

The *healing timeline*

A private, stage-by-stage timeline. Exactly what your body goes through, from your first day on the protocol to full resolution.



Why This Exists

Uncertainty is its own kind of stress. This guide removes it, stage by stage, from your first day on the protocol to the point your markers reflect genuine resolution.

Nothing here is aspirational. It's the actual sequence your body moves through: the early adaptation, the physical signs along the way, the plateaus that are normal, and the healing that follows, so you know exactly what to expect and when, without needing to ask.

Week One: Onboarding

DAYS 1-7

The first week is entirely about building an accurate baseline. Nothing gets prescribed before it's understood.

● WHAT HAPPENS

A full history review: current eating patterns, sleep, stress, training, and daily rhythm.

Baseline bloodwork requested, or your most recent panel reviewed if it's recent enough to still be useful.

Baseline photos and measurements taken, using the same method covered in How To Take Photos, so future comparisons are genuinely apples to apples.

Your individual protocol is built directly around this data, not assigned from a template.

● WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT

More questions than answers this week. That's intentional, the plan gets built after the picture is complete, not before.

Your first morning check-in rhythm (weight, sleep, mood) starts immediately, so it's a habit before the protocol specifics even arrive.

A kitchen audit conversation, using the same throw away, keep, replace framework in this guide's Kitchen Audit.

Month One: Foundation

WEEKS 2-4

The heaviest lift of the entire engagement, and also the fastest-moving in terms of how you feel day to day.

● WHAT HAPPENS

Daily photo check-ins for every meal, reviewed with real-time feedback, not a delayed weekly summary.

Electrolyte and hydration protocol introduced immediately to minimize early adaptation symptoms.

Movement guidelines built around your actual schedule and current strength level, adjusted as the month progresses.

● WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT

Early adaptation symptoms in the first one to two weeks for most people: fatigue, mild headache, or cravings, generally resolved by the electrolyte protocol.

Noticeable early shifts in energy and sleep quality by week three or four, even before major changes show up on the scale.

The first real test: a social event or dinner out, navigated together using the same scripts in Dining Without Damage.

Signs You're Actually Adapting

Nobody warns most people about this part, so it helps to know it in advance rather than mistake it for something going wrong.

Breath & Body Odor

A metallic, slightly acetone-like smell to your breath, and sometimes your sweat, in the first couple of weeks. This is a genuine ketone byproduct leaving your body, not a sign of anything wrong. It fades as you adapt.

More Frequent, Stronger-Smelling Urine

Your body is releasing water it had been holding onto. Completely normal for the first several days.

Increased Thirst & Dry Mouth

You're losing more water and sodium than usual. This is exactly why the electrolyte protocol starts on day one, not after symptoms show up.

Digestive Changes

Constipation or looser stools in the first couple of weeks as your body adjusts to a much higher fat intake and far less bulk from carbohydrate-heavy food. Temporary for almost everyone.

Cycle Changes, For Women

Some women notice their cycle shifts earlier or becomes irregular for the first three to four cycles after starting. This is common and generally temporary.

Feeling Lightheaded Standing Up

Almost always a sodium issue. Your kidneys switch from holding onto salt to releasing it quickly once you're in ketosis, and low sodium drags potassium down with it. More salt, not less activity, is usually the fix.

Skin Clearing Up

Breakouts and dull skin are often tied to inflammation from refined carbohydrates and processed oils. As those leave your plate, clearer, calmer skin is one of the more commonly reported changes, usually noticeable within the first six to eight weeks and continuing to improve after that.

THE REAL CAUSE, MOST OF THE TIME

What people call "keto flu," the headaches, fatigue, brain fog, and irritability some feel in the first week, is overwhelmingly an electrolyte problem, not a sign the approach is wrong for you. Salting your food more isn't enough on its own. This is why your onboarding protocol includes specific sodium, potassium, and magnesium targets from day one rather than leaving it to instinct.

What Your Weight Actually Does

Almost everyone goes through the same three phases. Knowing them in advance is what stops a completely normal stall from feeling like failure.

01

THE HONEYMOON

Roughly the first week

Weight drops fast, mostly water that was being held with stored glycogen. Satisfying, but it isn't fat loss yet. If you don't see a dramatic early drop, that's normal too, this phase varies more for women than men.

02

THE ADJUSTMENT STALL

Roughly week two

Water and glycogen find a new equilibrium, which can stall the scale or even tick it up slightly for a week or two. This is expected and temporary, not a sign anything has gone wrong.

03

FULLY ADAPTED

From roughly week three or four onward

Your body is now running primarily on fat and ketones, and a real downward trend begins. It won't be a straight line: expect a bumpy pattern with the occasional stalled week, more pronounced for women around their cycle. That bumpiness is universal, on every kind of weight-loss approach, not a sign something is uniquely wrong with your case.

HOW YOU'LL KNOW IT'S WORKING

You don't need to test ketone levels to know this is working. Testing sends a lot of people chasing a number that doesn't actually track progress, urine strips in particular become less accurate the more fat-adapted you get. Trust the trend across weeks, your energy, and the markers we track directly, over any single day's reading.

Months Two & Three: Adjustment

WEEKS 5-12

The routine stops feeling like a routine and starts feeling like how you eat. This is also where the protocol gets refined against your actual response, not the average response.

● WHAT HAPPENS

- Check-in cadence usually eases slightly as consistency builds, from every meal to a daily summary for most clients.
- A mid-point bloodwork check for anyone with specific markers being tracked closely.
- Supplement stack reviewed and adjusted based on how you're actually responding, not the starting assumption.

● WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT

- A plateau somewhere in this window is common and expected, not a sign anything's gone wrong.
- Travel, a wedding, or a work trip is often the first genuine stress test, handled with the Travel Companion and Weddings Without Damage guides.
- Visible physical change becomes noticeable to other people, often before you fully register it yourself.

Months Four To Six: Deep Work

WEEKS 13-26

This is where the underlying markers, not just how you look or feel, start to show the real story.

● WHAT HAPPENS

A full bloodwork panel repeated and compared directly against baseline, marker by marker, using the same framework in the Bloodwork Guide.

Protocol adjustments become more targeted: a specific marker not moving as expected gets a specific intervention, not a general tweak.

● WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT

For more complex or long-standing cases, this is often where the most significant marker movement becomes visible.

Confidence in navigating unplanned situations (a business dinner, a family event) without needing to check in first.

Months Seven To Nine: Resolution

WEEKS 27-39

Most clients see significant resolution somewhere in this window. The engagement runs until your markers reflect it, not until a calendar happens to run out.

● WHAT HAPPENS

Final comparative bloodwork and photos, reviewed directly against your original baseline from week one.

A maintenance protocol built for long-term independence, not a cliff-edge handoff back to guessing.

● WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT

If markers haven't moved as expected despite precise adherence, the engagement continues at no additional cost until they do. That's the standard, not an exception.

A clear, honest conversation about what maintenance looks like going forward, built around your life, not a rigid extension of the acute protocol.

WORTH KNOWING

Some clients see meaningful shifts well before month three. Others, with more complex or long-standing cases, need the full nine months to see complete resolution. Both are normal. The timeline bends to the case, not the other way around.

QUICK REFERENCE

The Full Arc, At A Glance

STAGE	TIMING	FOCUS
Onboarding	Week 1	Baseline bloodwork, photos, protocol design
Foundation	Weeks 2–4	Daily check-ins, adaptation, first social tests
Adapting	Weeks 1–4	Breath, urine, thirst, digestion, keto flu, weight phases
Adjustment	Weeks 5–12	Routine builds, protocol refined, plateaus expected
Deep Work	Weeks 13–26	Full bloodwork comparison, targeted adjustments
Resolution	Weeks 27–39	Final comparison, maintenance protocol built

Timing reflects typical pacing. Individual cases move faster or slower depending on complexity, and the engagement continues until markers reflect genuine resolution.



Now you know exactly what's ahead.

Questions about where you are in this timeline, or what's coming next,
are always worth raising at your next check-in.

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