

The Low-Cortisol Diet Cheatsheet



The Silent Midlife Fat Storer

A simple, hormone-friendly way to eat that supports fat loss, reduces stress, and works with your midlife body

JILL LAWS PT

THE MIDLIFE GLOW UP

Intro + The Cortisol Connection

Feeling stuck, bloated, or constantly exhausted?

Midlife weight gain isn't just about calories. It's about cortisol.

Cortisol is your body's main stress hormone—and when it's chronically high, it can lead to:
Fat stored around your belly

Poor sleep and cravings
Muscle loss and a slower metabolism
Burnout, brain fog, and stubborn weight gain

This cheatsheet gives you quick, practical strategies to support your body, reduce stress, and reset your hormones—without extreme diets.

Low-Cortisol Eating Guidelines

The 5 Key Nutrition Shifts

1. Eat protein + fats + fibre at every meal

This keeps blood sugar stable and stops cortisol spikes.

2. Don't skip meals

Fasting or skipping breakfast can raise cortisol and make your body hold onto fat.

3. Cut back on caffeine (especially in the morning)

Have it after you've eaten—not on an empty stomach.

4. Add magnesium-rich foods daily

Think leafy greens, nuts, dark chocolate, and avocados—these help regulate cortisol.

5. Stay hydrated

Even mild dehydration is a stressor and spikes cortisol.



Sample Day of Eating

Breakfast: Scrambled eggs with spinach and avocado

Lunch: Grilled chicken salad with olive oil and quinoa

Snack: Greek yoghurt with berries and walnuts

Dinner: Salmon, roasted sweet potato, steamed broccoli

Evening wind-down: Herbal tea + square of dark choc (yes, really!)



Foods That Can Spike Cortisol

What to Limit or Avoid When You're Trying to Lower Stress Hormones

Cortisol isn't just triggered by emotional stress—it also spikes in response to what you eat (or don't eat)

These foods can raise cortisol, mess with your blood sugar, and make fat loss harder in midlife:

 Foods to Limit or Avoid:

1. Skipping Meals / Fasting

Yes, skipping meals counts as a cortisol spike. Your body sees it as a stressor.

2. Caffeine on an Empty Stomach

That morning latte before breakfast? It can spike cortisol first thing and crash your energy later.

3. Ultra-Processed Carbs

Think: white bread, pastries, crisps, sugary cereals. Quick spike, hard crash.

4. Artificial Sweeteners

These may mess with your gut health and trigger cravings, which indirectly ramps up stress.

5. Alcohol (especially at night)

Disrupts your sleep cycles, dehydrates you, and increases cortisol—yes, even the “one glass of wine.”

6. Low-Calorie “Diet” Foods

Your body reads extreme restriction as a survival threat. Hello, stress response.



TIP:

Instead of cutting everything at once, start by swapping in better options. Balance, not extremes.



5 Easy Food Swaps to Lower Cortisol This Week

Small changes = big impact. These swaps will help stabilise your blood sugar, reduce cortisol spikes, and keep your energy more consistent throughout the day.

Swap These:

1. Morning coffee on an empty stomach

  Swap for: Herbal tea or warm lemon water before breakfast, then coffee after you've eaten.

2. Sugary cereal or toast for breakfast

  Swap for: Protein-rich breakfast like eggs, oats with Greek yoghurt, or a smoothie with protein powder.

3. A biscuit and coffee crash at 3pm

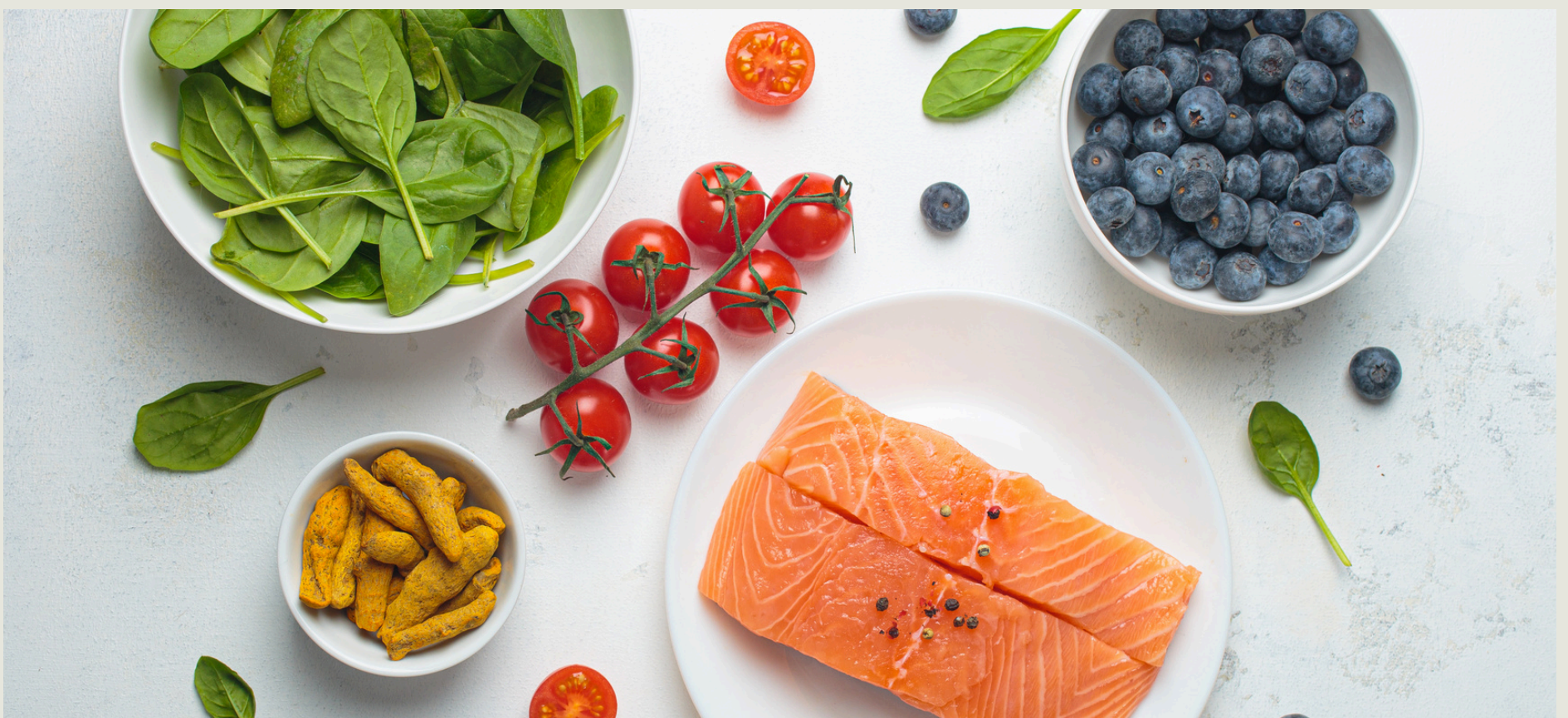
🍪 ➡ Swap for: A handful of nuts and berries, or a boiled egg and a few rice cakes with nut butter.

4. Friday night wine wind-down

🍷 ➡ Swap for: A short walk, an Epsom salt bath, magnesium glycinate, or herbal tea with dark choc.

5. Low-calorie “diet” meals

🥗 ➡ Swap for: Balanced plates with real food: protein + fibre + healthy fats. Your body is not a maths equation—it’s chemistry.



♥♥ Support & Next Steps

You don't need extreme diets or exhausting plans.

You need balance, strength, and a method designed for midlife women.

This is exactly what I coach inside The Midlife Method—a proven system to help you reset your hormones, rebuild strength, and feel confident again.

✉ Keep an eye on your inbox—I'll be sending you more support soon. And if you're ready to take the next step, just reply MIDLIFE or come say hi on Instagram

[instagram.com/jillawspt/](https://www.instagram.com/jillawspt/)

A little note from me

I'm Jill, a personal trainer and midlife coach, and I've been helping women build strength, improve their health, and feel more confident in their bodies for over 25 years.

If you want more support, you can check out my podcasts and blogs, where I share practical advice on hormones, strength training, and navigating midlife.

I know how frustrating this stage can feel—when what used to work no longer does, and you're left trying to figure it out on your own.

My approach is simple. No extremes, no guesswork—just the right structure, strength-focused training, and realistic habits that actually fit your life.

PODCASTS



BLOGS



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