

FIVE STEPS TO



HORMONE

BALANCE

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Optimal Health Redefined

REDUCE TOXIC LOAD

ESTROGEN DOMINANCE

can occur at all ages. It brings a feeling of fullness and bloating and adds to weight loss resistance and irregular menses in women. Estrogen elimination is very important and is dependent on detoxification in a healthy liver. Estrogen molecules, as they function in our body, cannot dissolve in water. They must be chemically converted, in the liver, to slightly different substances enabling elimination in urine or stool. Poor ability to eliminate estrogens in the high estrogen state can only lead to more uncomfortable symptoms such as fatigue and weight gain. This process requires well functioning enzyme reactions and the right level of micronutrients.

HOW TO IMPROVE DETOX

Sweat! Sweating is the body's natural way to rid itself of toxins while cooling the body. Exercise, walking outside or sitting in an infrared sauna are all great ways to work up a healthy sweat.

Eats lots of veggies! Vegetables, especially cruciferous vegetables, contain compounds such ID3 that push the estrogen detox pathways. Plus the fiber in veggies helps feed the good gut bugs that also contribute to healthy detox. To reduce toxic load even further, choose organic produce when possible.

REDUCE TOXINS

Plastics, skincare, makeup and shampoos can all contain xenoestrogens which can mimic the body's own natural estrogens and contribute to estrogen dominance issues. Check out the Environmental Working Groups list of clean skincare, makeup and shampoos. Also, it's best to avoid plastic water bottles, especially those that have been left in the heat, and do not heat food in plastic containers in the microwave.

REDUCE STRESS

LOW PROGESTERONE

is a result of two major issues - the aging process and less efficient ovulation so you do not make as much progesterone - and/or the push of progesterone to cortisol if the body is in a chronic fight or flight state. Progesterone helps us keep calm, lowers anxiety and maintains deep REM sleep, renewing our brain and thoughts for the next day. The decrease and loss of balance of this hormone leads to disruptive symptoms. Cortisol hormone is the body's natural way of dealing with stress. However, if there is excessive physical or mental stress, the body will overproduce cortisol causing weight gain in the middle, more sleep problems and a tired but wired state.

STEPS TO MANAGE STRESS

Meditate Meditation has been shown to decrease cortisol significantly in research studies while improving sleep and the overall stress response. Start with a goal of 5 minutes per day and work on increasing to sessions of 10-15 minutes. There are several apps that offer free guided meditations such as Insight Timer and Headspace.

Forest Bathing is a traditional practice characterized by visiting a forest and breathing its air. Studies have actually been conducted on forest bathing showing that it significantly reduces cortisol post session.

Try Adaptogenic Herbs These herbs can help modulate the cortisol response. Examples include Ashwaganda, Rhodiola, and Holy Basil. Supplements such as Apex Adaptocrine or Adrenal Essence by Xymogen have these herbs in combination with micronutrients such as Vitamin C and B5 which also help support the adrenals. Check with your doctor before starting any herbal supplements.

REDUCE SUGAR AND REFINED CARBS

TESTOSTERONE ELEVATION

in women can lead to acne, hair growth on the face, hair loss on the head and irregular menstrual cycles. Mother Nature provided a mechanism to keep us safe and alive through the long, cold, and foodless winters we survived in paleolithic times. Our ancestors ate higher carbohydrate in the summer because that is when the majority of that nutrient would have been available. Higher carb eating can trigger higher testosterone to estrogen ratios. The decrease in sunlight would trigger the body to sort of "power down". At that time-high testosterone, lack of menstrual cycles, insulin resistance and overall toughness would have been optimal to make it through tough winters where food may have been scarce. However, modern society never experiences this winter reset and the estrogen/testosterone ratio can remain imbalanced.

REBALANCE YOUR DIET

Eat Good Fats Fat is a slow burning fuel that keeps the body satisfied and can help curb carb cravings. 30-40% of your total calories should come from fat daily. Choose anti-inflammatory fats like grassfed butter or ghee, olive oil, coconut, avocados, nuts and seeds. Avoid highly refined industrial seed oils like canola, safflower, soybean and vegetable oils. These can promote inflammatory processes in the body.

Choose Good Carbs such as vegetables, low glycemic fresh fruit and fiber rich, gluten free whole grains. The fibers in these foods help keep your gut bugs happy and provide necessary nutrients to support the whole body without raising blood sugar significantly to throw off hormone balance.

Exercise helps with blood sugar balance which in turn will help with estrogen/testosterone balance. Start by walking daily for 30 minutes. If you are already active, add in 1-2 sessions of High Intensity Interval Training per week and 1-2 sessions of full body strength training.

OPTIMIZE SLEEP

MELATONIN

is a very important hormone responsible for initiating sleep, reducing inflammation, detoxifying free radicals, and promoting healthy reproduction. In humans, the secretion of melatonin starts soon after sundown, reaches a peak in the middle of the night (between 2 and 4 in the morning) and decreases gradually during the second half of the night. Melatonin is part of a healthy circadian rhythm which is very important for weight management and healthy aging. Cortisol and melatonin regulate the body's response to night and day. Cortisol should only be high in the daytime in response to light to help the body wake up and function during the day and then decrease to a low level at night before bed. Melatonin then takes over to initiate sleep. If any part of the body is exposed to light, melatonin production is dampened.

ADJUST YOUR LIGHT EXPOSURE

Get More Sun Go outside first thing in the morning to expose the body to natural daylight. This will let the body know it's daytime and help reset the circadian rhythm. Try to get as much natural daylight as you can during the day - When people are exposed to sunlight in the daytime, their nocturnal melatonin production occurs sooner, and they enter into sleep more easily at night.

Sleep in a Dark Room Since melatonin production can shut down when exposed to any light; make sure your room is super dark at night and keep your phone or other electronics out of your room. Reduce exposure to any kind of light an hour or more before bed - blue light blocking glasses can help with this.

Melatonin Supplementation may help with sleep quantity and quality but more is not better. Recommended doses are between 0.5 mg to 3 mg.

UNDERSTAND THE ROLE OF THE THYROID

THYROID

Thyroid hormone is one of the most prescribed medications in the US. 123 million prescriptions were written in 2016 for levothyroxine in the US alone. A sluggish thyroid is often blamed for symptoms like constipation, fatigue, weight gain and irregular menstrual cycles. But a recent study found that up to 1 in 4 people with these symptoms have normal thyroid function. We also forget that none of our hormones function in a vacuum separate from other hormones or bodily factors. A sluggish thyroid can be caused by gut issues, low Vitamin D, poor iodine or selenium status or uncontrolled stress. Optimizing your health overall is the best thing you can do to improve your thyroid function. It is also very important to have the right labs done to determine the best course of action.

OPTIMIZE THE THYROID

Eliminate Gluten Hypothyroidism is autoimmune in nature in up to 90% of cases. Several studies show a link between autoimmune thyroid disease and gluten intolerance. The molecular structure of gliadin, the protein portion of gluten, closely resembles that of the thyroid gland. When gliadin breaches the protective barrier of the gut, and enters the bloodstream, the immune system tags it for destruction.

Eliminating gluten can go a long way in improving your health.

Optimize Nutrient Levels Iodine, selenium and vitamin D are vital for proper hormone function. Consuming sea vegetables like kelp and seaweed along with cold water fish like salmon and tuna will help you obtain these necessary nutrients.

Thyroid labs should look at more than just TSH

A full thyroid panel looks at all aspects of the thyroid - ask your doctor to run TSH, Free T3, Free T4, Vitamin D, thyroid antibodies and reverse T3.