

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**Leading female doctor says a woman’s fitness and nutrition program should be planned around her menstrual cycle**

Sydney Gynaecologist and fertility specialist, Dr Natasha Andreadis, will be speaking about why it’s so important to take into account a woman’s menstrual cycle when planning her nutrition and fitness program, at the [ACNEM Conference](#) from 24 – 26th May.

When we talked with Dr Andreadis, she added: “Menstrual cycles can impact a woman’s training, performance and recovery. In caring for women, dietary and exercise recommendations should take into account an individual’s menstrual cycle.”

Dr Andreadis will be giving her presentation, titled: What is the relationship between exercise and nutrition – and how do both of these affect women’s menstrual cycles and metabolic rhythm?

Dr Andreadis will be presenting case studies to highlight how hormones such as, progesterone and estrogen, impact metabolism and sleep patterns. As she emphasised: “For this reason, all health professionals from doctors, dieticians to exercise physiologists and personal trainers, should have a good understanding of the menstrual cycle.”

**The take home message: Women are not small men**

Quoting [Dr Stacy Sims](#), Dr Andreadis said: “Women are not small men.”

“When a woman exercises, her trainer should ask her where is she in her cycle. If she’s halfway through her cycle, she’ll need more protein. But if she’s having her period, maybe she is better off doing lighter exercise – not necessarily high intensity training,” added Dr Andreadis.

She said if more women were aware of this, they wouldn’t “beat themselves up” about not feeling like doing their training at certain times of the month. “Doctors should be raising more awareness of this and bringing it to the public’s attention,” she added.



**DR NATASHA ANDREADIS AND HER RUNNING GROUP, 'BOOBS ON THE RUN'**

Dr Andreadis said certain injuries are more common among women and that she’ll be looking at examples of this in her presentation: “The anterior cruciate – we see this ligament being damaged far more in women, especially when they play netball or AFL.”

**Confusion around the best diet for women**

“There’s also a lot of confusion around the best diet for women – there are no consistent recommendations. For conditions like PCOS (Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome) there’s a lot of conflicting information. But this all needs to be far more individualised. A doctor should be asking their patients

what exercise they're doing and what diet are they on? If they're fasting some days – are these the best days to be fasting in their menstrual cycle?" she added.

"We need to do more research in this area. We need to start with educating people about the whole menstrual cycle – from the beginning when women start to menstruate right through to perimenopause and menopause," she said.

Dr Andreadis added it would be good for women to become more aware of their physiology and to read more than just one article on Google to get their information: "Get some knowledge behind you," she emphasises, "... you need to be the expert. Get to know your body and that means reading more than one article – it means reading up on this area."

Dr Andreadis said when she sees patients, she takes into account any symptoms which are presenting: "If they have allergies, there could be an issue with their home environment for example. I might refer them to a building biologist to see if there's anything wrong – they could have a lot of mould in their home. We don't acknowledge we're part of the environment enough."

### **When is the right time to exercise?**

We asked Dr Andreadis when is the best time in the cycle for a woman to exercise and she said: "I think a lot of it depends on women's energy levels because their menstrual cycle affects their hormones so much. When they're producing more progesterone at the end of the cycle, this will potentially affect the quality of their sleep. They also get cravings and may not have their usual amount of energy.

"At this time in their cycle, it might be better to do a gentle weight session at the gym. But if women don't realise this is all connected, they may feel guilty. They need to know it's OK to rest and sleep when their body tells them.

"When they are mid-cycle, they'll be producing more testosterone which gives them more energy and libido," she said.

"The message we need to get to people is that we need to tailor exercise and nutrition to a woman's menstrual cycle. I researched it personally myself and kept a diary of my workouts. I found some days, I just didn't feel well. So that's why I researched it and there's so much to it. We need to get this information out to women," she added.

**Dr Natasha Andreadis**, or 'Dr Tash' as she is known, is a certified Fertility and Hormone Specialist and Gynaecologist from Sydney, Australia. She runs a [private practice in Sydney](#) and is a Clinical Lecturer at Sydney University Medical School.

Dr Andreadis trained at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney and completed her fellowship in Reproductive Medicine and Infertility (CREI) in the Netherlands and Oxford in the UK. She is an expert in fertility treatments such as IVF, IUI and embryo genetic testing. She is a practitioner with Genea, World Leaders in Fertility.



With experience in managing a wide range of fertility issues such as endometriosis, ovulation, miscarriage, unexplained infertility and Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome, Dr Andreadis also performs hysteroscopic and laparoscopic surgical procedures.

As well as having completed a Masters of Reproductive Science and Genetics, she has a special interest in biotechnology and genomic medicine, incorporating this into her daily practice. She is a qualified

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Fitgenes practitioner and was an expert on Sarah Wilson's I Quit Sugar 8 week program. She has also worked with FitBit as a gynaecology advisor.

Dr Andreadis enjoys the world of social media and digital content creation. She has her own TV show on YouTube called Dr Tash TV, where she highlights the importance of diet, lifestyle, nutrition and environment when seeking good health. For more information about Dr Andreadis, visit her website: [www.drandreadis.com.au](http://www.drandreadis.com.au)

You can see Dr Natasha Andreadis giving her presentation titled: **Menstrual cycles and metabolic rhythms: understanding the relationships with exercise and nutrition** at the ACNEM Conference called [Evolving Landscapes of Nutrition in Medicine](#) in Melbourne from May 24 – 26th.

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*For further information and hi-res images please contact Jimena at ACNEM on [jimena@acnem.org](mailto:jimena@acnem.org) or 03 9583 1320.*