



Ayurveda Life

# Āyurvedic Diet & Regimen for a Healthy Menstrual Cycle

Jennifer Maklan, ĀP

# What is your experience?

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- What symptoms do you experience during menses?
- Do you have long, heavy periods or shorter, light periods?
- Are your emotions affected by your cycle?
- Do you experience weakness or low appetite?



# Pain-free, Healthy Periods are Possible

You can experience:

- Symptom-free periods
  - No mood swings
  - No tension or anxiety
  - No acne flare-ups
  - No fluid retention
  - No bloating
  - No breast tenderness
- Pain-free periods
  - No cramps
  - No back pain
  - No joint or muscle pain
- Periods of appropriate length





# Where Āyurveda Excels

"I believe that the Western medical system does not address health very well.

It addresses disease very well – with surgery, pharmaceuticals, diagnostic testing... but it does not have a firm grasp on health."

-- Jennifer Maklan, AP



# What Āyurveda is like...

- 1 Eight branches of Āyurveda
- 2 Panchakarma detox “surgery”
- 3 Gentle detox with formulations
- 4 Rasayana: Rejuvenation Therapy
- 5 Diet & lifestyle education
- 6 Clear definitions of health
- 7 Premonitory symptoms
- 8 Root cause analysis
- 9 Contributing cause analysis
- 10 Holistic support for disease management



# Jennifer Maklan, ĀP

My story: Āyurveda for panic attacks,  
anxiety after graduating from college.

Āyurvedic Practitioner

Classical Āyurveda

ĀYU Academy

The Arogya Center

Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree

Chattanooga, TN



# Doshas perform the functions of the body.

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- They are different than 'body types' (your 'body type' is called *prakriti*)
- Doshas are more than qualities, physical traits, and aspects of our personalities
- They perform all functions of the body
- Three Doshas: Vata, Pitta and Kapha
- Excess and deficiency

# The menstrual cycle, according to Āyurveda





# Menstruation

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- Three days of bleeding
- Natural weakness, loss of strength
- Hunger is diminished
- Vata dosha is predominantly active
  - Downward force, expelling the menstrual blood out of the body
- Full moon (ideally). Why?

# Menstruation: Diet Requirements

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- Eat lightly
- Barley, milk and ghee is recommended
- Avoid heavy foods and overeating
- Avoid: honey, alcohol, excess salt, carbonation, kombucha, soy sauce, fish, yogurt, sour fruits / citrus, caffeine, spicy food, eggs, overeating, cheese.
- Enjoy: hot cereals and milky cereals that are well spiced, vegetable porridges, oats, rice, quinoa, chicken and turkey-based dishes, stir fries.



# What to avoid during your period

- 1 No sex during menses
- 2 No exercise (breaking a sweat)
- 3 No cutting the hair or nails
- 4 No negative emotions
- 5 No daytime napping
- 6 Avoid excess talking
- 7 Avoid loud noise
- 8 No exposure to heat
- 9 No cleaning
- 10 No Āyurvedic therapies

# What to do during your period

1. Think good thoughts
2. Rest
3. Read
4. Sip tea
5. Enjoy yourself
6. Honor the process





# Kapha time of the month

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- Building phase, similar to winter months (moon-predominant)
- Agni / digestion is strongest
- This is the time to exercise to the point of breaking a sweat
- Diet: heavier and richer foods, good quality fats, some sweets, dairy, fish, beef, hot water.
- Avoid: pungent, bitter, astringent tastes
- Favor: sweet, sour, salty tastes
- Do: abhyanga, have sex

# Ovulation / Spring

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- Avoid heavy foods, unctuous / oily foods, sour and sweet foods.
- Avoid daytime napping.
- Enjoy: wheat, barley
- Do: exercise, abhyanga, sex



# Pitta time: Two weeks before menses

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- Heat begins to accumulate, causing a natural dilatation of the channels
- Regimen and diet is similar to summer: dry
- Do: enjoy beverages, favor a sweet, cold, liquid, unctuous diet and drinks (wheat and sugar, ghee, milk, rice), exercise gently (not to the point of breaking a sweat), keep cool
- Avoid: alcohol, excess exercise, sex

## Today you've learned...

1. Both healthy women and those with menstrual difficulties should follow an appropriate regimen during menses.
2. Avoid sex during menses.
3. See a qualified Āyurvedic practitioner if you are experiencing symptoms of PMS. Upcoming webinar.
4. For the two weeks after menses ends, kapha is predominant.
5. For the two weeks before menstruation begins, pitta is predominant. Do gentle exercise leading up to the period.
6. Do not do anything that will halt or shorten the duration of the period. Bleeding must happen.





# Upcoming webinars

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- May 27: Melasma, with Amala Gopakumar
- June 3: UTIs, with Madison Madden
- June 10: Breast Cancer Prevention, with Shibu Issac
- June 17: Spring & Summer Health, with Susan Weis-Bohlen
- June 24: Menstrual Irregularities, with Emma Landau

Join us each Thursday

11am PT / 2pm ET