement and exercise is beneficial for health. It can make us happier and more emotionally resilient. Even a single bout of exercise for 10 minutes can improve mood. Regular movement has been shown to be as powerful as antidepressant medications and without any of the nasty side effects.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Be active moving your body in some way for at least 30 minutes each day. Take a walk, go for a bike ride, do some resistance training, or work in your yard — exposure to natural settings has been shown to be emotionally uplifting.



NUTRITION



What we put into our bodies each day dramatically impacts our health and well-being. Our bodies are complex machines that function best when we provide them with quality fuel. Unfortunately, all too often in our modern world we are feeding our bodies convenient, processed junk food, with way too much salt, sugar, protein and fat, and a lack of water, fiber, and other nutrients.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Every day, try to consume EIGHT OR MORE servings of whole foods: vegetables, fruits, legumes/beans, whole grains.

- A serving size is roughly the size of your fist.
- Foods should be consumed as close as possible to their natural form.
- Prepare and share a plant-based meal with family or friends.

TAKING INVENTORY ON YOUR WHEEL OF LIFE

Self care is about taking an active role in preserving one's own well-being and happiness. It includes actions that help to promote health, prevent disease, and better cope with stress, injury and illness.

Self care includes being intentional and thoughtful about certain areas of your life. When you think about self care, you are becoming mindful of your lifestyle habits and how you can become proactive in managing your life stressors better and balance all areas of your life.

Our lives are full of stressors — physical, mental and emotional. These stressors are all around us. Our resilience and how we deal with the stressors are key indicators that affect our health and happiness.

10 KEY AREAS OF SELF CARE

Use this Wheel of Life tool to help you reflect and gain perspective on how you are currently showing up and acting in various areas of your life. The Wheel of Life is divided into the 10 dimensions that influence our unique ability to thrive.

STEP 1 ASSESS

In the circles next to each category description on the next page, rate your level of satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10:

STEP 2 DIAGRAM

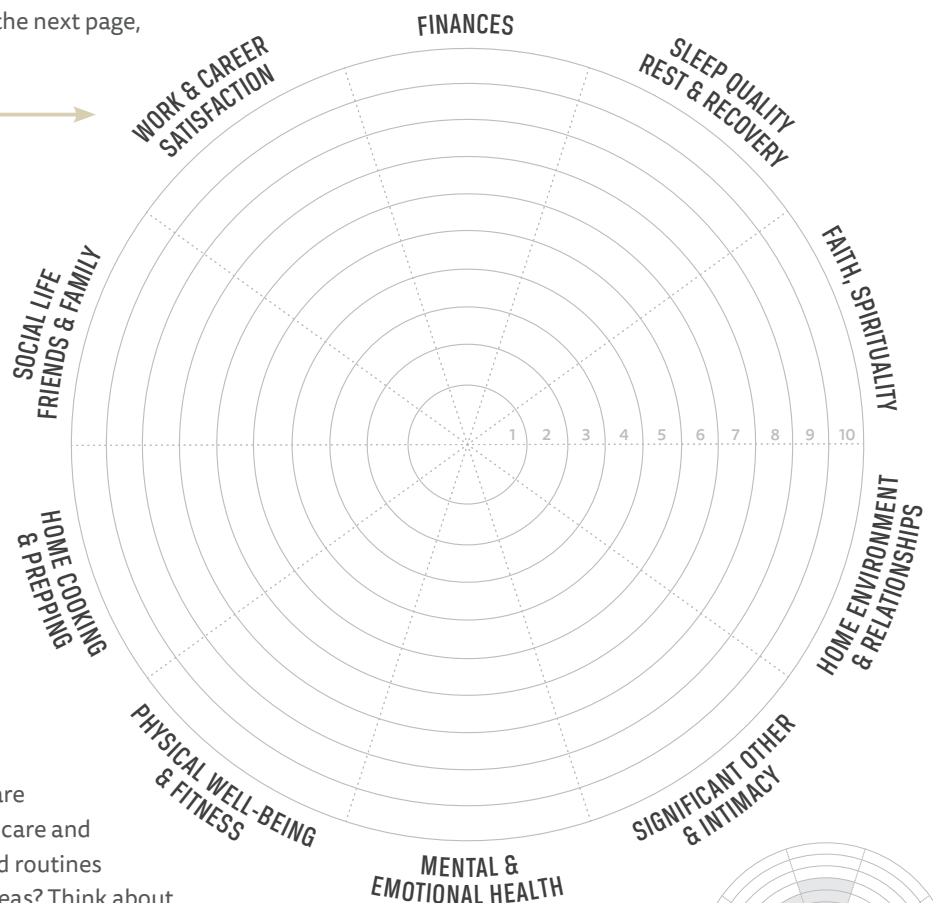
There are 10 lines on the wheel graph. Mark your rating from each category in the appropriate section of the wheel and shade the area towards the center of the wheel. See the example at the bottom of this page.

STEP 3 IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

Think of a bike wheel rolling down a hill. The smoother the wheel, the smoother the ride. A balanced circumference means that your life has balance and you are optimally managing key areas of your life.

On the contrary, flat tires, dented rims, bent spokes will all affect how we roll in life. Those areas will exhibit the imbalances in your life that are pulling you back and affecting how you thrive.

These become your areas of opportunity. These are the areas where you need to incorporate more self care and become more aware of your daily contributions and routines in those areas. What habits do you have in those areas? Think about small modifications you can start implementing in those areas, become mindful and set priorities based on your life vision.



This example shows how to fill in the spokes. It also demonstrates imbalance and opportunity for building more mindful habits in order to create a better balance.

In the circles next to each category description, rate your level of satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 10.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9 — 10
LOW SATISFACTION (OPPORTUNITY) HIGH SATISFACTION (ABUNDANCE)

WORK ENVIRONMENT & CAREER SATISFACTION

Do you sense that your work is aligned with your personal strengths and talents? Are you planted, engaged, properly challenged and growing in your career field, and working towards feeling success and achievement? Do you enjoy your work environment and colleagues or would you rather be working at a different job or in a different field?

FINANCES

Money is merely a tool that helps us achieve our dreams and live the life we desire. This category encourages you to think about if your income supports your basic needs and the lifestyle you desire. Reflect on your relationship and habits with money and how your finances impact your relationships, security, and retirement.

SLEEP QUALITY: REST & RECOVERY

Reflect on the routines around your sleep habits. Do you have a regular consistent bedtime and wake-up time? Do you properly wind down before bed, get seven-to-nine quality hours of sleep without disruption? Do you get up easily in the morning and feel like you have enough energy throughout the day?

FAITH & SPIRITUALITY

Positive psychology research shows us those that have a sense of being connected to something bigger than themselves are happier. You don't have to be religious to experience spirituality; this is about expanding on your sense of purpose and meaning in life. Your faith and spiritual beliefs can directly influence your relationships, as well as your emotional and mental resilience.

HOME ENVIRONMENT & HOME RELATIONSHIPS

Reflect on your living environment, family time, and family relationships. Do you enjoy your home environment and are you able to relax and enjoy hobbies at home such as watching sports, reading, writing, gardening, playing a musical instrument, etc? Are your home-life demands and relationships stressed with too many agendas and to-do lists? Is your home messy, cluttered, or unorganized?

SIGNIFICANT OTHER & INTIMACY

This category has you reflecting on your role in a potentially important and special relationship in your life. Reflect on your connection, engagement with each other, romantic activities, sex, and the support systems you have for each other. If you are not in a special relationship, rate how satisfied you are in that fact. Happy and satisfied or lonely and frustrated?

MENTAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Are you coping effectively and adapting to life stressors, uncertainty, and adversity in a constructive way? Can you manage your emotions and stay cool, calm and steady so you're able to communicate effectively, empathize with others, and defuse conflict? Or do you catch yourself worrying, becoming fearful of all the things that can go wrong, and swimming in negative emotions such as anger, judgment, sadness, jealousy, frustration, anxiety, loneliness, and resentment?

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING & FITNESS

Are you walking or getting at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week? Or at least 75 minutes of high intensity? Are you including resistance training and preserving muscle mass as you age? Reflect on your physical health and weekly exercise routine.

HOME COOKING & MEAL PREPPING

Reflect on how you plan and prepare your meals each week. Do you grab pre-packed processed foods and frequent drive-thrus? Or do you consciously go to the grocery store, choose your ingredients and prepare your meals at home? Our relationship with these habits reflect our nutritional beliefs and relationship with food that will impact our energy levels and health. Plus, home cooking and sharing a meal around a table with others can enhance connection, communication and build relationships.

SOCIAL LIFE, FRIENDS & FUN

Are you having enough fun in your life? This category is about the laughter, fun and enjoyment you have in your life. Reflect on your hobbies and recreational patterns and how you live life sharing that fun with others.

Forty and Beyond

GETTING BACK IN THE GAME

Women are unique in the way that we age, because we face distinct health and wellness changes that are different from men, especially in our forties and beyond. We understand that some of the factors that affect our health are out of our control, such as menopause and predisposition to certain diseases. But we also understand that lifestyle choices such as exercise, screenings, and diet are within our control and can greatly impact our health as we age.



Menopause and Mental Health

These two topics are so intertwined, it is almost impossible to address one without the other.

Menopause is a natural biological process that marks the end of a woman's reproductive years, usually occurring between the ages of 45 and 55. During menopause, a woman's body experiences hormonal changes that can cause symptoms such as hot flashes, night sweats, mood changes, and vaginal dryness.

As women approach menopause, hormonal changes can lead to weight gain, muscle loss, and a decrease in bone density. These changes can make it harder to maintain muscle mass and lose weight.

To complicate matters further, as women continue to age past menopause, the metabolism slows down, making it difficult to burn calories and lose weight, especially if compounded by a sedentary lifestyle and a diet high in processed and sugary foods.

Alongside the physical changes that accompany menopause are mental shifts. Women over 40 may experience increased stress and anxiety caused by these menopausal hormone fluctuations, as well as issues related to family and work responsibilities. Busy schedules that involve juggling work, family, and other responsibilities, can make it difficult to find time to exercise and prepare healthy meals.



Increased Risk Factors

There are a multitude of health risk factors for women that are 40+, including cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and joint pain/fatigue.

Cardiovascular Disease

Women over 40 are at an increased risk of developing cardiovascular disease, which is the leading cause of death among women in the United States. Factors that increase the risk of cardiovascular disease include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, and obesity. Cardiovascular disease is also complicated by a sedentary lifestyle and a diet high in processed and sugary foods.

Osteoporosis

As women age past 40, they are at an increased risk of developing osteoporosis, a condition in which bones become brittle and fragile, increasing the risk of fractures. Regular exercise and a healthy diet can help prevent or treat osteoporosis.

Joint Pain and Fatigue

You may have seen that meme, “everything hurts and I’m dying” and chuckled, but the truth is that women over 40 may experience joint pain and stiffness, particularly in the knees, hips, and back. That, coupled with general fatigue, can make it challenging to engage in high-impact exercises such as running or jumping.

How To Get Back In The Game

The good news, it’s never too late! Women over 40 may feel intimidated or less motivated to practice self care and exercise, especially if they have been ignoring these areas of their lives for a while. Realize that your health goals will and should be different than they were in your 20s and 30s.

With the help of a professional, you can use health metrics like heart-rate-measuring devices, InBody and InSight scans, as well as biofeedback to create appropriate health goals for this season of life.

Focus on strength training to maintain muscle mass and bone density, boost metabolism, and alleviate joint pain. It is often beneficial to work with a personal trainer, especially if you are new to weight training or just getting back into it.

Incorporate low-impact exercises such as walking, swimming, and cycling to improve cardiovascular health.

A nutrient-dense diet, rich in whole foods and protein can also help support overall health and fitness.

Lastly, joining a community committed to the same goals as you can provide motivation and support as you ease into this portion of your journey.

If you'd like to discuss this more, please give us a call. We're always here to help!

Managing High Blood Pressure with Chinese Medicine

Let's talk about something that often flies under the radar: how stress and daily "overdoing it" can impact blood pressure, especially in women who are constantly balancing multiple responsibilities.

When the body is under ongoing stress without enough rest, the nervous system can get stuck in a constant "fight or flight" mode. This state, known as **sympathetic dominance**, puts pressure on the heart to pump faster and harder, placing strain on the vascular system over time. Pair this with poor diet, lack of physical activity, hormonal fluctuations, medications, or underlying health conditions, and it's easy to see how blood pressure can begin to rise.

In some cases, medication is necessary and appropriate, especially under the guidance of a healthcare provider. However, for those dealing with borderline hypertension (typically under 150/90 mm Hg), **acupuncture and lifestyle changes may offer a natural and effective way to support healthier blood pressure levels.**

How Acupuncture Supports Blood Pressure Regulation

Acupuncture works by identifying imbalances in the body that may be contributing to symptoms like elevated blood pressure. In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), organs such as the heart, liver, stomach, and kidneys are often the focus when addressing vascular health.

A customized acupuncture treatment plan targets specific points to restore balance and promote circulation. Auricular (ear) acupuncture is often particularly effective, and small ear tacks may be applied for continued stimulation between treatments. Additional support may include dietary recommendations, supplements, or Chinese herbal formulas designed to regulate the nervous system and nourish the organs involved.

Stress Management as a Key Component

Sometimes, simply identifying major life stressors can be a breakthrough. Exploring sources of emotional or physical strain can help reduce triggers that may be contributing to elevated blood pressure.

One of the central goals of acupuncture is to "Calm the Spirit" and "Move Stagnant Qi"—both of which can bring about a deep sense of calm, help reset the nervous system, and create space for healing.

Additional Lifestyle Tips for Better Vascular Health

Balanced Nutrition: Emphasize whole foods and reduce saturated fats, processed oils, sugar, and additives.

Quality Sleep: A consistent sleep routine allows the body to repair and helps regulate stress hormones.

Regular Movement: Gentle exercise, such as walking or stretching, improves circulation and supports heart health.

Reduce Alcohol and Tobacco Use: These habits can increase blood pressure and reduce the elasticity of blood vessels.

Bottom line? High blood pressure doesn't always need to be tackled with medication alone. With the right support, including acupuncture and lifestyle changes, you can bring your body back into balance—and feel better, naturally.





LOVE NOTES

WE LOVE HEARING FROM OUR THRIVERS

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your healing, health, and wellness journey!

“Thrive Physical Therapy is a cornerstone of my wellness routine. What stands out most is the consistency across the board—from the welcoming front desk staff to the skilled physical and massage therapists. Everyone is not only professional and knowledgeable, but genuinely kind and attentive. Most importantly, I always leave feeling better than when I arrived. Thrive truly lives up to its name and plays a vital role in helping me feel my best. + SHAUNDAL T.

“I recently had my third deep tissue massage with Chantal at Thrive Proactive Health. It was as excellent as the previous two. I did purchase another Thrive 3 package as I will continue to see Chantal regularly and to also explore other services. I am completing my third month of Postural Restoration PT guided by Julie and working primarily with Karyn and Hillary. This PT has significantly improved my flexibility and strength, while reducing pain, helping me address lingering issues from two hip replacements and lower back surgery. The work I am putting into this PT is enabling me to directly improve my golf game. I am now able to practice and play multiple rounds of golf per week. My GHIN rating has already improved by 1 point and is trending down. If you have physical issues hurting your golf game, the Thrive team can definitely help you out.

+ MARK P.

“Gisele is truly exceptional at what she does. Her extensive knowledge shines through in her work, as she takes the time to educate you about your body and explains things in a way that's easy to grasp. I highly recommend her. Savanna's professionalism, empathy, and profound understanding of therapeutic techniques stood out from the first day. She consistently goes the extra mile to ensure that her patients feel supported, motivated, and safe while performing the correct techniques. Whether she's guiding exercises with precision, offering encouragement during challenging sessions, or simply listening with compassion, Savanna pours her heart and skill into every interaction. Having her as my physical therapy assistant has been a true blessing. + ANITA D.

*If you enjoyed the content in this magazine or loved your service from Thrive Proactive Health, we'd love to hear from you: **ThriveVB.revue.us***

NATURAL RELIEF FROM STRESS AND ANXIETY

Stress and anxiety have become nearly unavoidable in modern life. Whether it's work, family obligations, or constant digital distractions, many people struggle with overwhelming emotions. Integrative care—including chiropractic treatment—is a powerful, non-invasive solution for reducing stress and anxiety.



The Link Between Chiropractic Care and Mental Wellness

Chiropractic care may not be the first solution that comes to mind for stress and anxiety, but its benefits go beyond spinal adjustments. By optimizing the nervous system—central to mood, emotion, and stress regulation—chiropractic treatments help restore balance.

The spine houses the central nervous system (CNS), which controls communication between the brain and body. Misalignments, or subluxations, interfere with this communication, leading to tension and elevated stress levels. Chiropractic adjustments correct these misalignments, improving nervous system function and easing stress.

The Science Behind Stress and Anxiety Relief

Research shows chiropractic care can reduce cortisol, the body's primary stress hormone. Chronic stress causes cortisol overproduction, resulting in fatigue, brain fog, and immune suppression. Chiropractic adjustments lower cortisol and boost endorphins—natural “feel-good” hormones—promoting a sense of relaxation and balance.

Spinal manipulation also enhances vagus nerve function, which activates the parasympathetic nervous system responsible for rest and recovery. Proper vagus nerve stimulation can lower heart rate, reduce blood pressure, and improve digestion, all of which support a calmer mind.

How Chiropractic Care Eases Anxiety

Anxiety often brings physical symptoms such as muscle tightness, headaches, and poor sleep. Chiropractic care targets these issues at the source:

- **Relieves Muscle Tension:** Adjustments release tight muscles, reduce pain, and promote relaxation.
- **Improves Posture and Breathing:** Correcting posture enhances breathing, which calms the nervous system.
- **Supports Better Sleep:** With reduced tension and a balanced nervous system, many experience more restful sleep.

Additional Mental Health Benefits

Chiropractic care offers a range of secondary benefits that enhance overall well-being:

- **Stronger Immune System:** Stress weakens immunity; chiropractic adjustments help regulate immune function.
- **Better Digestion:** By improving nerve communication, adjustments can ease stress-related digestive issues.
- **More Energy:** A balanced nervous system uses energy more efficiently, increasing vitality and focus.

Start Your Journey to a Calmer, Healthier Life

If you're feeling overwhelmed by stress or anxiety, you're not alone, and there are natural, effective solutions available. Chiropractic care can help restore balance, promote relaxation, and support overall health.

TILT, SHIFT, and HIKE YOUR PELVIS Into Better Health

The key to a healthy pelvic floor is maintaining some dynamic rhythmic and balanced movements around the pelvic girdle. As you keep these movements healthy from side to side and front to back, the pelvic floor can maintain proper elasticity to support the movements and pressures you encounter during the day.



Pelvic dysfunction can be scary, unfamiliar and can seem easier to ignore than to address. Bladder leakage, painful intercourse, and hip, pelvis or back pain are just some of the symptoms that can affect someone's ability to thrive and live confidently.

Throughout my career, I have met people who have been Kegeling and working on their strength for years, yet continue to have “a weak core,” pelvic floor problems, bladder leakage, and/or prolapse issues.

Strong, muscular, crossfit athletes with a ripped abdominal physique have come into my office reporting of bladder leakage with jumping or squatting, yet they work on their “core” daily and continue to have issues feeling balanced around their hips and pelvis.

New or experienced moms who have been through pelvic PT continue to experience long-standing problems the more active they try to be.

I get it. There is confusing info on the internet and some teachings out there are short sighted.

While this article is only a brief snapshot, I hope that it lays a foundation for you to understand your body and movements better, and helps you to stand and move more confidently while doing the activities that bring you joy!

The basis of pelvic floor health is understanding that the pelvic floor is only one component of a bigger system. It's one small part of you, yet is greatly influenced by the function and movements of other postural parts.

For many reasons, the pelvic floor muscles can become weak, tight or spastic. The pelvis can also become misaligned and out of sync with your arms and legs causing unwanted tension and poor control.

The good news is that most of the time, the pain, tension and dysfunction is caused by a mechanical muscular problem that can respond well to realigning or engaging some key relationships.

TURN FOR EXERCISES



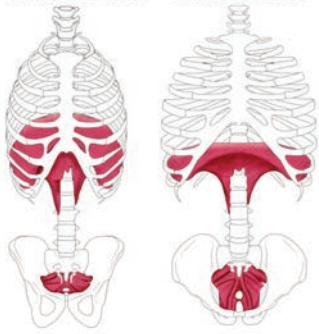
TILT, SHIFT, and HIKE YOUR PELVIS Into Better Health

For basic function, the pelvis needs to learn how to move in three foundational ways: tilt, shift and hike.

TILT The pelvis needs to maintain the ability to tilt in sync with your breathing, thoracic cage, abdominals and hamstrings. To keep the contents of this article light and relevant, let's just look at some basic foundational movements of the thoracic diaphragm and the pelvic floor diaphragm.

The diaphragms of the body are horizontal, trampoline-like muscles that separate cavities or regions of the body. It's very important that the thoracic and pelvic diaphragms can synchronize their movement and muscle control for pelvic and core health.

Full Active EXHALATION Full Active INHALATION



The **full active EXHALATION** image shows pelvic thoracic posturing with the abdominals, hamstrings, glutes and adductors well supporting the pelvic thoracic relationship.

The **full active INHALATION** image shows the unopposed or unsupported postural

changes with too much extension and hyper inhalation. Too much tension is present in the lower back, neck and hip flexors muscles groups.

Notice the shape of the two postures. The movement and positions of the thoracic cage and pelvic bowl are constantly changing shapes throughout the day with all the various ways your body moves. A healthy pelvic floor is able to dynamically adapt and move through, in, out and in-between these end-range postures. When the thoracic and pelvic relationships are well supported with hamstrings, adductors, glutes and abdominals, the pelvic floor muscles are happy and resilient.

When the thoracic and pelvic relationships are strained by too much back extension tone, or too much hip flexor and quad tone, the pelvic floor muscles are strained, stressed and pressured.



90-90 Hip Lift

To properly support a foundational layer for pelvic floor health, I want you to learn how to reposition your posture and learn how to engage your hamstrings and your exhalation abdominals in a basic exercise we call the 90-90 Hip Lift.

- Lay flat on the floor, perpendicular to a wall. Bend your knees 90 degrees and put your feet flat against the wall, making sure your feet are firmly grounded into the wall. Do not allow your knees to go outside the frame of your body. Your knees should be the same width or slightly inside your feet.
- As you exhale, press your feet into the wall, dig your heels down and move your knees upward to rock your tailbone higher than your waist. Keep your back flat against the floor.
- Reach around and make sure your hamstrings are engaged. Keep them engaged as you practice sensing your abdominal muscles' relationship with your breath. Can you feel your deep core abdominals at the end of your exhalation?
- The proper positioning of your hamstring and abdominals gets your pelvis in a better position to train your pelvic floor more effectively. The pelvic floor muscles contract on the exhalation in synchronization with your abdominals and proper hamstring support.

SHIFT Another key support needed for pelvic health is to learn how to shift your pelvis and pubic bone from side to side and engage your inner thigh muscles at the correct time to do this.

Your inner thigh muscles are constantly regulating the tension in your pelvic floor as you walk. When your weight is shifting over your left leg, your left inner thigh should be working to support your pelvic floor as you stand on your left leg, and then as you walk forward, your weight will transition off of that leg onto your right for your right inner thigh to support you when on your right leg. A lot of people develop pelvic dysfunction when their right inner thigh muscles can't relax properly. Because of this, the scissor slide activity needs to be done laying on your right more than the left.

Scissor Slides

To assess and work to rebalance the inner thigh muscles, we use an exercise called the Scissor Slides.

- Lay on your right side in the 90-90 position.
- Roll up a bath towel or use a small ball and place it between your knees. Also place a thin hand towel under your right knee to help cue you to keep your right outside leg against the surface you are laying on.
- As you inhale, shift your pelvis back as you slide your left knee behind your right.
- Maintaining the movement shift, exhale to squeeze your left knee into the towel roll.



HIKE The last of the key pelvic motions you need for pelvic floor health is pelvic hiking. One side of your pelvis should be able to depress as the other hikes slightly higher towards your armpit. This is the hula dancing pelvic motions that are needed to help shift lower back, neck and hip flexion tension.

Due to the fact that we live in a right-handed world, our pelvis often loses the ability to hike on the left side, and if our back is over tightened, it may have lost the ability to hike on either side.

Right Leg Reach

Our Right Leg Reach exercise is our favorite go-to experience to retrain the pelvis to depress on the right side and hike on the left. This exercise is about learning to sense a compression on one side of your body and an elongation or expansion on their other.

- Lay on your left side with your top leg straight and in line with your shoulders. The left leg may be bent.
- As you exhale, stretch your right foot away from your right armpit and hold your leg there.
- Pause and sense your left pelvis pushing down into the surface you are laying on and hiking up toward your left armpit.
- Hold this position, gently inhale and exhale again to elongate your right leg even longer. *This is creating what we call the "mouse house" space between your body and the surface you are laying on. The abdominal wall on the bottom is shortening while the opposite side is lengthening.*
- Hold this position for four to five breaths.

The exercises in this article have been modified techniques originally taught by the Postural Restoration Institute®. If you are having chronic pelvic problems—your core, hips or shoulders feel imbalanced—or you are having any pain, we recommend scheduling a consultation with a certified Postural Restoration Specialist at Thrive Proactive Health, or in your area.

HOW TO EAT FOR YOUR CYCLE

Have you ever thought about syncing the way you eat with your menstrual cycle? It might sound a little out there at first, but it's actually all about working with your body instead of against it. Your hormones naturally shift throughout the month, and those changes affect things like energy, mood, cravings, and even how your body uses nutrients.

By adjusting your eating habits to match each phase of your cycle, you can support your body in a smarter, more nourishing way. Think: better energy, fewer mood swings, reduced PMS, and way fewer cravings. Basically, it's a gentle way to help your body feel more balanced and supported.

Before we dive in, it's helpful to understand how your cycle actually works. Your body moves through different phases—kind of like the seasons—and each one has its own rhythm. Your cycle starts on the first day of your period and ends the day before your next one begins. While the average cycle is around 29 days, anywhere between 23 and 35 days is considered totally normal.

Let's break it all down and explore how you can eat to feel your best, no matter what phase you're in.



MENSTRUAL PHASE

days 1-5

- **Focus on warm and easily digestible foods.** Metabolic rate is high, so choose nutrient-dense foods that provide sustainable energy such as protein and healthy fats. Root vegetables provide vitamin A, which helps the liver filter out excess estrogen. Increased fiber also assists with filtering out excess estrogen in this phase.
- **Foods to emphasize during this phase include** soups, stews, potatoes, chestnuts, beets, figs, edamame, buckwheat, kelp, salmon, butter, dark chocolate, legumes, whole grains, and ginger.

FOLLICULAR PHASE

days 6-14

- **Focus on lighter and energizing foods.** This is a great time to eat raw veggies that are high in fiber, and citrus fruits with vitamin C, which aid in estrogen metabolism. Incorporate fermented food to promote gut vitality and healthy bacteria growth.
- **Foods to emphasize during this phase include** leafy greens, blueberries, citrus fruits, bananas, fermented foods like sauerkraut, pumpkin seeds, flax seeds, and oysters.

OVULATORY PHASE

days 15-17

- **Focus on high-energy foods to support spiking hormone levels.** Complex carbs, high-fiber fruits, and protein provide stabilized energy. Greens such as chard and dandelion root promote liver function and filtration to stabilize estrogen levels.
- **Foods to emphasize during this phase include** strawberries, broccoli, avocados, asparagus, red lentils, lamb, salmon, chocolate, and almonds.

LUTEAL PHASE

days 18-28
this is before
your period

- **You will want to focus on eating healthy and avoiding any foods or habits that trigger inflammation in your body.** Examples are alcohol, caffeine, carbonated drinks with artificial sweeteners, dairy, and added salt. Grounding and warming foods support progesterone production. Stabilize blood sugar levels and cravings with complex carbs from legumes, and whole grains can balance insulin. Magnesium found in leafy greens and dark chocolate helps you deal with bloating and cramping.
- **Foods to emphasize during this phase include** beans, berries, tomatoes, red peppers, apples, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, brown rice, oats, carrots, sweet potatoes, cod, salmon, bone broth, bone-in chicken, and organic grass-fed red meat.

BONUS

Honor your body through each phase of your cycle with exercise! Here are some general guidelines for exercise intensity that may be beneficial during the hormone fluctuations around your cycle.

MENSTRUAL PHASE

light movement, walking, stretching, slow yoga. Rest is key during this phase; pamper yourself.

FOLLICULAR PHASE

light cardio such as hiking, light runs, yoga, swimming.

OVULATION PHASE

opt for circuit, high-intensity interval exercise, spin classes, weight lifting, pilates, dancing, running.

LUTEAL PHASE

light to moderate exercise, strength training, pilates, more intensive yoga (yin or vinyasa).

EASY TIME-SAVING

We women wear many hats: employee, partner, entrepreneur, volunteer, wife, sister, friend, mom, grandma, significant other, chauffeur, activities director, house cleaner, chef... The list goes on and on.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND

In the mix of a chaotic week, home-cooked meals can easily be put on the back burner. We're here to help you maximize your time with three easy meals that **you can prepare in 15 minutes or less.**

DINNER RECIPES FOR YOUR

And while we offer these slow-cooker and oven-baked meals as solutions to your multi-tasking multiverse... Don't forget to take time just to breathe and chill. You're allowed!

TIME-LIMITED WEEK



Veggie Egg Muffins

serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 12 eggs
- ¼ cup plain, unsweetened almond milk
- 1 or 2 cups of veggies of your choice (onions, peppers, spinach, mushrooms, tomatoes, etc.)
- 2 garlic cloves
- Dash salt/pepper

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Whisk together eggs and almond milk. Season with salt and pepper (and any additional herbs/seasonings of your choice).
- Mist a 12-count muffin tin with cooking spray or brush with oil. Add veggie assortment to the muffin tins and pour the egg mixture in each muffin tin until almost full.
- Bake for 15 minutes or until set. Remove and let cool completely before storing in the refrigerator.

Crockpot Chicken Tortilla Soup

serves 6-8 • easy to cook overnight or during the day while at work

INGREDIENTS

- 4 chicken breast halves (or 3 large ones)
- 1 can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can shoepeg corn
- 2 cans of diced tomatoes & green chilies (we like Ro-Tel brand)
- 1 cup salsa
- 4 oz chopped green chilis
- 1 can (14 ½ oz) tomato sauce
- Grain-free tortilla chips (we like Siete brand) and sour cream (dairy or dairy-free) for toppings

INSTRUCTIONS

- Combine all ingredients (except chips and sour cream) in a slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 8 hours.
- Remove chicken and shred, and stir back into soup.
- Serve with grain-free tortilla chips and sour cream.



Honey-Glazed Salmon & Veggies

serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ½ tbsp coconut aminos
- 2 ½ tbsp honey
- 3 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 1 lb small potatoes, halved lengthwise
- ½ tsp salt, extra as needed
- ½ tsp pepper
- 4 (6 oz) skin-on wild salmon filets
- 1 bunch of asparagus spears
- Pinch of red pepper flakes
- Finely chopped parsley, as desired

INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Toss halved potatoes with 1 tbsp oil and spices, arrange potatoes on a baking sheet. Bake for 20 minutes.
- While potatoes are baking, whisk together the marinade for the salmon: coconut aminos, honey, 2 tbsp of olive oil. Trim ends of the asparagus.
- After 20 minutes, remove the pan from the oven and push potatoes to one side. Add salmon filets and asparagus to the pan and season with salt and pepper. Pour the marinade over the top of the salmon filets.
- Bake for an additional 12 minutes or until the salmon is cooked through.
- Sprinkle with chopped parsley and red pepper flakes if desired, and serve.

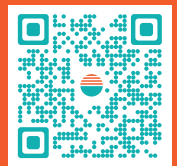


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