STRENGTH · FOOD · SLEEP · CALM

The Perimenopause Playbook

A 28-Day Plan for Women 35+



STRENGTH | PROTEIN | SLEEP | STRESS

28-day plan · 8 strength moves · symptom & habit log · doctor visit prep

By Coach Luke | NASM-CPT, NESTA Nutrition Coach

START HERE

How to use your playbook

Perimenopause can make your body feel like it changed the rules without telling you. Sleep gets lighter, energy swings, moods run hotter and your old routine stops working. This playbook gives you a simple 28-day plan built on five things you can control: strength, protein and food, sleep, stress, and small daily habits.

1. **Read pages 3 to 4 first.** They cover what this plan can and cannot do, and when to see your doctor.
2. **Do your Day 1 check (page 5).** A few quick tests and ratings, so you can see your progress on Day 28.
3. **Follow one week at a time.** Each week adds two or three habits. The week page tells you what to do each day.
4. **Fill in the log for a minute each evening.** Symptoms, sleep and habits on one page. Patterns jump out by Week 3.
5. **Take your notes to your doctor.** The doctor visit pages turn your log into a one-page summary and a question list.

What's inside

Before you start	3	What is going on	4
Day 1 check	5	Your 28 days at a glance	6
Strength: how it works	7	The 8 moves	8
Your two sessions	10	Walking + Unwind Flow	11
Protein + food	12	Protein cheat sheet	13
Build-a-plate ideas	14	Sleep plan	15
Stress + mood	16	Your daily checklist	17
Weeks 1-4 + logs	18	Day 14 check-in	22
Strength log	27	Cycle + bleeding log	28
Day 28 re-test	29	Doctor visit prep	30
Weeks 5-8: keep going	32	Your free bonus	34

MY DAY 1 DATE

WHO I'LL TELL, SO THEY CAN CHEER ME ON

You will need: a pair of dumbbells (or filled water bottles to start), a chair, a mat or carpet, and a pencil. Print at 100% on Letter or A4. Reprint the weekly logs any time.

READ THIS FIRST

Before you start

WHAT THIS PLAYBOOK CAN DO

- Help you build strength with two or three short sessions a week.
- Show you how to eat enough protein and fiber without a strict diet.
- Give you a sleep routine and a stress plan you can actually keep.
- Help you spot patterns in your symptoms, sleep and cycle.
- Help you walk into your doctor's office with clear notes and questions.

WHAT IT CAN'T DO

- It can't cure perimenopause or make your symptoms go away.
- It won't "balance your hormones." No food, workout or habit can promise that.
- It is not a weight-loss plan, and it makes no weight promises.
- It does not diagnose anything and it is not a replacement for medical care.
- It does not replace treatment your doctor recommends.

Talk to your doctor first. Check with your doctor before you start a new exercise or eating plan, especially if you have a heart or blood pressure condition, osteoporosis, diabetes, joint problems or a recent injury, take medication, or have a history of disordered eating. You can still get pregnant in perimenopause, so ask about birth control if that matters to you. This plan is not designed for pregnancy.

Call your doctor promptly if you notice

- Very heavy bleeding, such as soaking a pad or tampon every hour or two
- Periods less than 21 days apart, or bleeding that lasts more than 7 days
- Bleeding between periods or after sex
- Any bleeding after 12 months without a period
- Chest pain, fainting, or a racing heart with shortness of breath (get urgent care)
- Low mood most days for two weeks or more, or anxiety that stops daily life
- Loud snoring, gasping in your sleep, or drowsiness while driving
- Sharp pain, dizziness or anything that feels wrong during exercise: stop

If you ever have thoughts of harming yourself, contact your local emergency number or a crisis line right away. In the US, call or text **988**.

QUESTIONS I WANT TO ASK MY DOCTOR BEFORE I START

I'm a NASM-certified personal trainer and NESTA nutrition coach, not a doctor. Everything here is general education.

THE BIG PICTURE

What's going on in perimenopause

Perimenopause is the stretch of years before menopause, when estrogen and progesterone start to rise and fall unevenly. It often begins in your 40s and sometimes in your late 30s, and it can last several years. Menopause itself is the point when you have gone 12 months without a period.

WHAT MANY WOMEN NOTICE

- Cycles that get shorter, longer, heavier or lighter
- Hot flashes and night sweats
- Lighter sleep and 3 a.m. wake-ups
- Anxiety, irritability or low mood
- Tiredness, brain fog, achy joints
- Changes in where your body stores fat

WHY A PLAN HELPS

- Falling estrogen speeds up muscle and bone loss. Strength training is one of the most direct ways to push back.
- Protein and fiber at meals help keep energy and hunger steadier.
- A steady sleep routine gives lighter sleep the best chance.
- Stress tools turn down the volume on a more reactive stress response.

Your five pillars

Strength
Protects muscle and bone as estrogen falls

Protein + food
Steadier energy, fuller meals, muscle support

Sleep
A routine for lighter, broken nights

Stress + mood
Two-minute tools for a busier stress response

Daily habits
Small daily wins that add up over 28 days

Your symptoms are real, and you are not imagining them. Many of them have treatments, including hormonal and non-hormonal options. This plan works alongside that care, not instead of it. Your log will help you and your doctor decide what fits you.

CHANGES I'VE NOTICED, AND ROUGHLY WHEN THEY STARTED

DAY 1

Your starting point

Do this on Day 1, with your first session

These checks are not a test you pass or fail. They give you something to compare on Day 28. Warm up first (page 7), rest a minute between checks, and skip any that hurt.

STRENGTH CHECK	DAY 1	
30-second sit-to-stand Sit and stand from a chair, arms crossed. Count full stands.		stands
Push-ups Hands on a counter, wall or floor (note which). Count good reps.		reps
Farmer's hold Hold your dumbbells at your sides, standing tall. Time it (max 90 s).		seconds
Goblet squat weight The weight you used for 8 good reps on Day 1 of Strength A.		lb / kg

RATE YOURSELF TODAY (1 LOW TO 10 HIGH)	DAY 1	
Energy		1 to 10
Sleep quality		1 to 10
Mood		1 to 10
Stress (10 = very calm)		1 to 10
How strong I feel		1 to 10
Confidence in my plan		1 to 10

THE 3 SYMPTOMS BOTHERING ME MOST

WHY I WANT THIS, IN MY OWN WORDS

HOW I WANT TO FEEL BY DAY 28

THE PLAN

Your 28 days at a glance

WEEK 1 · FOUNDATIONS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strength A Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min Day 1 check	**Walk** 20 min at a pace you can talk	**Walk + Unwind Flow** 15 to 20 min walk, 10 min flow	**Strength B** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min	**Walk** 20 min at a pace you can talk	**Longer walk or easy fun** 30 to 45 min, anything you enjoy	**Rest + weekly check** Easy stroll if you like

WEEK 2 · FUEL

8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Strength A Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min	**Walk** 25 min at a pace you can talk	**Walk + Unwind Flow** 15 to 20 min walk, 10 min flow	**Strength B** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min	**Walk** 25 min at a pace you can talk	**Longer walk or easy fun** 30 to 45 min, anything you enjoy	**Rest + weekly check** Easy stroll if you like Check-in

WEEK 3 · SLEEP

15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Strength A Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min	**Walk** 25 min at a pace you can talk	**Strength B** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min	**Walk + Unwind Flow** 15 to 20 min walk, 10 min flow	**Strength A** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min	**Longer walk or easy fun** 30 to 45 min, anything you enjoy	**Rest + weekly check** Easy stroll if you like

WEEK 4 · CALM

22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Strength B Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min	**Walk** 30 min at a pace you can talk	**Strength A** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min	**Walk + Unwind Flow** 15 to 20 min walk, 10 min flow	**Strength B** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min	**Longer walk or easy fun** 30 to 45 min, anything you enjoy	**Rest + weekly check** Easy stroll if you like Re-test

Strength A / B page 10 **Unwind Flow** page 11 Move days around your week. Keep a day between strength sessions when you can.

> Every day also has your daily checklist (page 17). Tick the box on each day you show up, even if you only did the hard-day version.

PILLAR 1 · STRENGTH

How your strength sessions work

Two short sessions a week in Weeks 1 and 2, then three in Weeks 3 and 4. Each session is a 5-minute warm-up, four moves, and a 3-minute cool-down. That's about 20 to 30 minutes. Cardio is great for your heart and mood, but strength work is what loads your muscles and bones.

WARM-UP · 5 MINUTES

- March in place or walk briskly for 2 minutes
- 10 slow squats to a chair
- 10 arm circles each way
- 8 hip hinges, hands on your hips
- 1 light set of your first move

COOL-DOWN · 3 MINUTES

- Walk slowly for 1 minute
- Calf stretch against a wall, 30 seconds each side
- Chest opener in a doorway, 30 seconds
- 3 slow breaths with a long exhale

HOW HARD SHOULD IT FEEL?

Stop each set when you have about **2 to 3 good reps left in the tank**. On a 1 to 10 effort scale, that's a 6 to 8: challenging, but your form stays clean. Rest 60 to 90 seconds between sets.

When to go heavier: when you can do the top of the rep range on every set with 2 or more reps to spare, go up a little next time (about 2 to 5 lb or 1 to 2 kg). Small jumps, every week or two.

CHOOSING WEIGHTS

Start lighter than you think. Many women start with 5 to 15 lb (2 to 7 kg) dumbbells, often a lighter pair for arms and a heavier pair for legs. Filled water bottles or a backpack work for Week 1.

HARD DAYS

Bad night, joints achy, hot flashes? Do one set of each move, use a smaller range, or swap the session for a walk and the Unwind Flow. Skipping one session does not undo your progress.

Stop and check in with your doctor if you feel chest pain, dizziness, sharp joint pain, or unusual shortness of breath. If you have osteoporosis, a pelvic floor issue or a recent injury, ask your doctor or a physical therapist which moves fit you.

MY EQUIPMENT AND STARTING WEIGHTS

THE 8 MOVES · 1 OF 2

Session A moves

Finish position shown · amber arrow = direction

SESSION A

1



Goblet Squat

1. Hold one dumbbell at your chest, elbows tucked. Feet a little wider than hips.
2. Sit your hips back and down as far as feels good, chest tall.
3. Push through your whole foot to stand.

Easier: Sit-to-stand from a sturdy chair, no weight.

Harder: Pause for 2 seconds at the bottom.

Works: Thighs, glutes, core

SESSION A

2



Bent-Over Row

1. Hinge forward with a flat back and soft knees, dumbbells hanging.
2. Pull your elbows back toward your hips and squeeze your shoulder blades.
3. Lower slowly until your arms are long again.

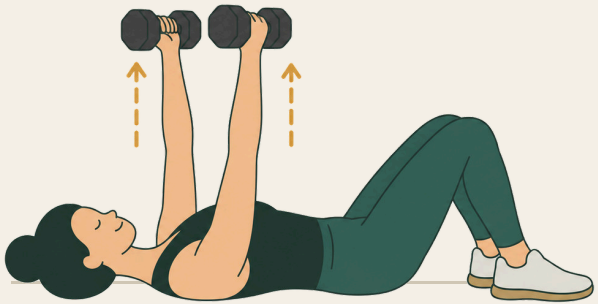
Easier: One arm at a time, other hand on a chair or counter.

Harder: Take 3 seconds to lower.

Works: Upper back, arms, posture

SESSION A

3



Floor Press

1. Lie on your back, knees bent, dumbbells over your chest.
2. Lower until your upper arms rest on the floor.
3. Press straight up until your arms are long, then repeat.

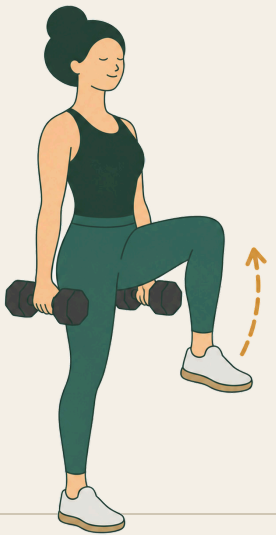
Easier: Lighter weights, or push-ups with hands on a counter.

Harder: Pause 1 second with your arms on the floor.

Works: Chest, shoulders, back of arms

SESSION A

4



Farmer's March

1. Hold a dumbbell in each hand at your sides. Stand tall, shoulders down.
2. Lift one knee to about hip height, then lower it.
3. Switch legs and keep your trunk still. March slowly for 30 to 40 seconds.

Easier: No weights, one hand on a counter, or just hold the weights and stand tall.

Harder: Heavier weights and a slower march.

Works: Grip, core, balance

THE 8 MOVES · 2 OF 2

Session B moves

Finish position shown · amber arrow = direction

SESSION B

5



Romanian Deadlift

1. Stand tall, dumbbells in front of your thighs, knees soft.
2. Push your hips back and slide the weights down your legs with a flat back.
3. Stop when you feel your hamstrings, then squeeze your glutes to stand.

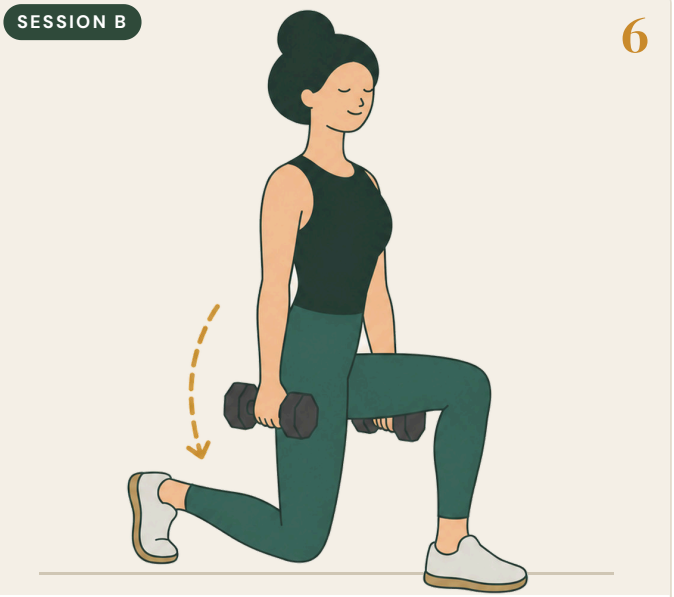
Easier: No weights, hands on your hips, smaller range.

Harder: Take 3 seconds to lower.

Works: Hamstrings, glutes, back

SESSION B

6



Reverse Lunge

1. Stand tall with a dumbbell in each hand.
2. Step one foot back and bend both knees, back knee hovering above the floor.
3. Push through your front foot to step back up. Switch sides.

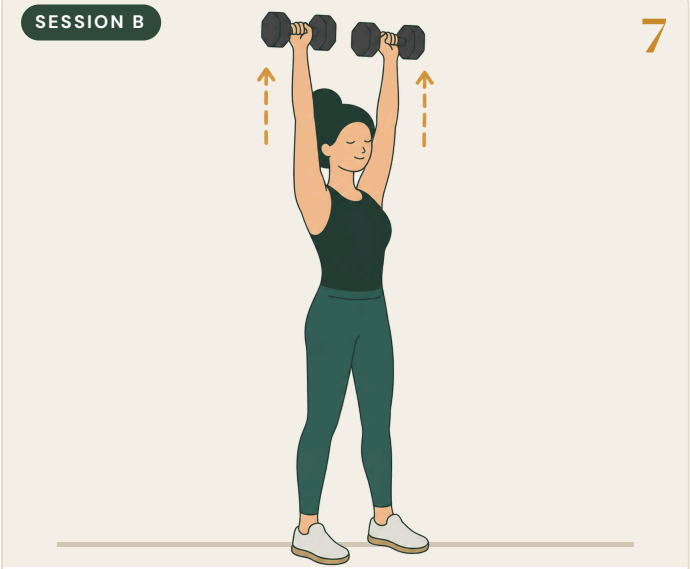
Easier: No weights, hold a counter, and take a shorter step.

Harder: Pause for 1 second at the bottom.

Works: Thighs, glutes, balance

SESSION B

7



Overhead Press

1. Hold the dumbbells at your shoulders, ribs down, glutes tight.
2. Press up until your arms are straight, without arching your low back.
3. Lower slowly back to your shoulders.

Easier: Sit on a chair, or press one arm at a time.

Harder: Take 3 seconds to lower.

Works: Shoulders, arms, upper back

SESSION B

8



Glute Bridge

1. Lie on your back, knees bent, feet flat. Rest a dumbbell on your hips.
2. Press through your heels and lift your hips until knees, hips and shoulders line up.
3. Pause, then lower slowly.

Easier: No weight, and a smaller lift.

Harder: Hold for 2 seconds at the top.

Works: Glutes, hamstrings

PILLAR 1 · STRENGTH

Your two sessions

STRENGTH A · ABOUT 20 TO 30 MINUTES

Session A

Warm-up	5 min, page 7
 **1. Goblet Squat**	sets x reps, see table
 **2. Bent-Over Row**	sets x reps, see table
 **3. Floor Press**	sets x reps, see table
 **4. Farmer's March**	timed, see table
Cool-down	3 min

STRENGTH B · ABOUT 20 TO 30 MINUTES

Session B

Warm-up	5 min, page 7
 **5. Romanian Deadlift**	sets x reps, see table
 **6. Reverse Lunge**	sets x reps, see table
 **7. Overhead Press**	sets x reps, see table
 **8. Glute Bridge**	reps, see table
Cool-down	3 min

WEEK	MOST MOVES	FARMER'S MARCH	GLUTE BRIDGE	FOCUS
Week 1	2 sets of 8 to 10	2 x 30 sec	2 x 12	Learn the moves. Use weights that feel easy.
Week 2	2 sets of 10 to 12	2 x 40 sec	2 x 15	Same weights, a few more reps.
Week 3	3 sets of 8 to 10	3 x 30 sec	3 x 12	Add a third set. Go a little heavier if Week 2 felt easy.
Week 4	3 sets of 10 to 12	3 x 40 sec	3 x 15	Same weights, more reps. Note what you lifted.

THE 10-MINUTE HARD-DAY VERSION

One round, slow and steady: 10 goblet squats or sit-to-stands, 10 rows, 10 glute bridges, 30 seconds of marching. Or walk for 10 minutes. Something beats nothing.

ORDER OF SESSIONS

Weeks 1-2: A, then B. Weeks 3-4: three sessions, alternating A and B (A-B-A, then B-A-B). Write what you lift in your strength log (page 27).

FORM NOTES: WHAT FELT GOOD, WHAT TO WATCH

PILLAR 1 · MOVEMENT

Walking + the Unwind Flow

Walking is the quiet workhorse of this plan. It helps your mood, helps your body handle blood sugar after meals, and aids recovery between strength days, without much wear on your joints.

YOUR WALKING BUILD-UP

- **Week 1:** 20 minutes on walk days
- **Week 2:** 25 minutes
- **Week 3:** 25 minutes, add a hill or a few brisk minutes
- **Week 4:** 30 minutes
- Pace: you can talk, but you would rather not sing.
- Short on time? Three 10-minute walks after meals count.

HOT FLASH FRIENDLY

- Walk or train in the cooler part of the day
- Wear light layers you can peel off
- Keep cold water close
- Lower the pace instead of stopping altogether

The Unwind Flow · 10 minutes

Once a week on your Flow day, and any evening as part of your wind-down. Move slowly, breathe out longer than you breathe in, and stay in a comfortable range.

Cat-cow	On hands and knees, slowly round and arch your back. 6 slow rounds.
Child's pose	Knees wide, hips back, arms long. 5 slow breaths.
Low lunge stretch	One knee down on a cushion, hips forward gently. 30 seconds a side.
Figure-four stretch	On your back, ankle over the opposite knee, pull gently. 30 seconds a side.
Open book	On your side, knees bent, open your top arm across to the floor. 6 a side.
Legs up the wall	Lie with your legs resting up a wall. Breathe slowly for 2 minutes.

> Prefer a class? A gentle, hatha or yin yoga class fits well on your Flow day. Yoga is a great partner to strength work, but it doesn't replace it.

MY WALKING ROUTES AND BEST TIMES TO WALK

PILLAR 2 · PROTEIN + FOOD

Eat to support your strength

This is not a diet and there is nothing to count unless you want to. The goal is simple: enough protein to protect your muscle, plenty of fiber, and meals that keep you full and steady.

THE PLATE FORMULA

- **Protein:** a palm or two (eggs, yogurt, fish, chicken, tofu, lentils)
- **Vegetables:** half the plate (or fruit at breakfast)
- **Slow carbs:** about a fist (oats, potatoes, beans, rice, whole grain bread)
- **Healthy fat:** about a thumb (olive oil, nuts, seeds, avocado)

SIMPLE TARGETS

- **Protein:** about 25 to 30 g at each of 3 meals
- **Fiber:** about 21 to 25 g a day for most women
- **Calcium:** 1,000 mg a day up to age 50, 1,200 mg from 51 (NIH)
- **Water:** sip through the day; pale yellow is a good sign

FOODS WORTH ROTATING IN

- Oily fish like salmon and sardines
- Soy foods like tofu, tempeh, edamame
- Dairy or calcium-fortified alternatives
- Beans and lentils
- Ground flaxseed and chia
- Colorful vegetables and berries

COMMON TRIGGERS TO NOTICE

- Alcohol, especially in the evening
- Large, late or very sugary meals
- Spicy food (for some women)
- Caffeine later in the day

Use your log to see which, if any, affect your hot flashes and sleep.

Don't under-eat. Crash diets cost muscle and energy. If you are hungry all afternoon, add protein to lunch before you add snacks. If you have diabetes, kidney disease, take medication, or have a history of disordered eating, check with your doctor or a dietitian before changing how you eat.

PROTEINS AND MEALS I ALREADY LIKE

PILLAR 2 · PROTEIN + FOOD

Protein cheat sheet

24 everyday foods, about how much protein

FOOD	SERVING	PROTEIN (G)
Chicken breast, cooked	4 oz (113 g)	**35**
Turkey breast, cooked	4 oz	**34**
Lean beef (90/10), cooked	4 oz	**32**
Salmon, cooked	4 oz	**28**
Tuna, canned, drained	1 can (about 4 oz)	**27**
Shrimp, cooked	4 oz	**26**
Eggs	2 large	**12**
Egg whites	1/2 cup	**13**
Greek yogurt, plain nonfat	1 cup	**23**
Cottage cheese, low-fat	1 cup	**25**
Milk	1 cup	**8**
Soy milk	1 cup	**7**

FOOD	SERVING	PROTEIN (G)
Cheddar cheese	1 oz	**7**
Extra-firm tofu	4 oz	**12 to 17**
Tempeh	4 oz	**22**
Edamame, shelled	1 cup	**18**
Lentils, cooked	1 cup	**18**
Black beans, cooked	1 cup	**15**
Chickpeas, cooked	1 cup	**15**
Pumpkin seeds	1 oz	**9**
Peanut butter	2 tbsp	**7**
Almonds	1 oz	**6**
Quinoa, cooked	1 cup	**8**
Protein powder	1 scoop	**20 to 25**

Amounts are rounded estimates based on USDA data for typical products. Brands vary, so check the label, especially for tofu, yogurt and protein powder. Cooked weights are shown for meat and fish.

MY GO-TO BREAKFAST PROTEIN

PROTEINS TO ADD TO MY GROCERY LIST

PILLAR 2 · PROTEIN + FOOD

Build-a-plate ideas

Mix and match, about 25 to 35 g protein per meal

No set menu to follow. Pick any breakfast, lunch and dinner you like, repeat your favorites, and swap in foods you already enjoy. Protein amounts are approximate.

BREAKFASTS

Greek yogurt bowl 1 cup Greek yogurt, berries, 2 tbsp pumpkin seeds	**28 g**
Egg scramble + toast 2 eggs + 1/2 cup egg whites, spinach, 1 slice whole grain toast	**29 g**
Cottage cheese plate 1 cup cottage cheese, sliced peach, a few walnuts	**27 g**
Protein oats 1/2 cup oats, 1/2 cup Greek yogurt, milk, chia, 1/2 scoop protein powder	**30 g**
Berry smoothie 1 cup milk, 1 scoop protein powder, frozen berries, 1 tbsp peanut butter	**32 g**

LUNCHES

Chicken + chickpea salad 3 oz chicken, 1/2 cup chickpeas, greens, olive oil dressing	**33 g**
Tuna wrap 1 can tuna, whole grain wrap, greens, cucumber	**31 g**
Lentil soup + side 1 cup lentil soup, 1/2 cup cottage cheese	**25 g**
Salmon grain bowl 4 oz salmon, 1/2 cup quinoa, roasted vegetables	**32 g**
Leftover chili 1 bowl turkey and bean chili, side salad	**35 g**

DINNERS

Salmon + potatoes 4 oz salmon, roasted potatoes, green beans	**28 g**
Turkey chili 4 oz lean turkey, 1/2 cup beans, tomatoes, peppers	**35 g**
Tofu stir-fry 6 oz extra-firm tofu, 1/2 cup edamame, vegetables, brown rice	**25 to 30 g**
Garlic shrimp + rice 4 oz shrimp, broccoli, 1/2 cup rice	**28 g**
Chicken tray bake 4 oz chicken thigh, carrots, onion, sweet potato	**30 g**

SNACKS

Two hard-boiled eggs + an apple	**12 g**
Edamame 1 cup, shelled	**18 g**
Cottage cheese 1/2 cup + cherry tomatoes	**13 g**
String cheese + a handful of almonds	**13 g**
Roasted chickpeas 1/2 cup	**7 g**

Cook twice, eat three times. Chili, soup, roast chicken and tray bakes all stretch into lunches. It's fine to eat the same breakfast five days in a row.

MY FAVORITE COMBOS

PILLAR 3 · SLEEP

Your sleep plan



Falling progesterone and swinging estrogen can make sleep lighter and easier to break, and night sweats, a busy mind and bathroom trips do the rest. You can't force sleep, but you can stack the odds.

YOUR SLEEP ANCHORS

- [ ] One wake-up time, 7 days a week, even after a rough night
- [ ] 10 minutes of outdoor light within an hour of waking
- [ ] Last caffeine by noon
- [ ] Go easy on evening alcohol
- [ ] A 20 to 30 minute wind-down: dim lights, screens away, same steps nightly
- [ ] Strength sessions finished a few hours before bed

NIGHT SWEAT KIT

- [ ] A cool, dark bedroom and a fan
- [ ] Layered bedding you can kick off
- [ ] Breathable cotton or moisture-wicking sleepwear
- [ ] A glass of cold water by the bed
- [ ] A spare top within reach
- [ ] Notice evening triggers in your log

THE 3 A.M. PLAN

- Don't check the clock.
- Keep the lights low and breathe out slowly.
- Awake and frustrated for what feels like 20 minutes? Get up and do something dull in dim light until you feel sleepy.
- Keep the same wake time the next morning.

ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT

- Insomnia that lasts weeks: ask about CBT for insomnia (CBT-I).
- Frequent night sweats: ask about hormonal and non-hormonal options.
- Twitchy, crawling legs at night: ask about an iron (ferritin) check.
- Loud snoring, gasping, or morning headaches: ask about sleep apnea.

MY WIND-DOWN ROUTINE, STEP BY STEP

PILLAR 4 · STRESS + MOOD

Turn down the volume

Hormone swings affect the brain systems that help you feel calm, so worry, irritability and a pounding heart can show up even if you were never an anxious person. These tools don't fix hormones, but they give your body a reliable way to downshift.

THE 2-MINUTE DOWNSHIFT

Sit or lie down. Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4, then out slowly for a count of 6. Repeat 10 times. Practice when you are calm, so it works when you are not.

When to use it: after waking, before a hard conversation, in the car before you walk in the door, at bedtime.

RESET MENU · PICK ONE

- [ ] A 10-minute walk outside
- [ ] Step outside and look at the sky
- [ ] Call or text a friend
- [ ] Stretch for 5 minutes
- [ ] A warm shower
- [ ] Write three lines about how you feel
- [ ] Phone in another room for 30 minutes

ROUGH-DAY RULES

- Shrink the plan, don't skip it: the 10-minute version counts.
- Eat regular meals with protein. Long gaps can feel like anxiety.
- One morning cup of coffee, not three.
- Protect bedtime.
- Track it. Many women see mood dips land in the same part of their cycle.

GET SUPPORT WHEN

- Low mood or emptiness lasts most days for two weeks or more
- Anxiety or anger is getting in the way of work, home or sleep
- Panic comes with chest pain or fainting (get urgent care)

Therapy (like CBT), medication and hormone therapy are all options worth discussing. Help works.

If you have thoughts of harming yourself, contact your local emergency number or a crisis line right away. In the US, call or text **988**.

MY EARLY WARNING SIGNS, AND WHAT I'LL DO

PILLAR 5 · DAILY HABITS

Your daily checklist

Nine small habits, added a few at a time



You don't start with all nine. Each week adds a few, and you keep the earlier ones going. By Week 4 you have a full routine that takes less time than it sounds.

STARTS	HABIT	WHAT COUNTS
W1	**Move**	Your strength session or walk for the day
W1	**Protein at breakfast**	About 25 to 30 g
W1	**Wake time + morning light**	Same time daily, 10 min outside
W2	**Protein at lunch + dinner**	A palm or two each
W2	**Plants at 2+ meals**	Half a plate of vegetables
W2	**Water**	Two bottle refills before dinner
W3	**Caffeine by noon**	Then decaf, tea or water
W3	**Wind-down**	20 to 30 min, same steps
W4	**2-minute downshift**	In for 4, out for 6, ten times

MAKE IT STICK: IF-THEN PLANS

Pair each habit with something you already do. **If** I pour my morning coffee, **then** I step outside with it. **If** I brush my teeth at night, **then** I start my wind-down.

MISSED A DAY?

Never miss twice. One missed day is normal life. Just make the next day's version smaller and keep the streak of showing up.

MY IF-THEN PLANS

WHERE I'LL KEEP THIS PLAYBOOK SO I SEE IT

WEEK 1 OF 4 · DAYS 1 TO 7

Foundations

This week is about showing up, not about working hard. Two short strength sessions, walks, and two small habits that make every other day easier.

THIS WEEK YOU ADD

MOVE
Strength twice, walks most days
Use light weights and learn the moves. Stop each set with 2 to 3 good reps left.

PROTEIN
Protein at breakfast
Aim for about 25 to 30 grams. Ideas on page 14.

MORNING
Same wake time + outdoor light
Get up at the same time every day and spend 10 minutes outside within an hour.

DAY	TODAY'S PLAN	DONE	NOTES
DAY 1	**Strength A** + Day 1 check (p. 5) Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 2	**Walk** 20 min at a pace you can talk · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 3	**Walk + Unwind Flow** 15 to 20 min walk, 10 min flow · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 4	**Strength B** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 5	**Walk** 20 min at a pace you can talk · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 6	**Longer walk or easy fun** 30 to 45 min, anything you enjoy · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 7	**Rest + weekly check** Easy stroll if you like · daily checklist	☐	

MY STRENGTH DAYS THIS WEEK

WEIGHTS I'LL START WITH

FROM COACH LUKE

Most women I coach feel the first win in Week 1 is not strength. It's the steady wake time and a breakfast that actually holds them until lunch.

WEEK 1 · LOG

Symptom + habit log

Days 1 to 7

EACH EVENING, ONE MINUTE	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
SLEEP							
Hours slept							
Sleep quality 1 to 5							
Night sweats how many							
BODY							
Hot flashes how many							
Energy 1 to 5							
Aches or stiff joints 0 to 5							
Headache Y / N							
Bleeding - S L M H							
MIND							
Mood 1 to 5							
Anxious or irritable 0 to 5							
Brain fog 0 to 5							
HABITS							
Moved today S / W / F / R							
Wake time + light	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Protein meals 0 to 3							
Plants at 2+ meals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Caffeine by noon	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wind-down	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2-minute downshift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alcohol drinks							

Bleeding: - none, S spotting, L light, M medium, H heavy. **Moved:** S strength, W walk, F flow, R rest. Ratings: 5 = best for sleep, energy and mood; 0 = none for aches, anxiety and fog.

PATTERNS I NOTICED THIS WEEK

WHAT HELPED MOST

WEEK 2 OF 4 · DAYS 8 TO 14

Fuel

Food is the other half of strength. This week you spread protein across the day, add plants at two meals, and drink enough water to notice.

THIS WEEK YOU ADD

PROTEIN
Protein at lunch and dinner too
A palm or two of protein at each meal. The cheat sheet is on page 13.

PLANTS
Vegetables or fruit at 2+ meals
Half a plate of vegetables at lunch and dinner is an easy target.

WATER
Two water bottle refills
Keep a bottle where you can see it. Refill it twice before dinner.

DAY	TODAY'S PLAN	DONE	NOTES
DAY 8	**Strength A** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 9	**Walk** 25 min at a pace you can talk · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 10	**Walk + Unwind Flow** 15 to 20 min walk, 10 min flow · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 11	**Strength B** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 12	**Walk** 25 min at a pace you can talk · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 13	**Longer walk or easy fun** 30 to 45 min, anything you enjoy · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 14	**Rest + weekly check** + Day 14 check-in (p. 22) Easy stroll if you like · daily checklist	☐	

MY STRENGTH DAYS THIS WEEK

WEIGHTS I'M USING THIS WEEK

FROM COACH LUKE

You do not need a perfect diet this week. If a meal goes sideways, make the next one protein first and move on.

WEEK 2 · LOG

Symptom + habit log

Days 8 to 14

EACH EVENING, ONE MINUTE	DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10	DAY 11	DAY 12	DAY 13	DAY 14
SLEEP							
Hours slept							
Sleep quality 1 to 5							
Night sweats how many							
BODY							
Hot flashes how many							
Energy 1 to 5							
Aches or stiff joints 0 to 5							
Headache Y / N							
Bleeding - S L M H							
MIND							
Mood 1 to 5							
Anxious or irritable 0 to 5							
Brain fog 0 to 5							
HABITS							
Moved today S / W / F / R							
Wake time + light	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Protein meals 0 to 3							
Plants at 2+ meals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Caffeine by noon	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wind-down	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2-minute downshift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alcohol drinks							

Bleeding: - none, S spotting, L light, M medium, H heavy. **Moved:** S strength, W walk, F flow, R rest. Ratings: 5 = best for sleep, energy and mood; 0 = none for aches, anxiety and fog.

PATTERNS I NOTICED THIS WEEK

WHAT HELPED MOST

DAY 14

Halfway check-in

Two weeks in. Copy your Day 1 ratings from page 5, rate yourself today, and look back over your two weekly logs.

RATING	DAY 1	DAY 14	
Energy			1 to 10
Sleep quality			1 to 10
Mood			1 to 10
Stress (10 = very calm)			1 to 10
How strong I feel			1 to 10
Confidence in my plan			1 to 10

SESSIONS DONE

Strength: ____ of 4 Walks: ____ Flow: ____

HABITS I KEPT 5+ DAYS

PATTERNS IN MY LOG SO FAR

WHAT HAS BEEN HARD

FOR WEEKS 3 AND 4 I WILL

☐ keep going as planned ☐ make it smaller (stay at 2 strength days) ☐ level up (go a little heavier)

WEEK 3 OF 4 · DAYS 15 TO 21

Sleep



Sleep shapes energy, mood, cravings and recovery. This week you add a third strength day and protect the hours before bed.

THIS WEEK YOU ADD

MOVE
Strength goes to 3 days
Add a third set. Keep one rest day between sessions when you can.

CAFFEINE
Last caffeine by noon
Caffeine can linger for many hours. Try a noon cut-off for the whole week.

WIND-DOWN
20 to 30 minute wind-down
Dim lights, screens away, the same steps each night. See page 15.

DAY	TODAY'S PLAN	DONE	NOTES
DAY 15	**Strength A** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 16	**Walk** 25 min at a pace you can talk · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 17	**Strength B** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 18	**Walk + Unwind Flow** 15 to 20 min walk, 10 min flow · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 19	**Strength A** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 20	**Longer walk or easy fun** 30 to 45 min, anything you enjoy · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 21	**Rest + weekly check** Easy stroll if you like · daily checklist	☐	

MY STRENGTH DAYS THIS WEEK

WEIGHTS I'M USING THIS WEEK

FROM COACH LUKE

A rough night is not a failure. Keep the same wake time, do the lighter version of your session, and let the routine do its work.

WEEK 3 · LOG

Symptom + habit log

Days 15 to 21

EACH EVENING, ONE MINUTE	DAY 15	DAY 16	DAY 17	DAY 18	DAY 19	DAY 20	DAY 21
SLEEP							
Hours slept							
Sleep quality 1 to 5							
Night sweats how many							
BODY							
Hot flashes how many							
Energy 1 to 5							
Aches or stiff joints 0 to 5							
Headache Y / N							
Bleeding - S L M H							
MIND							
Mood 1 to 5							
Anxious or irritable 0 to 5							
Brain fog 0 to 5							
HABITS							
Moved today S / W / F / R							
Wake time + light	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Protein meals 0 to 3							
Plants at 2+ meals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Caffeine by noon	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wind-down	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2-minute downshift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alcohol drinks							

Bleeding: - none, S spotting, L light, M medium, H heavy. **Moved:** S strength, W walk, F flow, R rest. Ratings: 5 = best for sleep, energy and mood; 0 = none for aches, anxiety and fog.

PATTERNS I NOTICED THIS WEEK

WHAT HELPED MOST

WEEK 4 OF 4 · DAYS 22 TO 28

Calm

Stress makes everything louder. This week you add a two-minute downshift each day, try a short break from alcohol if you drink, and finish with your Day 28 re-test.

THIS WEEK YOU ADD

BREATHE
2-minute downshift daily
Breathe in for 4, out for 6, ten times. Page 16.

OPTIONAL
An alcohol-free week
If you drink, try 7 days off and watch your sleep and night sweats in the log.

LOOK BACK
Day 28 re-test
Repeat your Day 1 checks and fill in your doctor visit summary.

DAY	TODAY'S PLAN	DONE	NOTES
DAY 22	**Strength B** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 23	**Walk** 30 min at a pace you can talk · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 24	**Strength A** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 25	**Walk + Unwind Flow** 15 to 20 min walk, 10 min flow · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 26	**Strength B** Warm-up + 4 moves, 20 to 30 min · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 27	**Longer walk or easy fun** 30 to 45 min, anything you enjoy · daily checklist	☐	
DAY 28	**Rest + weekly check** + Day 28 re-test (p. 29) Easy stroll if you like · daily checklist	☐	

MY STRENGTH DAYS THIS WEEK

WEIGHTS I'M USING THIS WEEK

FROM COACH LUKE

Look how far the week-by-week habits have come. Keep the ones that helped most. Those are your keepers.

WEEK 4 · LOG

Symptom + habit log

Days 22 to 28

EACH EVENING, ONE MINUTE	DAY 22	DAY 23	DAY 24	DAY 25	DAY 26	DAY 27	DAY 28
SLEEP							
Hours slept							
Sleep quality 1 to 5							
Night sweats how many							
BODY							
Hot flashes how many							
Energy 1 to 5							
Aches or stiff joints 0 to 5							
Headache Y / N							
Bleeding - S L M H							
MIND							
Mood 1 to 5							
Anxious or irritable 0 to 5							
Brain fog 0 to 5							
HABITS							
Moved today S / W / F / R							
Wake time + light	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Protein meals 0 to 3							
Plants at 2+ meals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Caffeine by noon	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wind-down	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2-minute downshift	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Alcohol drinks							

Bleeding: - none, S spotting, L light, M medium, H heavy. **Moved:** S strength, W walk, F flow, R rest. Ratings: 5 = best for sleep, energy and mood; 0 = none for aches, anxiety and fog.

PATTERNS I NOTICED THIS WEEK

WHAT HELPED MOST

YOUR NUMBERS

Strength log

5 sessions of A and 5 of B over 28 days



SESSION A · WRITE WEIGHT X REPS (E.G. 10 LB X 10)

#	DATE	GOBLET SQUAT	BENT-OVER ROW	FLOOR PRESS	FARMER'S MARCH	EFFORT
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

SESSION B · WRITE WEIGHT X REPS (E.G. 10 LB X 10)

#	DATE	ROMANIAN DEADLIFT	REVERSE LUNGE	OVERHEAD PRESS	GLUTE BRIDGE	EFFORT
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

Effort: rate the whole session 1 to 10. Aim for 6 to 8. When the numbers creep up week by week, that's your muscles and bones getting the message.

WINS I WANT TO REMEMBER (FIRST FULL PUSH-UP, HEAVIER DUMBBELLS, STAIRS FEEL EASIER)

FOR YOUR DOCTOR

Cycle + bleeding log

Track for 2 to 3 months

Cycle dates and flow are the single most useful thing your doctor can see. Write the month name at the left, then mark each day: **S** spotting, **L** light, **M** medium, **H** heavy. Add a star for clots or flooding, and a dot for hot flash or night sweat days if you like.

Month 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Month 2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Month 3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

	START DATE	DAYS BLED	HEAVIEST DAY	DAYS SINCE LAST PERIOD	NOTES (CLOTS, PAIN, SPOTTING)
Period 1					
Period 2					
Period 3					
Period 4					

See your doctor promptly for very heavy bleeding, periods less than 21 days apart, bleeding longer than 7 days, bleeding between periods or after sex, or any bleeding after 12 months without a period.

SHORTEST AND LONGEST CYCLE SO FAR

ANYTHING ELSE I WANT MY DOCTOR TO SEE

DAY 28

Your re-test + look back

Warm up, then repeat your Day 1 checks. Copy your Day 1 numbers from page 5.

STRENGTH CHECK	DAY 1	DAY 28	
30-second sit-to-stand Sit and stand from a chair, arms crossed. Count full stands.			stands
Push-ups Hands on a counter, wall or floor (note which). Count good reps.			reps
Farmer's hold Hold your dumbbells at your sides, standing tall. Time it (max 90 s).			seconds
Goblet squat weight The weight you used for 8 good reps on Day 1 of Strength A.			lb / kg

RATE YOURSELF (1 LOW TO 10 HIGH)	DAY 1	DAY 28	
Energy			1 to 10
Sleep quality			1 to 10
Mood			1 to 10
Stress (10 = very calm)			1 to 10
How strong I feel			1 to 10
Confidence in my plan			1 to 10

MY 3 KEEPER HABITS

WHAT CHANGED THAT NUMBERS DON'T SHOW

FOR YOUR DOCTOR · 1 OF 2

My one-page summary

Fill this in from your logs before your visit

FROM MY LOGS	WHAT I SAW
Shortest and longest cycle	
Longest bleed, heaviest days	
Hot flashes (typical day)	
Night sweats (nights per week)	
Sleep (average hours, quality 1 to 5)	
Mood, anxiety, irritability (any cycle pattern?)	
Other symptoms (aches, headaches, fog, bladder)	
What seems to make things worse	
What seems to help	

MY TOP 3 QUESTIONS (ASK THESE FIRST)

1.

2.

3.

MEDICINES, SUPPLEMENTS, BIRTH CONTROL I USE

FAMILY HISTORY (HEART DISEASE, STROKE, CLOTS, OSTEOPOROSIS, CANCER)

FOR YOUR DOCTOR · 2 OF 2

Questions + what to bring

QUESTION BANK · TICK THE ONES YOU WANT TO ASK

- [ ] Do my symptoms and cycle changes fit perimenopause? What else could explain them?
- [ ] Are there tests that make sense for me, such as thyroid or iron? What would each rule out?
- [ ] Is my bleeding pattern normal for this stage?
- [ ] What are my treatment options: lifestyle, hormonal and non-hormonal?
- [ ] Am I a good candidate for hormone therapy, given my personal and family history?
- [ ] Do I still need birth control, and for how long?
- [ ] Does a bone density scan, blood pressure check or cholesterol test make sense now?
- [ ] Which symptoms mean I should come back sooner?
- [ ] Could my sleep problems need a closer look (sleep apnea, iron, CBT-I)?
- [ ] When should we follow up, and how will we know a plan is working?

PACK THE NIGHT BEFORE

- [ ] This playbook's logs and summary page
- [ ] Your top 3 questions
- [ ] A list of medicines, supplements and birth control
- [ ] Your family history notes
- [ ] Recent lab results from other doctors

IN THE ROOM

- Start with: "I think perimenopause may be affecting me, and I'd like to talk about my options."
- Take notes, or ask if you can record the key points.
- Feeling brushed off? It's fine to ask for a second opinion or a menopause-trained clinician.

WHAT MY DOCTOR SAID · NEXT STEPS

AFTER DAY 28

Weeks 5 to 8: keep going

The first month builds the habit. Strength gains usually show up more clearly in months two and three, so the best next step is to keep the same simple structure and keep nudging it forward.

YOUR WEEKLY TEMPLATE

- 3 strength sessions, alternating A and B
- Walks on most other days, 30 to 40 minutes
- Unwind Flow once a week
- One full rest day
- Your daily checklist, all nine habits

HOW TO PROGRESS

- Stay at 3 sets of 8 to 12.
- When every set feels easy at 12, go up a little in weight and drop back to 8 reps.
- Try new versions: a pause at the bottom, a slower lowering, or a split squat.
- Keep logging your lifts on a fresh copy of page 27.

KEEP TRACKING

Reprint the weekly log (page 19) and the cycle log (page 28) for another month or two, so your doctor sees the full pattern.

CHECK IN AGAIN

Repeat the Day 28 checks at Day 56. Write the date in your calendar now: _____

MY PLAN FOR THE NEXT 4 WEEKS



THANK YOU

You showed up for yourself

Thank you for buying direct from my shop. I would love to hear how your 28 days go. Just reply to any of your coaching emails.

PRINTING TIPS

- Print at 100% (actual size) on Letter or A4.
- Print the guide pages once and the weekly logs as often as you like.
- A clipboard or binder keeps it handy.
- Reprint any page for your personal use.

PLEASE NOTE

This playbook is general education about exercise, nutrition and habits. It is not medical advice and does not diagnose, treat or cure any condition. Talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise or eating plan, and about any symptom that worries you.

Personal use only. Please do not share, resell or redistribute this file.

Coach Luke | NASM CPT, CES, PES | NESTA Nutrition Coach

More free workouts and recipes at coachluke.com.

YOUR FREE BONUS

Thanks for buying direct

Because you bought this playbook from my own shop, two bonuses come with it.

BONUS 1 · 28 DAILY COACHING EMAILS

They start automatically after your purchase, one short email a day for 28 days, matched to the day of the plan you're on: what to focus on, how to adjust on a rough day, and a nudge to fill in your log. Check your inbox (and your promotions or spam folder) for the first one.

BONUS 2 · FREE RESOURCE LIBRARY

Scan the code or visit
coachluke.com/free-library

Printable guides, trackers and checklists to use alongside this playbook. New ones are added regularly.

Questions about your playbook? Reply to any coaching email or write to **coach@coachluke.com**. I read every one.

