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Female Hormonal Imbalance

A survey conducted by the Institute for Optimum Nutrition, London showed that as many as sixty-four per cent of women suffer from PMS (premenstrual syndrome).

Many female health problems are hormone related, including **irregular periods, PMS symptoms, infertility, fibroids, endometriosis, polycystic breasts and ovaries, cervical and breast cancer**. The most common imbalance is related to an excess of oestrogen. Oestrogen stimulates the growth of sensitive tissue in the breasts and womb, and a high level is associated with increased risk of breast cancer, endometriosis and fibroids.

An Under functioning Liver

The liver converts oestrogen to a safer form for excretion, but if it is not functioning efficiently, old hormones may accumulate and be recycled back into the bloodstream. Along with all its other jobs, the liver has to detoxify drugs, alcohol, tea, coffee, chemicals and pesticides so is frequently overworked.



A Sluggish Colon

Once oestrogen has been converted in the liver, it passes back into the colon for excretion. If there is constipation, the excess oestrogen is absorbed back into the blood stream and will need to be detoxified again. A sluggish colon equals a toxic colon, a toxic body and more work for the liver.

How to fix it

Start with assessing **how well your liver and your bowel are working** and get any problems in this area sorted.



Reduce Exposure to Hormone Disrupting Chemicals

- As far as possible avoid food or drinks in plastic containers or wrapped in plastic, cans and cardboard packs with plastic linings. Do not heat or microwave food in plastic.
- Limit intake of meat and dairy produce
- Eat organically if possible and wash all fruit and vegetables.
- Drink filtered or bottled water
- Avoid using pesticides in the garden.
- Use natural cleaning products for the home and use natural toiletries
- Consider natural alternatives to the contraceptive pill and HRT

Foods to Reduce

- Saturated fat found in red meat, dairy products, processed foods, fried foods
- Caffeine in tea, coffee, chocolate, cola
- Alcohol

Foods to Avoid

- Sugar both on its own and hidden in food
- Additives, preservatives and chemicals such as artificial sweeteners



Enhance your Diet, include;

- Complex carbohydrates- wholegrain like brown rice, wholemeal bread and flour, rye, oats.
- Phyto-oestrogens in the form of pulses, especially chick peas, lentils, soy beans, linseeds. These are plant estrogens that have a balancing effect on hormones.
- Plenty of fruit and vegetables to provide a wide range of vitamins, minerals, anti-oxidants and fibre. Fibre is important to help prevent old hormones being recycled.
- Oily fish- trout, salmon, mackerel, sardines, nuts and seeds such as sunflower, pumpkin, sesame. These provide the essential fatty acids the body needs.
- Plenty of fluids in the form of water and herbal teas



Exercise

Without exercise, nutrients are not properly distributed to the cells, the body's waste material is not processed properly and blood sugar control is impaired. Exercise has a positive impact on almost every metabolic process in the body. It improves immunity, resistance to stress, cardiovascular health, blood sugar control, bone health etc. etc. At least 45 minutes three times per week is recommended. The time you invest exercising is thought to improve your life expectancy and years of 'healthy' life – that is why it is such a good investment of your time.

Treat the Symptoms

If you manage to stick to the above way of eating 80% of the time, your symptoms may improve, however there are nutrients and herbs that might be particularly helpful for each of the conditions mentioned above.

For more information on health issues go to:

www.scandinavian-health.de

Bibliography:

Marilyn Glenville: The Nutritional Health Handbook for Women, Piatkus 2001
 Kate Neil and Patrick Holford: Balancing Hormones Naturally, Piatkus 1998
 Patrick Holford: 6 Weeks to Super Health, Piatkus 2000

For a personal **Optimum Nutrition consultation** contact:
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Don't change your medication or start a supplement regime without consulting a health professional.