



## **Bio-identical Hormone replacement therapy**

### What is Bio-identical Hormone Replacement Therapy?

Bio-identical hormone replacement therapy or (BHRT) is for the treatment of the hormone deficiencies caused by menopause and peri-menopause, as well as other hormone imbalance conditions, such as PMS, sexual dysfunction, and other. Bio-identical hormones are manufactured using molecules that are identical to the endogenous hormones found in the human body. BHRT differs from traditional hormone replacement therapy which includes animal-derived and invented molecules that are similar to, but not identical to human hormones.

No matter what your age, if your hormones (estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone) are unbalanced, you may suffer ill effects such as hot flashes, night sweats, trouble sleeping, mood swings, depression, anxiety, memory loss, vaginal dryness, fatigue, loss of your sex drive and even weight gain.

Women with balanced hormones, integrated with proper nutrition and fitness can have a better quality of life.

### What is the difference between bio-identical and synthetic hormones?

Synthetic hormones are manufactured in laboratories, for mass consumption, in other words, one-pill-fits-all. They are synthetic and not natural, and may produce unwanted side effects like nausea, fluid retention, and dizziness. There are also potential dangers like the increased risk of breast or uterine cancer.

Bio-identical hormones, contrary to synthetic hormones, are extracted from natural sources, plants like soybean and wild yams, and their molecular structure is identical to that of the hormones produced by our bodies. They can also be compounded (made into creams, capsules or troches) to suit your specific hormone replacements needs, allowing you to receive individualized treatment.

Women suffering from menopause or peri-menopause can turn to bio-identical hormones to replace the natural hormones that have declined as their bodies have aged. They have been used safely and effectively for decades.

### What can you expect?

Some advantages of bio-identical hormone replacement therapy are: control of hot flashes, night sweats, trouble sleeping, memory loss, mood swings, weight gain, and low libido/sex drive.

Individualized programs can be designed specifically for each woman suffering from a variety of hormone related conditions: menopause, peri-menopause, PMS, sexual dysfunction, etc.

Proper treatment will allow you the possibility of enjoying an active, happy and healthy life, by fighting many of the uncomfortable effects of menopause and hormone imbalance.

#### Some common BHRT Medications:

Progesterone Topical Cream: 200mg/ml apply 0.1ml topically daily – effective for multiple hormone related conditions, including peri-menopause and menopause, PMS, and sexual drive issues.

Progesterone (micronized) Capsule Slow Release: 100mg one every night – helps with sleep and reduces anxiety. Also, effective for PMS, peri-menopause and menopause. Is effective in protecting the uterus. Increases testosterone levels. Side effects are occasional nausea, foggy head feeling and breast swelling.

Testosterone Topical Cream: 10mg/ml apply 0.1ml topically daily – effective for multiple conditions, especially menopause and sexual drive issues.

Estriol vaginal insert: 1mg per gram 1 applicator in vagina daily – effective for vaginal dryness and vaginal hormone balance

Estriol vaginal insert: 1mg per gram + Vitamin E 200IU 1 applicator in vagina daily – as above.

Bi-est (Estradiol:Estriol) Cream: 1/4mg one application/day on day 1-25 of the month – Estrogen cream can improve perimenopause and menopausal symptoms. May work better than pills as more of the medication gets to the site of action. They show less interference with liver enzymes, therefore less interference with other medication and less risk of clotting problems.

#### Application for topical (cream) treatment:

1. Apply to inner thigh, back of arm or lower abdomen. Avoid breasts, back of knee, buttocks and neck.
2. Rub in well for at least one minute.
3. Be careful about possible transfer of hormone to others by contact.
4. Do not apply any other ointment or cream over the same area.

#### Insurance coverage:

Insurance coverage for BHRT is very variable amongst insurers. Your prescription will be sent directly to the Compounding pharmacy. The compounding pharmacy will contact you directly and will help you in this regard. Often, even if the medication is not covered, or partially covered, the cost is no more than many copays.