

HORMONE IMBALANCE

Estrogen Dominance

What is “estrogen dominance”?

Estrogen dominance does not necessarily mean that the body produces too much estrogen (although that can happen too); it means that your body’s estrogen production is not in balance with your progesterone production. “Estrogen dominance” occurs when



your ovaries produce a relatively consistent amount estrogen while producing significantly less and less progesterone. All women experience this change, at varying levels — it is a natural process of your aging ovaries.

For the typical teen starting her period, the balance of hormones

produced in the body is a healthy ratio of estrogen to progesterone. This balance begins to shift in your late 20s, or early 30s, as symptoms related to stress, lack of sleep, and side effects of synthetic birth control start to appear. Mid-30s weight gain and worsening PMS are common symptoms of estrogen dominance. As you reach your 40s and 50s, symptoms begin in earnest as your aging ovaries gradually lose their ability to produce steady amounts of each sex hormone.

To understand how estrogen dominance, it is important to understand the role of progesterone. Estrogen and progesterone operate like sides of a seesaw, shifting up and down during a woman’s monthly cycle. When progesterone gets low, that side of the seesaw hits the ground, causing negative symptoms to arise: fatigue, anxiety, heavy periods, weight gain, uterine fibroids, irritability. When the progesterone side of the seesaw gets stuck on low, the estrogen side stays elevated, relative to progesterone. It’s not (necessarily) that your

estrogen is high — it’s that your progesterone level drops so low that estrogen effectively “dominates.” Contributing factors: xenoestrogens (man-made environmental estrogens) found in hormone-injected meats, certain pesticides, petrochemicals, herbicides, plastics, and drugs, as well as phthalates, (plastic-softening chemicals), add to the body’s estrogen “load.” In addition, fat cells have a built-in ability to churn out estrogen, so if you have been 10 pounds or more overweight for one or more years, your body fat may be causing your estrogen levels to increase. Lifestyle choices can also contribute: eating processed foods, too little exercise, too little sleep, and too much stress can accelerate estrogen load.

Estrogen dominance can short-circuit your internal remote control physically, emotionally, and mentally. Symptoms include fatigue, depression, low libido/poor sex drive, mood swings/increased irritability, PMS, hot flashes, night sweats, headaches/migraines, abdominal weight gain, insomnia, osteoporosis, irregular bleeding, and bloating. Estrogen is important to a woman’s physical well-being; however, an overload can be destructive, causing a cascade of unpleasant symptoms and raising the risk of life-threatening diseases. Untreated estrogen dominance has been clinically-linked to an increased risk of breast and uterine cancers, osteoporosis, low thyroid and dementia.

Can “estrogen dominance” be reversed?

Absolutely. The first step towards restoring an optimal balance of hormones is bioidentical progesterone cream that can act to eliminate your condition of estrogen dominance at a cellular level and begin to bring all your hormone levels into better balance. Lifestyle changes like regular exercise, stress-reduction strategies and a hormone-healthy diet are also fundamental to feeling and looking your best – at any age.



DR. RANDOLPH'S
AGELESS & WELLNESS
MEDICAL CENTER