

The Tuesday Minute

Nutritional information.... one byte at a time

This Week's Topic

Improve Sexual Health

We've all seen the commercials on TV like the middle age guy who pulls up on a Harley, his sexy wife or girlfriend jumps on the back, and they ride off together as she holds him tightly. The music is romantic, the couple is smiling. Why, because he uses Viagra. No wonder Viagra and other drugs for sexual enhancement are making Big Pharma rich.

As we speak there is a major push by companies to get these drugs sold online and over the counter in drug stores without a prescription. But besides the hurried rundown at the end of commercials, we don't hear much about possible, dangerous side effects. Here are just a few:

- Pilots can't take Viagra within 12 hours of a flight because of visual disturbances. Viagra blocks an enzyme in the optic nerve.
- Viagra interferes with other drugs.
- Headaches - Viagra opens arteries in the brain's lining causing excess pressure.
- Heart attacks - One the main reason why Viagra needs a prescription.
- Overstimulation - resulting in painful, long lasting erections.
- Dependency - unable to maintain an erection without the drug.

Let's stop here and consider a few of the reasons why our systems are so prone to fatigue, dis-ease, and sexual dysfunction. Stress is one of the major reasons why our bodies don't make enough testosterone. The stress hormone cortisol, produced in the adrenal glands, suppresses testosterone. Cortisol and other stress related hormones put us into

the sympathetic fight or flight response which blocks sexual function and pleasure.

In order to respond sexually we need a healthy balanced parasympathetic nervous system. Also antidepressants widely used reduce sexual function.

Chemicals in the environment from the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, even the containers we store food in can be linked to sexual dysfunction. These factors mimic estrogenic compounds in the body act as an antagonist to testosterone. Many men, as well as women, show low levels of testosterone in their blood samples.

One of the main symptoms of low testosterone is low sex drive. Many women are advised to supplement this hormone when they go into menopause. The ovaries stop producing estrogen, as well as progesterone, and testosterone. Highly toxic estrogen from the environment is continually overloading our systems.

There are numerous nutraceuticals available that help us to regain an improved level of health as well as deal with the issue of sexual dysfunction that are free of side effects. Most of these focus around the concept of adaptogens.

The concept of adaptogens dates back thousands of years to ancient India and China, but modern study did not begin until the late 1940s. In 1947, Nikolai Lazarev defined an adaptogen as an agent that allows the body to counter adverse physical, chemical, or biological stressors by raising nonspecific resistance toward such stress, thus allowing the organism to "adapt" to the stressful circumstances. Adaptogens are natural substances that provide pre-

cursors and co-factors the body needs to return itself to physiologic balance. Sometimes that means making healthy hormones, sometimes it means breaking down hormones to return to homeostasis.

Biotics Research Corporation provides several adaptogenic formulas for men and women. Here are 3 supplements that are dependable, effective, and as always painstakingly tested to guarantee the highest quality.

B-VITAL is formulated using 750 mg of Peruvian Maca and 50 mg of Velvet Deer Antler from live American elk. This product has proven very effective especially with men. Maca is a well known adaptogen with over 165 citations on PubMed. It is used as a food in Peru. It is a natural precursor to testosterone. Remember testosterone is necessary for healthy muscles. B-VITAL would be an asset to healthy muscle function throughout the body, including the heart.

The dose I personally have recommended to men with low testosterone is 3 caps at bedtime and 3 in the morning before breakfast. Men seem to have more improvement than women. Although I know of a couple of female patients who have had an increased libido using it. I usually start higher and then reduce the dose to 1 twice a day after a few months.

BioDrive is used as a libido/energy support product. It supports adrenal balance which indirectly supports sexual drive. Staying consistent with the concept of optimizing health instead of using blanket stimulants, BioDrive contains both Rhodiola and Panax ginseng which are well known adaptogens, having over 240 references on PubMed. The result of this formula is that women, although men can take this formula as well, feel a sense of increased energy. The side effect of that energy is greater interest in extracurricular activities. Let's face it, if you're exhausted, sex is definitely at the low end of the priority list.

In an evaluation of BioDrive, 12 of 17, or 71% who responded to a survey reported they had a greater interest in sex. Of the 12 positive responders, 10 said they were more easily aroused, 11 indicated more pleasure with sex, and 8 reported an improved ability to achieve orgasm.

Some patients on SSRI's, which have a known effect on libido, have found BioDrive to be very helpful. I generally use higher doses like 3 twice a day to start with and then reduce when the desired results are achieved.

Ca D-Glucarate is used for binding and elimination of toxins and spent hormones, although it's not technically an adaptogen.

As you know zenoestrogens in our environment have a cumulative effect. There are at least three ways to control how much estrogen is reabsorbed into your bloodstream. They are:

- Eat no meat, especially red meat.
- Eat at least two vegetables from the cruciferous family, such as broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, kale and collards, every day.
- Take Ca D-Glucarate.

In addition, remember to always evaluate thyroid function, make sure you have the proper ratio of EFA's, a good foundational multivitamin mineral, and of course give the "Food for Life" CD to every patient. More problems are caused by the "Standard American Diet", and that CD allows you to give them a lifetime of dietary information for free.

Thanks for reading today, and thanks for your comments and the encouragement we receive from YOU each week. I'll be with you next Tuesday.