

SEX HORMONES OPTIMAL BODY BALANCE

Effects of Hormones

There are over seventy known human hormones, and they can have a profound effect on your body; in regards to weight loss, hormones control or regulate the following:

- Food cravings
- Appetite
- Metabolism
- Digestion
- Blood sugar levels
- Sleep
- Hydration
- Mood
- Energy production
- Reproductive cycle
- Electrolyte balance
- Mineral balance
- Inflammation
- Muscle growth
- Fat storage
- Preparation of the body for “fight” or “flight” response
- Production and release of other hormones

One look at this list and you can quickly see that hormone balance is essential to achieve and maintain your ideal weight. Many of these hormonal effects are covered in great detail in the sections on [Stress](#), [Sleep](#), [Thyroid Fatigue](#), [Insulin Resistance](#), and [Gut Dysbiosis](#) (if you haven't already purchased these, you may do so by clicking the appropriate link). In this section we will discuss the sex hormones and their effect on weight.



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The sex hormones are typically broken up into two main groups: the “male” sex hormones and the “female” sex hormones, although both types of sex hormones are present in each gender, albeit at different levels. The main hormones in each group are.

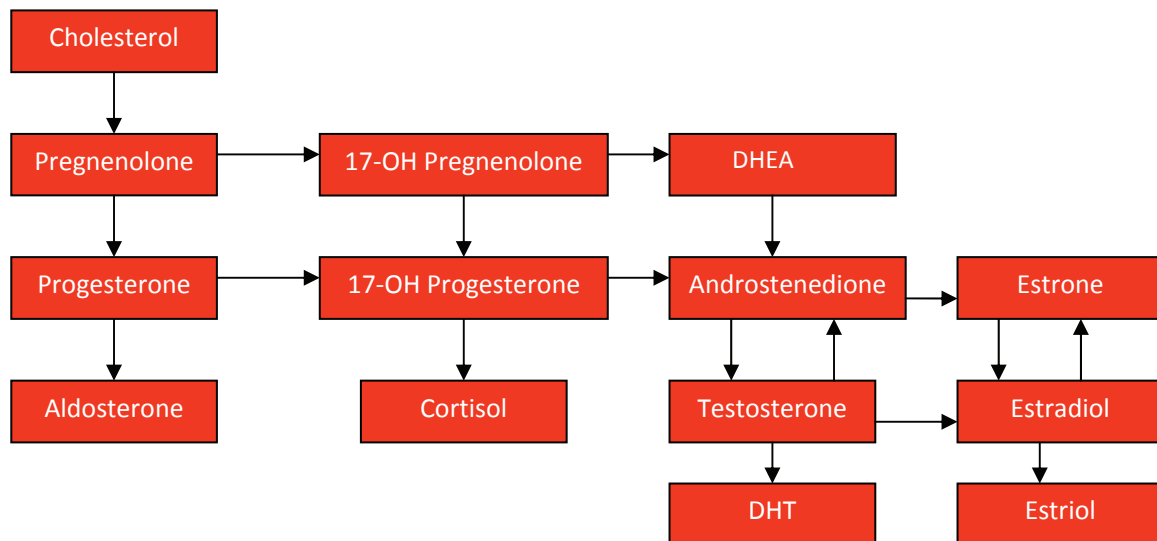
“Male” Sex Hormones:

- Androstenedione
- Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA)
- Dihydrotestosterone (DHT)
- Testosterone

“Female” Sex Hormones:

- Estrogens:
 - Estradiol
 - Estriol
 - Estrone
- Progesterone

All of these hormones are made from cholesterol, proteins and essential fatty acids. The chart below illustrates how sex hormones are synthesized in the body.



One can easily see how imbalances in one of these hormones can quickly translate into imbalances in many others. This illustrates a key point in understanding the complexity of hormone balance: ALL of your hormones impact one another. If we are going to rebalance your sex hormones, we have to take into account how other factors, such as stress (which affects cortisol and DHEA) and sleep (which affects cortisol, DHEA and testosterone) impact your overall hormone balance.



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Hormones and a Woman's Body

The most important groups of hormones for women are estrogens (especially β -estradiol) and progesterone. In a healthy female body they balance each other so phases of the menstrual cycle occur regularly. When one is going down, the other is going up. Their synchronized cycle repeats about every month (25 to 35 days). When the balance between estrogen and progesterone is lost, your body may act in unpredictable ways. When everything works normally, the menstrual cycle goes through appropriate phases. For the first 10-16 days, a woman's body is getting eggs ready for fertilization (pregnancy). Follicles grow in the ovaries. The tissue in the womb prepares for a fertilized egg. If eggs are fertilized, then the menstrual cycle is suspended for the nine months of pregnancy. The body automatically produces appropriate amounts of both estrogen and progesterone. These in turn stimulate secretions for nourishing the fertilized egg.

If fertilization doesn't occur, the nurturing environment created in the womb rapidly changes. Hormone levels drop off quickly after about two weeks, and the womb cleanses itself through menstruation- and the process is ready to repeat again. When Imbalance Occurs If sufficient estrogen is not available in the first two weeks of the menstrual cycle, eggs are not stimulated to develop. This condition is known as anovulation - which simply means that the body is not producing eggs. When anovulation occurs repeatedly, it can cause infertility. A year of unprotected sex without pregnancy occurring usually indicates the condition of infertility. Prior to menstruation, an imbalance of progesterone and estrogen can produce physical and emotional discomfort for women. Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) can result in bloating, headaches, mood swings, and irritability. Too much estrogen, in relation to progesterone, or vice-versa, throws the body into an imbalanced state.

The experience of missing menstrual periods for months in a row can also result from hormonal imbalance. Amenorrhea is a failure of menstruation for six months in a woman with previously normal menstrual cycles. It is a condition most common in women undergoing high intensity athletic training or stress, who aren't making enough progesterone to trigger their menstrual cycles.

When it's time to move beyond the child-bearing years, women's estrogen levels should gently fall, telling their bodies to cease preparing an environment for fertilized eggs. When menstruation stops abruptly, menopause brings with it some uncomfortable symptoms typically associated with Peri-Menopause and Menopause, such as hot flashes and mood swings. Estrogen depletion can also accelerate bone loss and increase risk of osteoporosis & heart disease. Natural or pharmaceutical hormone replacement therapy can alleviate many of the symptoms. But if a woman takes too much estrogen to replace this loss, the estrogen overload can lead to other health problems, even cancer of the uterus or breasts.



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Testing for Hormone Imbalances

There are several tests that can be very useful to help uncover and address hormone imbalances in both men and women. The following is a brief description of the most beneficial tests along with links to learn more. Salivary testing (as opposed to blood/serum testing) is the preferred testing method, as it can more accurately assess active hormone levels in the body.

Tests for females

Women with a monthly menstrual cycle

Rhythm: this test analyzes 11 saliva samples over a 28-day period for the levels of estradiol, progesterone, and testosterone, providing clues about premenstrual syndrome (PMS), menstrual irregularities, infertility, endometriosis, breast cancer, and osteoporosis. Research has shown that fluctuating levels of estradiol, progesterone and testosterone play a major role in a woman's overall health, effecting appetite, mood, sleep patterns, the menstrual cycle and sex drive. Click here for more information.

Rhythm Plus: In addition to analysis of hormones included in the Rhythm profile (estradiol, progesterone and testosterone) over a 28 day period, this advanced profile includes the Adrenocortex Stress Profile and the Comprehensive Melatonin Profile to reveal how the sex hormones are influenced by cortisol, DHEA, and melatonin. This test would be indicated if adrenal stress and/or sleep are also possible Underlying Metabolic Imbalances and/or if more comprehensive testing is desired.

Non-menstruating women

Menopause Profile: This test examines three saliva samples over a 5-day period to determine levels of estradiol, estrone, estriol, progesterone, and testosterone for women who are menopausal. Click here for more information.

Menopause Plus Profile: In addition to the analysis of hormones included in the Menopause™ profile, this advanced profile includes the Adrenocortex Stress Profile and the Comprehensive Melatonin Profile to reveal how the sex hormones are influenced by cortisol, DHEA, and melatonin. This test would be indicated if adrenal stress and/or sleep are also possible Underlying Metabolic Imbalances and/or if more comprehensive testing is desired.

Tests for males

Male Hormone Profile: This test analyzes 4 saliva samples over a 24-hour period for levels of testosterone. The profile provides insights into a wide range of disorders, from reduced libido and muscle mass to cardiovascular disease, insulin resistance, obesity, mood swings and osteoporosis. Click here for more information.

Male Hormones Plus: In addition to analysis of testosterone, Male Hormones Plus includes the Adrenocortex Stress Profile and the Comprehensive Melatonin Profile to reveal how testosterone is influenced by cortisol, DHEA, and melatonin. This test would be indicated if adrenal stress and/or sleep are also possible Underlying Metabolic Imbalances and/or if more comprehensive testing is desired.

Hormone Changes and Men — The Battle of the Bulge

Most everyone is familiar with the term 'menopause', which refers to the end of a woman's reproductive years. What some people don't know is that men also go through a similar transition, known as 'andropause' or 'male menopause', during their later years. In both cases, the transition is often associated with hormone imbalances and tends to coincide with other age-related declines. Fortunately, rebalancing hormones naturally generally provides symptom relief and also tends to delay other age-related illnesses and conditions.

Between the ages of 25 and 50, men's testosterone levels tend to decrease by approximately 10% per decade, yielding over a 50% reduction by the time they reach their 60s. Because it is such a slow decline and men's responses to it vary widely, andropause is difficult to detect. The fact that men generally do not discuss symptoms as readily as women also makes it more difficult to identify.

During this period of testosterone decline, men's estrogen hormone levels tend to increase by almost 50%, drastically altering their hormone balance. This change in the ratio may help explain why many men begin to feel more family-oriented and nurturing as they age.

Factors that accelerate the decline of hormones such as testosterone and DHEA include:

- Excess weight, especially abdominal obesity
- Illness, disease, or other stressful events
- Tobacco consumption
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Depression or mental illness
- Reduced sexual activity



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Common Symptoms of Andropause

Similar to menopause, the effects of andropause are not uniform – each man’s response to it is unique. That said, there are commonly reported symptoms, many of which are considered part of the “normal” aging process (see chart below), but which are also accelerated by a testosterone deficiency.

- Balding head
- Reduced body hair, especially armpits and genital area
- Decreased muscle mass, with increased body fat
- Reduced strength and stamina
- Feeling weak or tired
- Decreased testicle size
- Enlarged prostate
- Urinary discomfort and/or difficulties
- Increased abdominal fat, increasing risk of heart attack
- Increased insulin, cholesterol, and triglyceride levels
- Elevated blood pressure
- Diminished coronary artery elasticity (weakening of the heart muscle)
- Moodiness, irritability, insecurity
- Inner unrest
- Lack of concentration
- Memory failures
- Reduced intellect and critical thinking
- Decreased sex drive and arousal
- Reduced organ sensitivity or pleasure
- Fewer orgasms
- Erectile dysfunction

Testosterone Deficiency

Symptoms of testosterone deficiency tend to fall into one of four categories: physical, cardiovascular, mental or sexual, with some of them overlapping. For example, feeling too weak or tired to engage in sex could be related to impaired cardiovascular health, feelings of insecurity, and decreased libido, all of which may be related to a testosterone deficiency.

One of the most troubling symptoms men encounter as they age is an enlarged prostate. The prostate gland goes through a second growth spurt as men reach their 40s, 50s, or 60s, often resulting in benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH). As the prostate grows, it pushes on the bladder and urethra, causing mild to severe urinary discomforts, such as increased frequency of urination, especially at night; difficulty initiating urination; decreased urinary force; and the sensation of a full bladder, even after urinating.

Current medical research indicates that low testosterone levels may be associated with BPH, especially when coupled with elevated estrogen hormone levels.

Comprehensive Testing and Targeted Therapy

There are safe and effective ways to synchronize hormone production, but healthcare practitioners first need to know your hormone levels throughout the monthly cycle. Thankfully, there are several hormone tests available to help us pinpoint your exact imbalances so we can design a customized program specifically for you. Please contact us to learn more about which test(s) will help you quickly and efficiently address your concerns.



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Supplementation for Hormone Imbalances

The first place to start from a supplemental standpoint is to cover the basics. Supplement quality is a BIG problem (one that we highlight at length on our blog); at this point, know that all supplements, in fact most supplements are not created equally. Most of the products on the market are made with poor quality ingredients and/or processed in such a way as to diminish the supplement quality. Poor quality supplements means you are not getting what you paid for, no matter how little or how much you actually paid.

Finding high quality supplements takes some doing; here are some great products that you can use with confidence:

Foundational support: Address your basic nutritional/hormonal needs with either **Wellness Essentials Women** or **Women's Prime** (for menopause and beyond) or **Wellness Essentials Men's Vitality**.

Restoring balance: In order to truly know what additional support any given person needs, additional testing is necessary. Use one of our questionnaires or complete one or more of the tests listed in this section to help you determine which products may be most beneficial to get your hormones back into balance as efficiently as possible

Female Hormones

Women of any age will generally benefit from helping to rebalance the balance between estrogen and progesterone with **EstroFactors** – 3-6 tablets daily with meals or as directed by your health care provider.

Male Hormones

Herbs

Saw palmetto (*Serenoa serulatta*): Saw palmetto is a general remedy that works well for prostate health, partially if included with other remedies, as it helps to enhance the actions of other herbs. Saw palmetto helps maintain the prostate gland's proper hormone balance – needed for optimal sexual function and weight loss, especially in older men. **Prostatrol Forte** contains saw palmetto along with other synergistic herbs for improved prostate health.

Rhodiola rose: Rhodiola can boost sexual desire in both men and women. Rhodiola is thought to work on the dopamine system in the brain which is very important to male hormone balance, sexual functioning and libido. It improves satisfaction, pleasure, erections, and response to orgasms. It also appears to help the body adapt to a variety of life stresses. **Adreset** contains Panax ginseng and rhodiola.

Puncture vine (*Tribulus terrestris*): The puncture vine has long been a popular medicinal herb used in many areas of the world to treat sexual deficiency. Based on that usage, pharmacologists studied the active ingredients of the plant and concluded that the active ingredients were steroid saponins. They isolated these substances, now marketed under the trade name **HisSynergy**, in film coated tablets.

Because of its effective use in treating sexual dysfunctions, infertility, and impotence, many studies of **HisSynergy** have been published in professional journals worldwide. **HisSynergy** provides a non-hormonal preparation which restores and improves libido in men, improves and prolongs the duration of an erection and increases the level of testosterone and sperm and sperm mobility.