

Menopause Symptom Relief Without Hormones

"With her formulas, 19 out of 20 women were able to reduce their menopausal symptoms without hormones."

I once heard an internationally known lecturer say he would rather treat cancer than a tough menopausal case. Just because menopause is a natural process in a woman's life, that doesn't mean it will be an easy transition.

With great compassion, I have to acknowledge for many women it can be a rollercoaster ride. With all the xenoestrogens in our diet, with the pressure and stress most women experience in our society, it's not uncommon to have hormonal dysregulation. And with 2 million more women entering menopause each year, we are talking about a growing market.

Menopause is clinically defined as "the permanent, natural cessation of menstruation." A woman is considered menopausal when menstruation has stopped for at least six months and she is over 45 years of age.

Ideally, the ovaries and adrenals produce estrogen and



progesterone during the fertile years. The adrenal glands make estrogen by converting the male hormone testosterone to estrogen. But what happens if the adrenal glands are exhausted? Who picks up the slack? Fat cells can also manufacture estrogen, but that's not an appealing option.

After age 40, hormones start their descent; and by the time a woman is post menopausal, estrone is reduced by 60%, estradiol by 90%, and progesterone by 60%. The closer a woman is to her 50's, she may

have intense symptoms such as hot flashes. 60% of all women experience some form of hot flashes lasting for 1-5 years. 10-20% experience hot flushes for life.

Other symptoms are: night sweats, vaginal dryness, mood swings, headaches, irritability and anxiety, insomnia, weight changes, fatigue, low libido, and heart palpitations.

Diet is extremely important when it comes to limiting the severity of menopausal symptoms. Blood sugar and hormo-

nal fluctuations are connected. If blood sugar is not balanced and regulated, hormonal fluctuations are more erratic and intense, food cravings and hot flashes feel intolerable. Subsequently, sugar, refined flours, and too many simple carbohydrates should be strictly avoided.

I have included a hormone balance test. You can print out this simple questionnaire and give it to your patients to help them determine which hormone may be out of balance. Menopause complications can be a result of too much estrogen, estrogen deficiency, improper estrogen ratio or estrogen dominance, adrenal fatigue, excess androgens, or progesterone deficiency.

Women can have elevated estrogen levels and still have hot flashes. This test helps to co-ordinate subjective indicators and may give insight if a dominant imbalance exists. As for supplements, my recommendations are more like a shopping cart than a protocol. Everybody has their favorites. Let's look at mine.

First of all, we want to make sure we have a good foundational multivitamin/mineral that is high in magnesium, zinc, and B6. I like Equi-Fem; but if there is any hint of blood sugar irregularity, I use GlucoBalance.

A naturopathic physician Dr. Michelle Pouliot designed several female formulas based on her exclusively female clientele. With her formulas, 19 out of 20 women were able to reduce their menopausal symptoms without hormones.

BioPause-AM with the three primary herbs rhodiola, black cohosh and chaste berry is taken in the morning to botanically support the adrenal glands and helps maintain mental acuity. Support but not over-stimulation is the goal. Patients report that this product is also helpful with heart palpitations, fatigue, mood fluctuations, low sex drive, as well as muscle aches and pains. I generally start with 4 capsules and

reduce to 2 as soon as possible.

Generally used with BioPause-AM is BioPause-PM with black cohosh, passiflora, lemon balm, and magnesium glycinate is designed for a good nights sleep. This product works well to control hot flashes. The recommended dose is 2 at bedtime.

If patients desire more help to control hot flashes throughout the day, they can take more. A clinician friend of mine shared how a higher dose completely controls her hot flashes throughout the day by taking 4-6 at bedtime. BioPause-PM is also effective with insomnia.

Speaking of sleep, Neuro-5-HTP Plus as well as 5-HTP is helpful because they contain 5-HTP which is a precursor to serotonin, melatonin, and other endorphins. Because anxiety is a common symptom associated with menopause, both 5-HTP products can help.

Be sure to consider iodine in any protocol concerning hot flashes. Iodine is used by the thyroid, breast and ovary tissue. Iodine can also decrease the production of anterior pituitary production of FSH and LH which are often high in post menopausal women. Clinically, I have seen some dramatic changes when iodine is added to the diet. To me it is essential for any hormonal protocol. Use Liquid Iodine Forte, 30 drops twice a day or use one tablet a day of Iodizyme-HP.

As you work with patients, don't forget to stimulate conversation about energy levels, sleep patterns, headaches, heart palpitations or other symptoms of menopause. Inform them about positive solutions and encourage them to take a Wellness approach to what can be a very challenging transition for many women.

Thanks for reading this week's Tuesday Minute. I'll see you next week.