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GOOD MOOD MEALS

Naturopath and nutritionist Belinda Kirkpatrick reveals delicious ways to balance your hormones with food

BROCCOLI & KALE SALAD

"This super green salad may help relieve relative oestrogen excess, so add it to your regular diet if you suffer from fatigue, easy weight gain, sugar cravings, heavy periods or mood swings," Belinda says. "It works well as a side but also on its own. Simply add chicken, tuna or salmon. It's best chopped finely, like a tabouleh salad."

Serves 2-3

1 small broccoli (just the florets)
 1 kale leaf, stem removed and finely sliced
 ½ Lebanese cucumber, chopped
 ½ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
 8 cherry tomatoes, quartered
 3 tbs pomegranate seeds
 1 tbs sunflower seeds
 1 tbs chopped tamari-roasted almonds
 1 tbs pepitas (pumpkin seeds)
 1 tbs currants
 1 avocado, chopped
 Squeeze of lemon juice
 Salt and pepper, to taste

GREEN HERB DRESSING
 (makes about 1 cup)
 2 tbs olive oil
 2 tbs macadamia oil

2 tsp caramelised red wine vinegar
 1 large handful mint
 1 large handful flat-leaf parsley
 1 small garlic clove
 ½ lemon, juiced
 Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

To make the dressing, place all of the ingredients in a smoothie-maker or blender with 2 tsp water, season and blitz until smooth. (Any leftover dressing can be stored in the fridge for up to 1 week, but it won't retain its bright colour.)

To prepare the salad, place all the ingredients in a bowl and mix to combine. Season and top with the dressing. (If you want to keep any as leftovers, add the avocado and dressing just before serving.)



SALMON FISHCAKES

"Tinned salmon is a great way to add more hormone- and mood-friendly omega-3s to your diet and, thanks to the small bones, it's an excellent source of calcium," Belinda says. "I recommend this dish if you're avoiding dairy (just skip the dressing) and for anyone whose menstrual cycle is absent or irregular."

Serves 4

1 sweet potato, coarsely chopped
 2 eggs, whisked

2 x 210g tins wild-caught salmon with bones, drained
 ¼ cup quinoa flakes
 ½ cup finely chopped fennel
 ¼ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
 ¼ cup chopped spring onions (scallions)
 ¼ cup chopped dill
 1 lemon, zested
 Salt and pepper, to taste
 Olive oil, for frying
 Micro herbs, to garnish

CREAMY TAHINI DRESSING
 (makes 1 cup)

2 tbs hulled tahini
 2 tbs hummus
 3 tbs plain yoghurt
 1 tsp ground cumin
 ½ orange, zested and juiced
 Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Fill a pan with water, add the potato and boil for 10 minutes, or until soft. Meanwhile, to make the dressing, place all of the ingredients in an airtight container, stirring well, and season. (Leftover dressing can be stored in the fridge for up to 1 week.) One cooked, drain the potato and mash it with a fork so it cools slightly. Add the eggs, salmon, quinoa, fennel, parsley, spring onions, dill and zest, then season. Gently mix to combine.

Form the mixture into small patties roughly the size of your palm. Heat a frying pan over medium heat and add the oil. Fry the patties until golden on both sides. Scatter with the herbs and serve with green salad, lemon wedges and the dressing.



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BIG FRITTATA

"The mushrooms in this recipe are a source of selenium, which helps to support optimal fertility and a healthy thyroid," Belinda says. "This recipe is particularly recommended for those with autoimmune thyroid issues."

Serves 8

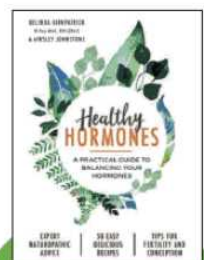
1 sweet potato, chopped
Olive oil, for roasting and frying
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 brown onion, thinly sliced
200g Swiss brown mushrooms
(about 10), coarsely chopped
12 eggs
¾ cup milk
½ cup grated cheddar cheese
(or other cheese of your choice)
1 zucchini, grated
1 cup baby spinach leaves
1 tbs thyme leaves
100g cherry tomatoes, halved
60g goat's cheese
Tomato chutney, to serve

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Line a baking tray with baking paper. Spread over the potato, spray with the oil and season. Roast for about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook the onion and mushrooms in a frying pan with 1 tbs oil for about 10 minutes, until soft.

Line a large baking dish with baking paper and spray with oil. Turn the oven down to 180°C.

Whisk the eggs in a bowl, add the milk, cheese and zucchini and stir to combine. Spread the onion, mushrooms, spinach and roasted sweet potatoes in the prepared dish and pour over the egg mixture. Top with the thyme leaves and tomatoes and crumble over the goat's cheese. Bake for about 50 minutes, until the egg has set. Slice and serve with a green salad and tomato chutney.



This is an edited extract from *Healthy Hormones: A Practical Guide to Balancing Your Hormones* (\$35, Murdoch Books) by Belinda Kirkpatrick & Ainsley Johnstone, out this week.