



Carmen Mair

SEED CYCLING GUIDE

*A science-based guide to seed cycling for
hormone balance and to support fertility*

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Hi! **WELCOME**



Carmen Mair

I am a fertility nutritionist dedicated to helping women overcome fertility challenges by addressing root causes through nutrition and mindset coaching.

Welcome to the Seed Cycling Guide! As your health coach, I'm excited to introduce you to the natural practice of seed cycling, a powerful method to support hormonal balance through diet.

This guide will walk you through the basics of seed cycling, providing tips, recipes, and advice on how to adapt it to your unique cycle, whether regular or irregular. By understanding and applying these principles, you can harness the nutritional benefits of specific seeds to promote overall wellness and hormonal health. Let's embark on this journey together towards a more fertile, more balanced life.

Carmen Mair

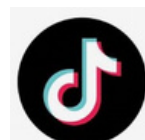
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WHAT IS SEED CYCLING?

Seed cycling has recently gained popularity, yet it's more than a passing trend. When used correctly, seed cycling serves as a beneficial method to intake essential nutrients and support natural hormone balance through dietary means. It's a profound approach to harnessing food as a form of medicine, and the simple dietary adjustment has shown remarkable results.

So, what exactly does seed cycling entail? It involves alternating the consumption of flaxseeds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, and sunflower seeds during different menstrual cycle phases to aid in hormonal equilibrium. Advocates suggest that seed cycling may also promote skin health, alleviate symptoms of conditions like PCOS, and ease menopausal issues such as hot flashes and mood swings.

Particularly noteworthy, seed cycling offers a natural method to rebalance hormones when transitioning off oral contraceptives or other hormonal birth control methods, making it relevant across various stages of women's lives.

While some preliminary studies suggest that the seeds used in seed cycling (like flax, pumpkin, sunflower, and sesame seeds) contain nutrients that may have hormonal benefits, more robust clinical trials are needed to validate its effectiveness and explore potential mechanisms.



THE BENEFITS OF SEED CYCLING

1

Hormone Regulation: Seed cycling is designed to support hormonal balance naturally. Flaxseeds and pumpkin seeds are typically consumed during the first phase of the menstrual cycle (follicular phase). In contrast, sesame and sunflower seeds are consumed during the second (luteal phase) phase. This alternating pattern is believed to provide specific nutrients that support estrogen and progesterone balance throughout the menstrual cycle.



2

Nutrient Density: Seeds used in seed cycling are rich sources of essential nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids, lignans, zinc, and vitamin E. Flaxseeds are known for their high omega-3 content and lignans, which have antioxidant properties and potential estrogenic effects. Pumpkin seeds provide zinc, vital for hormone production and immune function. Sesame seeds are rich in vitamin E, while sunflower seeds provide selenium and vitamin E, both essential for hormone synthesis and antioxidant protection.



3

Support for Women's Health: Seed cycling has been associated with broader health benefits beyond menstrual cycle regulation. It is often touted for its potential to support skin health, manage symptoms of polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), and alleviate menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes and mood swings. These benefits are attributed to the seeds' nutrient profiles and their effects on hormone metabolism and inflammation levels.



HOW DOES SEED CYCLING WORK?

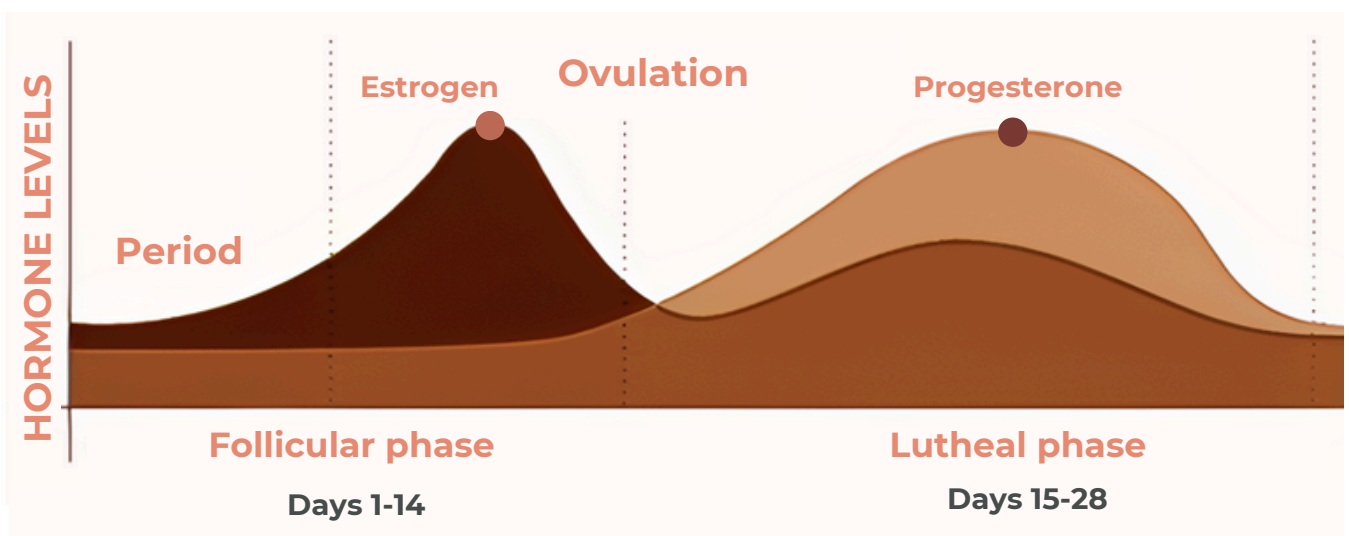
The menstrual cycle consists of two phases:

> Follicular Phase (Days 1-14):

This phase starts with menstruation and ends with ovulation. During this time, estrogen levels rise to help the uterine lining grow and mature the egg. Eating flaxseeds and pumpkin seeds during this phase is beneficial. Flaxseeds are rich in lignans and omega-3 fatty acids, which support estrogen metabolism, while pumpkin seeds provide zinc, essential for hormone production.

> Luteal Phase (Days 15-28):

Following ovulation, progesterone levels increase to maintain the uterine lining. Consuming sesame seeds and sunflower seeds during this phase supports progesterone production and helps maintain a healthy endometrial lining. Sesame seeds are packed with lignans, while sunflower seeds are high in vitamin E, both crucial for hormone balance.



Hormone Dynamics in the Menstrual Cycle

SEED PHASES

Follicular Phase



Flaxseeds



Pumpkin Seeds

Follicular Phase



Sesame Seeds



Sunflower Seeds

- > 1 tablespoon of raw flaxseeds
- > 1 tablespoon of raw pumpkin seeds

These seeds are rich in omega-3 essential fatty acids, zinc, and selenium, crucial for hormone production. They support healthy estrogen metabolism and maintain optimal estrogen levels. Incorporating flaxseeds has been shown to reduce androgen levels in women with PCOS, addressing symptoms like excess hair growth, acne, and breast tenderness.

- > 1 tablespoon of raw sesame seeds
- > 1 tablespoon of raw sunflower seeds

Sesame seeds and sunflower seeds are rich in nutrients such as lignans and vitamin E, which support progesterone production and help maintain a healthy hormonal balance. This can alleviate symptoms associated with hormonal fluctuations, such as mood swings, bloating, and breast tenderness.

NUTRITIONAL INSIGHTS



FLAXSEEDS

Flaxseeds are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, lignans, and fiber.

They support hormone balance by aiding in estrogen metabolism and may help reduce symptoms of hormonal imbalances such as PMS and PCOS.



PUMPKIN SEEDS

Pumpkin seeds are a good source of zinc, magnesium, and omega-3 fatty acids. They contribute to hormone production and support reproductive health. Zinc is particularly important for fertility and hormone balance.



SESAME SEEDS

Sesame seeds are high in lignans, which have antioxidant properties and may support estrogen metabolism. They also provide calcium, magnesium, and vitamin E, which are beneficial for overall health and hormone balance.



SUNFLOWER SEEDS

Sunflower seeds are rich in vitamin E, selenium, and lignans. Vitamin E is an antioxidant that supports reproductive health and hormone balance. Selenium is important for thyroid function and hormone synthesis.

MICRONUTRIENTS AND HORMONAL HEALTH

Flaxseeds and Omega-3s: Supporting Adrenal and Thyroid Health

Flaxseeds are a rich source of omega-3 fatty acids, which have anti-inflammatory properties. Chronic inflammation can disrupt adrenal function by increasing cortisol production, leading to hormonal imbalances. Additionally, omega-3s support thyroid health by improving the conversion of inactive thyroid hormone (T4) into its active form (T3), essential for maintaining energy and metabolic balance.

Pumpkin Seeds and Zinc: Crucial for Hormone Synthesis

Pumpkin seeds are packed with zinc, a mineral vital for both adrenal and thyroid function. Zinc supports the production of thyroid hormones and plays a key role in adrenal health by aiding in the synthesis of cortisol, the body's main stress hormone. Adequate zinc levels help maintain hormonal equilibrium, supporting overall reproductive health.

Sesame Seeds and Selenium: Enhancing Thyroid Function

Sesame seeds are a good source of selenium, a powerful antioxidant critical for thyroid function. Selenium is involved in the production of thyroid hormones and protects the thyroid gland from oxidative damage. It also plays a role in adrenal health by reducing stress-induced inflammation.

Sunflower Seeds and Vitamin E: Balancing Hormones and Reducing Oxidative Stress

Sunflower seeds are rich in vitamin E, which helps modulate hormone levels and supports healthy adrenal function. Vitamin E acts as an antioxidant, reducing oxidative stress that can impair the balance of sex hormones and thyroid function.

MOON CYCLE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SEED CYCLING

The moon cycle, also known as the lunar cycle, is a fascinating natural phenomenon that has been observed and revered by cultures worldwide for centuries. This cycle, which lasts about 29.5 days, represents the changing phases of the moon as it orbits the Earth. Many people believe that the moon's phases can influence various aspects of life, including women's menstrual cycles. For those with irregular menstrual cycles, using the moon cycle as a guide for seed cycling can be an effective way to regulate hormones and support overall health.

The Phases of the Moon

The moon cycle consists of eight distinct phases, but for the purposes of seed cycling, we focus on the new moon and the full moon:

1

New Moon

This phase marks the beginning of the moon cycle. The moon is not visible from Earth during the new moon. In many traditions, the new moon symbolizes new beginnings and a fresh start. For seed cycling, this phase is used to represent the start of the follicular phase of the menstrual cycle.

2

Waxing Crescent

The moon starts to become visible again, growing into a crescent shape. This phase symbolizes growth and development, aligning with the body's preparation for ovulation.

3

First Quarter

Half of the moon is illuminated, symbolizing decision-making and taking action. This phase corresponds to the continued rise in estrogen levels as the body prepares for ovulation.

4

Waxing Gibbous

More than half of the moon is illuminated, indicating progress and refinement. This phase leads to the full moon and can be seen as the body's final preparations before ovulation.

5

Full Moon

The moon is fully illuminated and visible from Earth. The full moon is associated with completion, manifestation, and peak energy in many cultures. For seed cycling, this phase marks the transition to the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle, characterized by the rise in progesterone.

6

Waning Gibbous

Following the full moon, the illumination begins to decrease. This phase represents introspection and releasing what no longer serves us.

7

Last Quarter

Half of the moon is visible again, but now it is the opposite half compared to the first quarter. This phase is about reflection and reevaluation, mirroring the body's preparation for the end of the menstrual cycle.

8

Waning Crescent

The moon continues to shrink until it is no longer visible, leading back to the new moon. This phase represents rest and renewal, similar to the body's need for rest during menstruation.



APPLYING THE MOON CYCLE TO SEED CYCLING

Follicular Phase (New Moon to Full Moon):

New Moon to Full Moon (Day 1-14):

- Seeds: 1 tablespoon ground flaxseeds and 1 tablespoon ground pumpkin seeds daily.
- These seeds help support estrogen production and metabolism, preparing the body for ovulation.

Luteal Phase (Full Moon to New Moon):

Full Moon to New Moon (Day 15-28):

- Seeds: 1 tablespoon ground sunflower seeds and 1 tablespoon ground sesame seeds daily.
- These seeds support progesterone production and help maintain a healthy luteal phase.

Benefits of Using the Moon Cycle

- **Regularity and Rhythm:** Aligning your seed cycling with the moon cycle provides a consistent and predictable framework, especially useful for those with irregular cycles.
- **Holistic Approach:** This method embraces a natural and holistic approach to health, considering the interconnectedness of nature and the human body.
- **Mind-Body Connection:** Following the moon cycle can enhance your awareness of your body's rhythms and promote a deeper connection to natural cycles.

SEED CYCLING AND SLEEP

The micronutrients in seeds, such as magnesium in pumpkin seeds and omega-3s in flaxseeds, support sleep quality by promoting relaxation and reducing stress. Incorporating seed cycling with improved sleep hygiene can enhance hormonal balance, supporting overall fertility.

Tips to Improve Sleep for Fertility

1. **Establish a Consistent Sleep Schedule:** Go to bed and wake up at the same time daily, even on weekends.
2. **Create a Sleep-Friendly Environment:** Keep your bedroom dark, cool, and quiet to promote restful sleep.
3. **Limit Screen Time Before Bed:** Blue light from screens can suppress melatonin production, making it harder to fall asleep.
4. **Incorporate Relaxation Techniques:** Activities like deep breathing, meditation, or gentle yoga can help calm the mind and prepare the body for sleep.

DOS AND DON'TS



- Follow the phases of your cycle: Follicular Phase (Days 1-14) - consume 1-2 tablespoons of ground flaxseeds and pumpkin seeds daily; Luteal Phase (Days 15-28) - consume 1-2 tablespoons of ground sesame seeds and sunflower seeds daily.
- Grind your seeds to help your body absorb the nutrients better. Use a coffee grinder or blender.
- Store seeds properly in an airtight container in the refrigerator or freezer to prevent them from becoming rancid.
- Incorporate seeds into your diet in creative ways, such as adding them to smoothies, yogurt, salads, oatmeal, or baked goods.
- Listen to your body and pay attention to how it responds to seed cycling, adjusting the intake if necessary.



- Don't use whole seeds without grinding them first, as your body may not fully absorb the nutrients.
- Don't store seeds in a warm or humid environment, which can lead to spoilage.
- Don't consume excessive amounts of seeds, as this can cause digestive issues or nutrient imbalances.
- Don't skip days frequently; consistency is key for seed cycling to be effective.
- Don't ignore any adverse reactions or discomfort; stop the practice and consult a healthcare provider if necessary.
- Don't rely solely on seed cycling for hormone balance; maintain a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle.

EQUIPMENT AND STORAGE TIPS

EQUIPMENT

Grinder or Blender:

For easier consumption and better absorption of nutrients, consider grinding seeds before use, especially flaxseeds and sesame seeds.

Mason Jars or Airtight

Containers: Use these to store seeds after opening their original packaging to maintain freshness and prevent spoilage.

Storage Bins or Pantry

Organizers: These help keep seeds organized and accessible for regular use.



STORAGE TIPS

Cool, Dry Place:

Store seeds in a cool, dry location away from direct sunlight to maintain their nutritional integrity and prevent rancidity.

Refrigeration:

While not always necessary, refrigerating ground seeds, especially flaxseeds, can extend their shelf life and preserve their nutrients.

Freezing:

If you buy seeds in bulk or intend to store them long-term, freezing them in airtight containers or freezer bags can help maintain freshness.



**DELICIOUS
RECIPES**



VEGAN



3 SERVINGS



25 MIN

SESAME QUINOA SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- 2 cups water
- 1 cucumber, diced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh herbs (such as parsley or cilantro)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds

DIRECTIONS

1. In a medium saucepan, bring quinoa and water to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes, or until quinoa is cooked and water is absorbed. Remove from heat and let it cool.
2. In a large bowl, combine cooled quinoa with diced cucumber, cherry tomatoes, and chopped fresh herbs.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, tahini, salt, and pepper until smooth.
4. Pour the dressing over the quinoa salad and toss to coat evenly.
5. Sprinkle toasted sesame seeds over the salad just before serving.
6. Serve the Sesame Quinoa Salad chilled or at room temperature. Enjoy!

NUTRITIONAL VALUES (PER SERVING)

Calories: 393

Protein: 11

Fat: 20

Carbs: 43



VEGETARIAN



2 SERVINGS



15 MIN

PUMPKIN SEED PESTO ZUCCHINI NOODLES

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium zucchinis, spiralized into noodles
- 1/2 cup pumpkin seeds (pepitas), toasted
- 2 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Cherry tomatoes, halved, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

1. In a food processor, pulse toasted pumpkin seeds until finely ground.
2. Add basil leaves, minced garlic, and grated Parmesan cheese (if using) to the food processor. Pulse until combined.
3. With the food processor running, slowly drizzle in olive oil until the pesto is smooth and well combined. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. In a large bowl, toss spiralized zucchini noodles with the pumpkin seed pesto until evenly coated.
5. Serve the Pumpkin Seed Pesto Zucchini Noodles garnished with halved cherry tomatoes.
6. Enjoy this nutritious and flavorful dish!

NUTRITIONAL VALUES (PER SERVING)

Calories: 460

Protein: 13

Fat: 38

Carbs: 20



VEGETARIAN



1 SERVING



5 MIN

FLAXSEED BLUEBERRY SMOOTHIE BOWL

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup frozen blueberries
- 1/2 ripe banana
- 1/4 cup Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup almond milk (or any milk of your choice)
- 1 tablespoon ground flaxseeds
- Toppings: fresh berries, sliced banana, granola, shredded coconut, chia seeds

DIRECTIONS

1. In a blender, combine frozen blueberries, ripe banana, Greek yogurt, almond milk, and ground flaxseeds.
2. Blend until smooth and creamy, adding more almond milk if needed to achieve desired consistency.
3. Pour the smoothie into a bowl.
4. Top with fresh berries, sliced banana, granola, shredded coconut, and chia seeds.
5. Serve immediately and enjoy your nutritious Flaxseed Blueberry Smoothie Bowl!

NUTRITIONAL VALUES (PER SERVING)

Calories: 195
Protein: 10
Fat: 5
Carbs: 30



VEGAN



1 SERVING



15 MIN

FLAXSEED CHIA PUDDING

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup chia seeds
- 1 cup almond milk (or any milk of your choice)
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup or honey (optional)
- 1 tablespoon ground flaxseeds
- 1/2 banana, for topping
- Nuts or seeds, for topping (such as toasted almonds or sunflower seeds)

DIRECTIONS

1. In a bowl, combine chia seeds and almond milk. Stir well to combine.
2. Add maple syrup or honey (if using) and ground flaxseeds to the mixture. Stir again until well combined.
3. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or overnight, until the chia pudding thickens and sets.
4. Stir the chia pudding before serving to evenly distribute the seeds.
5. Pour the Flaxseed Chia Pudding into a serving bowl.
6. Top with banana and nuts or seeds of your choice.
7. Enjoy this creamy and nutritious Flaxseed Chia Pudding for breakfast or as a healthy dessert!

NUTRITIONAL VALUES (PER SERVING)

Calories: 486

Protein: 18

Fat: 23

Carbs: 59



VEGETARIAN



1 SERVING



15 MIN

SUNFLOWER SEED AND KALE SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups chopped kale leaves
- 1 tablespoon sunflower seeds, toasted
- 1/2 cup baked pumpkin, cubed
- 1/4 cup red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon cranberries
- 1 tablespoon crumbled feta cheese
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large bowl, combine chopped kale leaves, toasted sunflower seeds, dried cranberries, pumpkin, red onion, and crumbled feta cheese.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, salt, and pepper until well combined.
3. Pour the dressing over the kale salad and toss to coat evenly.
4. Serve the Sunflower Seed and Kale Salad immediately, or refrigerate for 30 minutes to allow flavors to meld.

NUTRITIONAL VALUES (PER SERVING)

Calories: 242

Protein: 5.5

Fat: 20

Carbs: 14



VEGAN



1 SERVING



5 MIN

SUNFLOWER SEED AND BANANA SMOOTHIE

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ripe banana
- 2 tablespoons sunflower seed (or 1 tablespoon natural sunflower seed butter)
- 1 cup almond milk (or any milk of your choice)
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon honey or maple syrup (optional)
- Ice cubes, as needed

DIRECTIONS

1. In a blender, combine ripe banana, sunflower seeds, almond milk, cinnamon, and honey or maple syrup (if using).
2. Add ice cubes as needed to achieve desired thickness.
3. Blend until smooth and creamy.
4. Pour into glasses and serve immediately.
5. Enjoy your refreshing and nutritious Sunflower Seed Butter and Banana Smoothie!

NUTRITIONAL VALUES (PER SERVING)

Calories: 480
Protein: 15
Fat: 23
Carbs: 60

SEED CYCLING TIPS AND TRICKS

Use Fresh Seeds

Quality: Purchase fresh, organic seeds to ensure you're getting the highest quality nutrients.

Storage: Store seeds in a cool, dark place. Ground seeds should be kept in the refrigerator or freezer to prevent rancidity.

Listen to Your Body

Track Changes: Keep a journal to note any changes in your symptoms, mood, and overall well-being.

Adjust as Needed: If you notice any adverse reactions or no improvements, consider adjusting the types or amounts of seeds you're consuming.

Pair with a Healthy Diet

Balanced Nutrition: Complement seed cycling with a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins.

Hydration: Drink plenty of water throughout the day to support overall health.

Grind Your Seeds

Why: Ground seeds are easier for your body to digest and absorb.

How: Use a coffee grinder, blender, or food processor to grind seeds. Store ground seeds in an airtight container in the refrigerator to keep them fresh.

Incorporate Seeds Into Your Meals

Smoothies: Add ground seeds to your morning smoothie for a nutritious boost.

Salads: Sprinkle seeds on top of salads for added crunch and nutrients.

Yogurt and Oatmeal: Mix seeds into yogurt or oatmeal for a healthy breakfast.

Stay Consistent

Daily Intake: Aim to consume the recommended seeds daily for the best results.

Routine: Integrate seed consumption into your daily routine to ensure consistency.

CONCLUSION

Seed cycling is a natural and gentle way to support hormonal balance and overall health. By incorporating specific seeds into your diet at different phases of your menstrual cycle, you can harness the power of nutrients to help regulate estrogen and progesterone levels. This guide provides you with the tools and knowledge to start your seed cycling journey, offering practical tips, delicious recipes, and ways to adapt the practice for irregular cycles.

Remember, consistency and patience are key. It may take a few cycles to notice significant changes, but sticking with it can yield positive results. Alongside seed cycling, maintaining a balanced diet, staying hydrated, and leading a healthy lifestyle will further support your hormonal health.

Whether you have a regular or irregular cycle, or are aligning with the moon phases, seed cycling is a versatile and holistic approach to wellness. Embrace this practice, listen to your body, and enjoy the benefits of using food as medicine. Here's to a healthier, more balanced you!





THANK YOU

Thank you for exploring this Seed Cycling Guide. I hope it provides you with valuable insights and empowers you to incorporate this practice into your daily routine with confidence.

Remember, achieving hormonal balance is a journey that takes time, patience, and consistency. You're not alone on this path—I'm here to support and guide you every step of the way as we work together toward your miracle baby.

Stay in touch!

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