



Test Your Hormone Levels - Don't Guess

When hormone imbalance is detected early and steps are taken to correct it, progression to disease states may be prevented. To correct a hormone imbalance, I use the “test-and- treat” approach, which involves assessing your hormone levels through blood and saliva testing and then providing individualized treatment such as customized dosages of bio-identical hormones, if needed, and lifestyle and nutrition recommendations designed specifically for YOU!

The test-and-treat approach is far superior to the “guess and treat” approach to hormone replacement therapy that I was taught in medical school and residency and that is still used by many physicians. In the guess-and-treat approach, the patient reports her symptoms and the physicians guesses which hormones might be out of balance before prescribing a standard dose of a hormone.

If, at the follow-up visit, the patient’s symptoms have not improved or her condition has worsened, her treatment is changed to another pre-selected dose of conventional hormone therapy. After several episodes of treatment with different hormones or changes in doses, a patient who reports no improvement is often treated with a drug to relieve anxiety or depression. If that therapy fails, she is usually referred to a psychiatrist or is told that “Your problems are in your head.” or “There is no treatment left to offer.” and is dismissed.

Unfortunately, the guess-and-treat approach is still far too common in clinical practice. Most physicians would never prescribe drugs such as a blood thinner, insulin, or cholesterol-lowering medication without first measuring the appropriate blood or blood sugar values via well established monitoring and then treating the patient appropriately. This is a normal scientific approach, but somehow the Pharmaceutical industry sales people brainwashed physicians into abandoning this correct method in favor of the "guess and treat" approach.

The Health Benefits of Treating Hormone Imbalance

The precise diagnosis of hormone imbalance can motivate women to change their diet and lifestyle. Also, regular exercise, stress reduction, and good nutrition can favorably affect hormone production and metabolism. Having normal physiologic levels of certain hormones enables many people to feel well enough to adjust their diet and lifestyle. For example, women with a low progesterone level often crave sugar or are fatigued. Eating sugar-rich foods produces a fleeting feeling of energy but (coupled with a lack of exercise) causes weight gain over time. When I prescribe progesterone supplementation for such patients, they crave sugar less and have more energy. They are therefore more likely to exercise, make better food choices, and lose weight.