

Menopause

Contrary to popular belief, Menopause is not simply the result of estrogen deficiency; although, estrogen levels do decline during the latter phases of a woman's reproductive cycle. Estrogen levels drop by approximately 40% at menopause while progesterone levels plummet to approximately 90% of the pre-menopausal levels.

It is the relative loss of progesterone that causes the majority of symptoms. The disproportionate loss of progesterone begins in the latter stages of a woman's reproductive cycle, while unbeknownst to her, the luteal phase of the menstrual cycle begins to malfunction. The malfunction is initiated when the remnant tissue of the follicle (corpus luteum), the primary source of progesterone, begins to lose its functional capacity.

By approximately age 35, many of these follicles fail to develop creating a relative progesterone deficiency. As a result, ovulation does not always occur and progesterone levels steadily decline. It is during this period that a relative progesterone deficiency, or what has become known as **Estrogen Dominance**, develops.

The most effective way to assess hormone status is to test saliva for the appropriate hormone levels. The reason that saliva is the best method of testing is that "active" tissue levels are measured, opposed to serum testing in which essentially measures the "inactive" levels.

Typical symptoms of estrogen dominance are:

- * Mood Swings: Irritability, Depression
- * Irregular Periods
- * Heavy Menstrual Bleeding
- * Hot Flashes
- * Vaginal Dryness
- * Water Retention
- * Weight Gain: Hips, Thighs and Abdomen
- * Sleep Disturbance (Insomnia, less REM sleep)
- * Decreased Libido
- * Headaches
- * Fatigue
- * Short-term Memory Loss
- * Lack of Concentration
- * Dry, Thin, Wrinkly Skin
- * Thinning of Scalp Hair
- * Increased Facial Hair
- * Bone Mineral Loss (Osteoporosis)
- * Diffuse Aches and Pain

Health Disclaimer: All information given about health conditions, treatments, products and dosages are not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. This is provided only as a suggested guideline.

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