

Hormone Therapy Alternatives Explored

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As more people turn to natural health and wellness, it becomes increasingly important for us to guide our patients each step of the way. As we mentioned in our last article, chiropractors need to serve as an information clearinghouse on natural health and to point patients to other natural health and wellness providers, so that together we can help them accomplish their health goals.

We intend to cover various health topics that chiropractors deal with every day and to show how chiropractors can network with osteopaths and other like-minded wellness providers to promote natural health in our communities. We are not promoting MD/DC/DO multidisciplinary clinics, nor are we implying that the scope-of-practice laws change in any way for chiropractors. Chiropractors are at the forefront of the natural health and wellness movement and should be proud of that position.

Give Women a Choice

Although a large percentage of menopausal females choose hormone replacement therapy (HRT), it is hard to believe that they knowingly want to be on chemical hormones. If women truly understood the potential side effects of HRT, most would try to avoid the drug, especially if they realized there was a more natural, safe approach. Information about natural treatment is limited in the public domain, yet when a woman begins taking HRT she knows that something is not right. She has the feeling that she is placing "poison" in her body. After a few months, the undesirable, dangerous symptoms she feared begin to appear, and she is even more convinced.

The dilemma she faces is whether to accept the aging process, with its osteoporosis, hot flashes, skin wrinkles, dry vaginal area, lack of sex drive, cardiovascular disease, flabby tissues, and so on, or take hormones in hopes of postponing some of these undesirable symptoms for a few more years. She has read about the side effects of conventional HRT, but assumes her doctor knows best and would not give her something that is dangerous. Guess again. The hormones being prescribed are distillates of pregnant mare's urine. The doctor who prescribed them is a salesperson for the pharmaceutical industry and the medical establishment. If you don't believe it, read the warnings that every pharmacist is required by law to provide the patient who will undergo HRT. It includes an increased risk of blood clots; hypertension; susceptibility to breast and uterine cancer; water retention; weight gain; and so on. This is most often ignored by both patient and physician. Subsequently, osteopathic (or medical) physicians conduct procedures such as annual breast exams, mammograms and pap smears to detect malignant tumors early and provide expensive, long-term treatment for a problem they helped create!

When will the medical establishment become more concerned about the patient's survival than medical correctness and profit? When will we understand that horse's and women's hormones are distinctly different and not interchangeable without serious side effects? Horse hormones are estrone dominant and women are estradiol dominant. Because horses do not produce estradiol, their hormones are very dangerous and loaded with side effects for women.

As a natural health and wellness-minded osteopath who has taken the natural approach for 25

years, it is my responsibility to offer patients natural, vegetable-based hormones in the same chemical proportions that their bodies produced during childbearing years. These hormones are obtained from a formulating pharmacy in both transdermal cream and in time-release capsules. Although prescribed, they are natural and have few or no side effects. As the medical community shows little signs of changing its philosophy concerning HRT, especially because it is a huge industry for the pharmaceutical cartel, it is my mission to make natural hormone therapy available to as many women as possible.

Women who have had hysterectomies before age 40 will need help. They don't go into menopause gradually: They drop into it. But whether they have ovaries or not, they will need some hormonal support. Most medical gynecologists place these women on horse estrogen and fail to give them any progesterone. So, many of them begin to gain weight in a matter of months. Some even have blood pressure problems; water retention; gall bladder problems; progression of osteoporosis (which the hormones were supposed to prevent); arthritis; breast engorgement; fibroids; and so on. Needless to say, these women become frustrated and need answers. Natural hormonal support can help the body normalize and correct many of these problems, but it takes patience from the woman and her physician.

Women who have tubal ligations (TL) often experience severe problems following this procedure. Approximately one in three women who have TL find this to be anything but the simple procedure they were led to believe before surgery. If a woman's ovaries receive more than half the blood supply from the artery that follows the fallopian tube that was ligated, along with the artery, then those ovaries are without adequate blood supply and the woman will experience problems. This doesn't become apparent until after the procedure, and by then it is too late. As an osteopath who works with the body naturally and not against it with chemicals, I usually recommend both natural estrogen and natural progesterone and ask that the woman experiment with these to see which works best individually or in combination. For example, if a woman experiences excessive bleeding each month and/or irregular cycles with endometrial buildup from a lack of progesterone, she will need natural hormonal support. Some need only natural progesterone, while others need natural estrogen (Triest) and natural progesterone in cyclic fashion.

The women I see who have been on conventional chemical HRT and desire to exchange the drug(s) with natural hormones will usually take one to two months on an every-other-day dosage (alternating with the chemical hormone) to be weaned off them.

Many can go totally on natural hormonal support with a minimum of trouble. This is especially true for those women who have been on horse estrogen without any progesterone. With natural hormonal support, they will immediately begin to note weight loss, increased libido, mood stability, and an end to water retention and feeling bloated.

Elderly women with osteoporosis need a small amount of natural estrogen (Triest) and as much natural progesterone as they can tolerate. Progesterone increases bone density, so seniors taking this have noted as much as a 5% increase in bone density in one year.

The reason I recommend a small amount of Triest with the natural progesterone to my older female patients is that it makes skin smoother and reduces vaginal dryness, and will keep the body from converting progesterone to estrogen. This reduces cancer risk and at the same time improves bone density and cardiovascular health. Again, this has been done with vegetable-based natural hormones, not chemicals! Young women who have severe PMS and excessive menstrual periods during childbearing years can receive small amounts of transdermal natural progesterone gel two times a day at mid-cycle (days 10-20) each month. This will cut the top out of the estrogen curve, thus reducing the endometrium and the severity of menstruation as well as the water retention and PMS caused by estrogen excess.

When a female patient comes to our chiropractic office seeking guidance along the natural route instead of depending on HRT, we first begin with vertebral subluxation correction, coupled with determining system imbalances. We also find a nutritional assessment form to be an invaluable tool in evaluating system imbalances. We usually recommend nutrient support such as black currant seed oil perles, Utrophin, Ovex and Symplex F. We also recommend a low-fat diet that includes plenty of fish, legumes, fruits and vegetables, along with exercise. We then refer the patient to Dr. Streeter, who initiates the appropriate course of natural hormonal therapy if indicated. The result is a patient who holds her adjustments, feels better and is very happy overall with this combined approach. As a result, she refers others to our office for chiropractic care.

Herbs that we find to be very helpful are black cohosh; blue cohosh; squaw vine; damiana; licorice root; don quai; and chaste berry extract, just to name a few.

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