
The

THE HORMONE CURE

DR. SARA GOTTFRIED, M.D.



The Hormone Cure Jump Start Course

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Jump Starts

I know what it can feel like to be stuck in a rut with your body, your energy, your mood and your sex drive. It's no fun. Worse than that, it's exhausting, frustrating and debilitating. That's why I designed my popular "Mission Ignition Jump Starts". Consider them fueling stations for your body and soul filled with small actions you can implement right away to start seeing results.

In this special Jump Start (which you're getting because you pre-ordered my books!) I'm sharing with you my best tips for getting your metabolism, mood, energy and sex drive back in balance so you'll feel better than you have in years!

Jump Start - Metabolism

1. Inventory

Take an honest, unflinching inventory of how you feel at the beginning of our time together. I think of metabolism and weight as being not just physical, mediated by biochemistry and genetics and hormones, but also energetic. How's your inner voice? Can you hear it clearly or do you need 10 minutes of quiet time to attune? Is your intuition plugged in? What's your energy like today? Not what you want it to be, or what you think I may want to hear, but how did you feel when you woke up today, before breakfast, after breakfast, and so on? Is your tank full, half-way or empty? Are your relationships energizing or depleting?



Look in the mirror (a literal mirror) at your body. What are you satisfied with? What are you not satisfied with? What is asking for attention? Please record your reflections in a journal or wherever it would most support you. Ideally, perform this inventory every day, either when you awaken or every night before you go to bed. One method is the 4 G's: What is GOOD in my life today? What are the GLITCHES I encountered? What am I GRATEFUL for today? What are my GOALS for the upcoming day?

2. One Supplement

This is a bit of a spoof on OneTaste.us. I am a huge fan and proponent of good supplements and right now I want you to choose just ONE that you'll begin taking this week. One supplement that most supports your needs. Perhaps it's CLA (Conjugated Linoleic Acid) because you want to lose a few pounds or more, and burn fat. Perhaps it's Rhodiola, because you're tired or you want to boost your metabolism. Is your thyroid overactive, and you need L-Carnitine? Or underactive,

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and you need more minerals, such as copper, zinc or selenium? Have you measured your Vitamin D, and need to be consistent about taking it daily (we're desperate for Vitamin D here in the Bay Area of California!). Maybe your pick is EGCg, the extract from green tea, because you'd like to give up caffeine and it helps you feel clear and focused in the morning. Please, don't go into Victim Mode by getting overwhelmed by all the options I provide—just choose one, and stick with it with full intention and awareness during our time together. If you'd feel better talking to your doctor about them first, then make the call. You are in charge of your health.



3. Prevent the Bad Acid Trip

I'm the queen of data. I find, when I begin to slide into some of my default patterns of overdoing, overworking and over providing, that it helps to have external systems to keep me aware that I'm getting off track. Alert! Sara! Pay attention! One of my favorites is to track my morning pH. When you're stressed, you tend

to become acidic, and to eat more acidic foods, such as sugar/refined carbohydrates, animal protein and your stomach makes more acid. Over time, ulcers arise. Acidity prevents hormonal balance by shifting your metabolic, immune, enzyme and repair systems toward crisis mode. Tracking your pH is inexpensive: purchase some inexpensive litmus paper from the local drug store, and measure your pH in the morning. You can test either your saliva (before brushing your teeth: let saliva fill your mouth, then swallow, then let saliva fill your mouth again and smear it on the litmus paper) or on your urine (pee on a 2 to 3 inch piece of litmus paper first thing in the morning). Track it in your smart phone or journal.

4. Get Your Sleep On

One of the top reasons that I see women stall with their weight goals or fail to heal their thyroid or adrenal glands is that they run a chronic sleep debt.



Sometimes it feels that the mantra of the modern woman is this: "But after dinner, when XYZ, is the only time I can get anything done!" However, all of your hormonal systems run on a circadian rhythm, and as we work toward resetting your hormones, you must do your part with winding down and getting to bed by 10pm. Yes, that's right... 10pm!

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5. Basal Body Temperature



Basal body temperature (BBT) is an important way to assess thyroid function particularly in folks who are chronically stressed and they're doctors have told them the 3 words they least want to hear when trying to identify why they are tired, gaining weight and moody: "All is well." Basal body temp is a good way to measure your T3 activity inside cells, which is where it truly affects metabolism.

We used to recommend it mostly for women who were trying to conceive, but now I recommend it for anyone trying to assess if their thyroid is working properly, particularly if your thyroid blood tests are normal.

If your basal body temp is low, chances are your thyroid is underactive and metabolism is low. Here's how to measure BBT. Buy a basal body thermometer. They're different from other thermometers because the temperatures run lower than the usual 98.6. When you wake up, you put the thermometer under your armpit for a good 10 min. This would be a good time to meditate. Remain as still as possible - no multitasking! Record the temp at least 3 days in a row, preferably consecutive. If you're menstruating, ideally you measure on days 2-4 of your period. The normal range is 97.8 to 98.2, so if you're regularly below this range, you are likely to have a thyroid problem.

6. Elimination

Choose one toxin to eliminate from this list: gluten, sugar, alcohol, caffeine, or dairy. For extra credit, slowly

eliminate all 5 over the next 7 days. If you are short on time or patience or bandwidth, just start with one and slowly get it out over the next week. These are the most common food sensitivities. Additionally, gluten is linked to Hashimoto's thyroiditis, also known as autoimmune thyroiditis. Record how you feel after 7 days of being free of these foods. I'll be shocked it it's anything less than fabulous!

7. Mental Retraining

I joke sometimes that I spend half my time working and half my time reversing the ravages of how hard I work, from the stress of my agro lifestyle. I've tried many things to reduce stress, ranging from expensive high-cacao chocolate to expensive fine cabernet to mindfulness to Dailey Method (a form of Barre workout popular right now) to parenting workshops to weekly walks with my girlfriends. But what works best for me is sitting my butt down 5 mornings per week for 15 minutes to be quiet. Sometimes I meditate but more often lately, it's yin yoga or mindfulness.

Or perhaps a customized loving-kindness meditation (learned this from a beloved client!). I want you to choose one form of being quiet and attuning to your inner divinity, and commit to the minimum that you can do consistently 5



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days per week. Keep track of what's working, what's not, and what's challenging about it.

If you're looking for some tips, I especially love the book by Rick Hanson, PhD, called *Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love & Wisdom*. Honestly, while I enjoy his book, I don't have enough time to read it as often as I'd like, but he just released an iPhone app that gives quick meditations or attitude adjustments, and you can select the ones you most like to create your own customized snack list. Check it out!

8. Slow Up When Eating



One of the top reasons I see for fat-loss resistance is that stress, and the main stress hormone, cortisol, is out of whack. Cortisol is too high, causing a spare floaty around your mid-section, or too low and making you fantasize about a cup of coffee when you awaken

in the morning. Too often, I eat in a rushed way, not channeling Geneen Roth at all—shoving food into my mouth over the island in my kitchen, or even worse, dripping over the kitchen sink. Commit for the next 3 weeks to sit down every time you eat, and take 3 deep slow breaths before you take your first bite. Say a blessing, regardless of your religious affiliation, for the effort you or others put into your meal or snack, and for the earth for providing the good vegetables you are about to eat. Smell your food. No, this isn't woo-woo Berkeley hippy-dippy weirdness. Smelling your food

actually activates the enzymes that help you most efficiently digest your food and extract the nutrients you need. Chew slowly until your food is liquid. In Ayurveda, the idea is to eat until 75% full: 25% fluid (such as water), 50% food and the rest blessed emptiness, so that you do not eat until full. Ayurveda believes that the root of all disease and imbalance is poor digestion, particularly prevalent in our over busy lifestyles.

9. Iodine Patch Test

I haven't seen data showing that a home test is as accurate as a urine iodine test, but the price is right. You can test for a potential problem with iodine and/or thyroid problem by putting a patch of iodine on your skin and then note how quickly the patch disappears. If it disappears rapidly, you may be deficient in iodine, which is the most common cause worldwide for low thyroid function and brain damage. Please keep in mind though that you want to be extremely careful about taking exogenous or supplemental iodine because excess iodine can trigger extremes of thyroid function; that is, hyperthyroidism or hypothyroidism. As with most hormones and nutrients, you want to find your sweet spot: not too much, and not too little.

10. Heed Your Body's Cry for Water

Aim to drink for the next 4 weeks approximately 60 to 65 ounces of water per day. Here's how I like to drink it: I buy artisanal vinegar, such as Cranberry-Pear White Balsamic Vinegar or Coconut (from a place called Amphora near my new office in Berkeley) or

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even just raw apple cider vinegar from your local health food store, and mix in 1-2 tablespoons of vinegar with 8-12 oz of filtered water in a big glass. I love it because it's refreshing (and a great alternative to the glass of wine my adrenals request at the end of the day when my nerves are jangly) and gets you a dose of probiotics. There was a study from the University of Chicago that showed that 8oz of water before bed shuts down 100% of hunger pains and cravings. We know that mild dehydration triggers stress in the body and raises cortisol, the main hormone of stress. My great-grandmother did this every night before bed - she'd drink 8oz of warm water with lemon. I do the same but add a pinch of cayenne.



exercise: if weight didn't matter, and you could eat whatever you wanted without gaining weight, what would your food plan be? Jot it down and put it in play this week. I'm particularly interested in the food plan that would best support your mood.

2. Step into the Architect Role

Take the evolutionary perspective on your job description. Women in their 40s and older are not wired to want a lot of sex, or even to be highly attentive to babies. You are wired, as described by author Barbara Sher, to shift from the life you were born into to the life you create. Become the architect of your best life. Women who are clear about the configuration of a life of meaning – what personally brings them the greatest meaning and the energy to sustain it – have it.

3. “Everything is possible—the impossible just takes longer.”

– Dan Brown

What's your outrageous, seemingly impossible goal for your health? Now take that goal and break into smaller modules. We know that more than 70% of US health care costs are for problems that arise from poor lifestyle choices. In other words, 70% or more of your future health care costs might be preventable based on what you do now. Post your most audacious health goal somewhere you can see it every day so you (and those who love you) can hold yourself accountable for taking the baby steps toward your goal.

Jump Start - Mood

1. Don't Mortgage Your Health for Thinness

Are you thin but unhealthy? Dean Ornish recently wrote an opinion piece in The New York Times, commenting that half of Americans are on a diet but that often we get misguided – we believe that if we become or stay thin, it doesn't matter what we eat. That's wrong: being thin and being healthy are completely separate states. For instance, the low-carb or Atkins Diet raises stress hormones in your body such as cortisol and doubles your inflammation, as measured by c-reactive protein. This week, flip the logic and eat for health, not weight. Here's a thought

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4. Eschew Processed Food



Worldwide, processed food sales top \$3.2 trillion, and the worst offenders are marketed to children. Frankenfoods, or foods that have little in common with whole foods, are abusive to your genes. Here's a fairly good rule of thumb – if your great-grandparent wouldn't recognize it – don't eat it. Try going an entire week without eating processed food. And then how about a month? Or a year?

5. Take Tiara Time

Purchase your tiara and wear it 3 times this week. If you heard me talk about Tiara time with my friend JJ Virgin on our call together, you know that I understand that women need help to claim their “Me” time. A tiara can help – it's a visual cue for your family that you are not endlessly available to satisfy their every whim. Wear your tiara at least 3 times this week, and do something nourishing, such as taking a hot bath, talking to a



girlfriend on the phone for 10 minutes, practicing yin yoga, or listening to a meditation CD from Andrew Weil or Jon Kabat Zinn. Claiming “Tiara Time” helps women step back from over-providing, which my friend Jennifer Louden defines as giving more than is sustainable, and often for the wrong reasons.

6. Become a Stress Sleuth

Become a sleuth looking for the hidden ways you create stress and even drama for yourself. It may be the number of times you say “yes” when you mean “probably not” or, better yet, “no.” Or perhaps it's the low-carb diet you favor as a way to keep your weight down, which actually could be raising your stress hormones such as cortisol, and thereby depleting your happy brain chemicals, such as serotonin and dopamine.

7. When Triggered, Ask Empowering Questions

I've been married for years now, and I carry a simple checklist in my iPhone to use when I get emotionally triggered with my husband, or when a friend and I have a disagreement. First, is your “painbody” activated, a concept put forth by Eckart Tolle. (Your painbody, according to Tolle, is the old emotional pain you carry as a negative energy field that occupies your body and mind – it's the old and painful life experiences that were not fully processed and accepted in the past, which leaves behind a residue of emotional pain.) Here is the full list of the questions: Is your pain body activated (that is, is this old pain getting re-triggered)?

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Put another way, are minor things triggering intense anger and defensiveness (get rigorously honest about the “minor” aspect)? Are you resistant to letting go of the negativity—and if so, can you let go just a little bit? If you can even let go a tiny bit of your painbody identity as an angry, hard-done-by person, it helps. A tiny crack is all you need.

8. Tired? Channel Arlene Blum



Fatigue is one of the most common symptoms holding women back from their mission, particularly in perimenopause and menopause. Is it possible that hormonal imbalance is a root cause? Or environmental toxins? Or nutritional deficiency? Jot

down in your accountability journal which are the most likely causes of your fatigue, and take a lesson from Arlene Blum’s life, fueled by tireless energy. Arlene is a mountain climber and indefatigable activist against endocrine disruptors, including flame retardants, and she holds meetings while hiking trails in Tilden Park, a forest near my home in Berkeley, CA.

9. Is Learned Helplessness Holding You Back from Greatness?

Learned helplessness is when you get accustomed to not having much control, perhaps as a child, over your environment – your stressors, how you’re treated, whether people attune to you – and you start to behave helplessly. Ultimately, the problem leads to a situation where you overlook opportunities for change or relief.

Is this true for you? Using your accountability journal, write 3 pages on ways that this pattern might be showing up. Give it your best guess, without judging or feeling bad. Are there any opportunities for you to make positive changes in your life configuration, stress map, hormone balance, health, or lifestyle design that you aren’t considering, aren’t responding to, aren’t taking – possibly because of learned helplessness? Martin Seligman originally developed this theory – and depression as well as other mood issues are thought to stem from a perceived lack of control over the outcome of a situation. The truth is that you are far more effective in situations than you may realize.

10. Remove Your Corset

I filmed a 20/20 segment once about the medical risks of wearing a corset, which is making a comeback especially among younger women. Did you see it? Corsets reduce your maximal breathing by 30 to 60%, which limits neurogenesis (growth of new brain cells) and keeps you in a stress response. Corsets also deform the liver, causing a furrow in the right lobe, and may constrict the gut so much that constipation occurs. Are you wearing a figurative corset that you need to remove, so that you can take a deep breath and soothe yourself? Or is some other aspect of your life, perhaps your alcohol consumption or tendency toward carbophobia, keeping you from the liver function or bowel movements of your dreams? Assess your current “corset” situation and make adjustments as necessary.



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Jump Start - Energy

1. Choose a New Mantra

I suggest you start saying “probably not.” Women are neurologically programmed to overpromise, overprovide, overdeliver -- generally, to people please, often at the expense of our general health, and certainly at the expense of our stress response and adrenal function. Let’s implement a new rule this week. For all the “asks” that come your way this next week, try the following script. You get asked to do something, anything... maybe to stay late at work or drive on a kid’s field trip, and here’s a suggested reply: “Probably not... (pause), but let me think about it.” Do you feel the generous space that creates between stimulus (ask) and response (usually limbic hijack if you’ve allowed no space)? We’re in adrenal recovery together, and this first step is similar to Step 1 in any recovery system -- we admit our powerlessness and turn it over to a higher power, however you define that! No guilt allowed because this is a prescription from Dr. Sara!

2. Walk Barefoot on the Earth

I know, I know.
Sounds woo woo but there’s actually some compelling science that shows you can reset adrenal function by connecting to earth energy. No wonder gardeners are so happy!



3. Bust the Super Woman Myth!

One of the unfortunate legacies of the Feminist Movement is that we gained equal rights to men, in some realms. Unfortunately, we did it on their terms! I believe women need a different model. Not that we can achieve what men do career wise, but that we can find a new way to serve and answer our calling without depleting ourselves, our relationships, our energy tank, and our planet’s resources. How does the Super Woman or Super Mom myth show up for you? The more you can name it, and describe it, the better you recognize the insidious ways that it limits you and keeps you exhausted.

4. Add One Nutrient-Dense Food this Week

Women with adrenal challenges perform better with extra protein, such as a Paleo (Paliolista!) diet. Suggestions: daily kale, bone broths, coconut oil, grass-fed butter.



5. Are You Addicted to Struggle?

We are taught that struggle is noble, but the truth is that it just burns through our adrenal glands. When we struggle, we’re our least resourceful self. How does struggle show up for you? What is one thing you could do this week to reduce struggle in your life?

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Jump Start - Sex Drive

1. Drink 8oz of Water

Before you go to bed drink 8oz of water, and not for the reason you think. There was a study from the University of Chicago that showed that 8oz of water before bed shuts down 100% of hunger pains and cravings. We know that mild dehydration triggers stress in the body and consequently, a low sex drive.

2. Start or Change Up Your Daily Practice

Yin yoga--3 poses in the morning. 4Gs—a writing exercise of what's good in your life, what glitches you encountered in the past 24 hours, gratitude, goals for the day.

3. Dump Caffeine or Alcohol or Both for the Next 30 Days

Caffeine raises cortisol and blocks serotonin receptors. Alcohol is associated with estrogen dominance, and when you withdraw from even small amounts - it increases anxiety.

4. Get an Oil Change

If you don't use coconut oil I want you to start. It's great for your thyroid and is very stable at high temperatures, which makes it a better oil to cook with than olive oil. I have it by my stove in both an organic spray and a jar that I use and I add 1T every day at lunch to my vegetables.



5. Connect to Somatic Intelligence

I want you to work with, over the next few days, your ability to tune into your body to be able to tell what's true for you. I want you to use your body as a gauge of your own current capacity and correct



from that knowledge in real time. It takes practice but I want to plant the seed here at the beginning - how to align head, heart, body in real time as your innate intelligence.

Here's an exercise for developing your somatic intelligence.

Stop yourself once per day for the next 30 days and ask yourself: What decision did I make? How did my head vote? How did my heart vote? How did my belly vote?

6. Be Inspired

Write down the names of 3 women who inspire you with their vitality, their sexual energy, and/or their ability to live life fully on their own terms. They can be famous or people you know personally. Next to their name, write what you believe their beliefs are—regarding sexuality, health and vitality.

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7. Get Needled



Acupuncture raises estradiol levels. If you have symptoms of low estrogen such as low mood, disrupted sleep, hot flashes/night sweats (if cycling, before your period), low sex drive—consider a trip to get Traditional Chinese Medicine.

8. Do Bursts of Intense Exercise

Growth hormone helps to prevent abdominal fat, reduces anxiety and helps those who need excessive sleep. Exercising at your anaerobic threshold raises growth hormone. Measure yours via Canary Club or ask your doctor for a IGF-1 level.

9. Consider Your Shadow

I want you to work, over the next week, with your shadow, particularly as it relates to your sexual self and your sexual energy. “Shadow” is a Jungian term that refers to the disowned or integrated, perhaps unwanted, sides of you. “Everyone carries a shadow,” Jung wrote, “and the less it is embodied in the individual’s conscious life, the blacker and denser it is.” Many are familiar with their money shadow, or have worked on their shadow as it relates to intimacy in relationships, but I suspect you have not yet had the experience of working with your sexual shadow. Your sexual shadow has much to teach you. Get curious about it. Befriend it – this is the path of integration.

10. Make a Stop Doing List

Instead of a to-do list, make a stop-doing list. I’ll show you mine if you show me yours!