



Center for Traditional Medicine Newsletter

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ANSWERING THE ESTROGEN QUESTION

Noel S. Peterson, ND

Marta had been taking Estrace and Provera for 4 years and was pleased with the results. She felt it had helped her out of menopausal depression and made her feel and look more youthful. She had read about the benefits of estrogen for preventing osteoporosis, heart disease, and Alzheimer's. Then, her aunt was diagnosed with breast cancer and the first thing her aunt's doctor had done was to take her off of Estrogen. Also, Marta's gynecologist had sent her a letter advising all her patients to discontinue hormone replacement.

All the conflicting information and advice was making it difficult to make a decision. All she really wanted to know was: Do the benefits of taking estrogen outweigh the risks?

At our first office visit we performed a basic risk assessment: We found that on the positive side, she had delivered two healthy children, as well as having breast fed both of her children for over 3 months, both of which had lowered her risk.

On the negative side, we found that the risk factors working against her were that (1) she had a family history of breast cancer, (2) she was eating a diet too high in sugar and fats, (3) she was taking estrogen without knowing how her body

metabolized them, and (4) she was taking Provera, the synthetic progestin that has been linked with increasing the risk of breast cancer and blocking the benefits estrogen has on the heart.

Next, we needed find out if her body metabolized estrogen favorably. The best method to find this out is by performing a 24 hour Urinary Sex Steroid Profile. Marta collected her urine for 24 hrs. and we sent the sample to the laboratory. The test measured progesterone, testosterone, DHEA, and the primary anabolic steroid metabolites. Also, her Estrogen Quotient (EQ) was calculated, along with her 2-hydroxy/16-alpha-hydroxy estrone ratio ("good estrogen"/"bad estrogen" ratio). These two ratios tell us how well estrogen is being metabolized. Women with an EQ under 1.0 have lower E3 levels and are at the highest risk for breast cancer. Those with an EQ greater than 1.5 have the highest E3 levels and are at the lowest risk for breast cancer. Basically, the lower the EQ, the higher the risk.

Marta's hormone results were an eye opener. First, her total estrogen levels were four times the normal levels of women half her age. Her estrone level was ten times the safe range, and her Estrogen Quotient was a high risk 0.1. Her "good estrogen"/"bad estrogen" ratio was way below the safe range of 2.5.

Five things were clear from her lab tests: 1) her estrogen levels were too high, 2), her intestinal bacteria and her liver were metabolizing the estradiol (E2) in Estrace into estrone (E1), 3) her

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PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME: IT IS TREATABLE!

Lori Horan, ND, L.Ac.

Christy came to my office one day to seek help for premenstrual syndrome--the cyclical appearance of bloating, acne, emotional instability, fatigue, food cravings, and headaches. By her estimation, she had suffered from PMS at least 240 times (12 periods per year for 20 years). Christy was a slightly overweight, ambitious career woman who worked long hours six days a week and ate a predominantly "fast food" diet. Over time, Christy's PMS was getting worse--instead of only one week before her period, her symptoms lasted two weeks. Christy was delighted to learn that PMS could be treated effectively using diet, exercise, acupuncture and nutritional supplementation.

Treatment of PMS is most effective when it addresses the root causes, which may include the effects of a nutrient deficient diet, insufficient exercise, relationship imbalances, emotions, and childhood traumas. Dietary change, however, is the cornerstone and starting place of PMS therapy.

Upon evaluation, we discovered that Christy's life regularly included every factor that is known to cause PMS:

- * Refined sugar.
- * Caffeine (including soft drinks, coffee, chocolate).
- * Dairy products (excess calcium intake can block the intake of magnesium).
- * Insufficient fiber intake (such as fresh vegetables).
- * Being overweight (increases the likelihood of excess estrogen since body fat produces estrone).

Christy's fast food diet was the perfect diet to produce PMS symptoms. A diet that is full of refined foods, high in partially hydrogenated fats, and low in essential fatty acids lends itself to high levels of estrogen and low levels of progesterone. Relatively high estrogen is what accounts for many of PMS's symptoms because a) the liver gets sluggish from stored toxins, and b) a woman with excess estrogen is likely to be deficient in Vitamins C, E, B6, B12, magnesium, and selenium, all of which are required to break down and inactivate estrogen, and to excrete it efficiently.

An optimal diet that includes more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, less fat, and more fiber helps to excrete estrogen, thereby reducing symptoms. Christy learned that the optimal diet also would eliminate dairy foods and caffeine, and reduce partially hydrogenated fats, refined carbohydrates, red

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own fatty tissue was producing large amounts of E1, 4) her liver was not converting the higher risk estrogens into the "good estrogen" metabolites, and 5) she needed an alternative to Provera that still gave her the benefits of hormone replacement.

Our first step to achieve this was to gradually begin lowering her Estrace dose while gradually increasing her E3. We did this by improving her liver function through diet changes, herbal medicines and giving her a natural form of E3 to take. She began taking INDOLPLEX to raise her "good estrogen" / "bad estrogen" ratio. She went off Provera and began taking natural progesterone. She took most of the sugar out of her diet, and lowered her total fat intake. She began eating more of the good fats like olive oil, fish oils, and fresh nuts and seeds. She cooked using more garlic, pesto and fresh herbs containing protective antioxidant flavones and terpenes, which include basil, thyme, oregano, cumin and lemon peel. She reduced her coffee intake, replacing it with Gyokuro green tea. She added soy products to her diet for the cancer preventing isoflavones found in them. She added whole fresh ground flax seeds to her morning whole grain cereal to help her liver metabolize estrogen. She guarded against constipation, which can increase carcinogenic bile acids in breast cysts, and added the *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *bifidus* bacteria to her diet to help bile acid elimination.

And it worked! After 5 months of following the program we repeated the tests and were delighted to find that her total estrogen was now in the normal range, her EQ was a robust 2.21 ratio, and her "good estrogen" / "bad estrogen" ratio had risen to protective levels. She continued to gain all the benefits of hormone replacement therapy, including the absence of hot flashes, prevention of heart disease, osteoporosis, and Alzheimers, and a feeling of youthful vigor. Best of all, she had peace of mind and now knows what to do to get the benefits of hormone therapy without the risk.

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meat and eggs. Included in Christy's treatment regimen were the following daily supplements: a multi-vitamin, Omega-3 fatty acids (in the daily form of fish oil or flax oil DHA or EPA), B Complex, magnesium, Vitamin E, C, selenium, and flax seed meal.

Another part of Christy's PMS-recovery plan included a series of 6 acupuncture treatments. Acupuncture has long been used as a method to restore the proper flow of energy throughout the body and to balance biochemical rhythms. It can unblock areas that may be blocked, and tonify areas that may be deficient. In Christy's case, her liver's organ network was sluggish and needed a boost.

In addition to diet and acupuncture, we also added an exercise plan to Christy's schedule. It consisted of a minimum of 20 minutes of aerobic movement three times per week. Her work schedule had to be cut back, but this brought her work hours back into balance with her health. Studies show that exercise reduces many PMS symptoms by supporting neurotransmitters and improving circulation. Aerobic movement is more effective for PMS than strength training. Studies show frequency, not intensity, results in decreased menstrual distress symptoms. Regularity of exercise and diversity of movement (stretching, strength training and cardiovascular conditioning) appear to be the most helpful. Increased endorphins produced by exercise also reduce depression and pain.

Finally, every month during PMS time, Christy had repetitive emotional conflicts revolving around the lack of personal time she needed for her artistic hobbies. During treatment she made the connection that she continually downplayed and ignored her feminine side, and overextended her masculine side by overworking in her career. Why she did this, she concluded, had to do with the values instilled in her by other family members when she was young, rather than something she consciously chose. She decided it was time to make a conscious choice to make more time for art regularly.

Some very persistent cases of PMS contain a much deeper emotional seed that lifestyle changes alone will not help. Unresolved emotional and psychological stressors can disrupt the menstrual rhythm. These insidious stressors can include an imbalance in relationships, codependency, addiction, previous traumas, denial of existing conflicts, etc. Our psyches hold tremendous power over our biochemical health, and often psychological stress needs to be revealed in order to understand our hormonal imbalance.

Most of Christy's symptoms improved with diet, acupuncture, and exercise. Sometimes, however, progesterone therapy is indicated when PMS doesn't respond to simple lifestyle changes. In some cases it may be necessary to provide symptom relief while

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A LITTLE INFORMATION ON THE NEW GUY

Daniel H. Chong, ND

Hello everyone! Now that many of you may have seen me around the clinic, I thought people might like to know a little more about my practice. In the treatment of any health condition, I believe there are five fundamental areas that must always be addressed in order to assure a complete healing process. Failing to include one or more of these can often result in an incomplete healing response, or at least a delay in healing time. These five crucial areas are nutrition, detoxification, structure, genetics/heredity, and mind/spirit.

Nutrition involves much more than the food we eat. In my opinion, nutrition involves anything and everything the human body takes in as nourishment. Of course the most obvious form of nourishment is food, but water, air, sunlight, auditory and visual stimuli are equally important forms of "food" for the body. I encourage my patients to improve the quantity and quality of all of these factors in their lives. When they are able to, they notice greater and longer lasting changes in their levels of health and vitality.

Detoxification- Most of us are aware that we live in a very toxic world these days. The better our bodies are able to eliminate the various toxins we accumulate, the better our bodies will function, and the stronger and more resistant to disease we will be. In situations where one's health has already been compromised, any treatment, regardless of what type it is, will be more effective if the body is "cleaned out" first. When you re-paint a wall, do you just start painting, or do you first clean off the dirt and strip off the old paint so that the new paint sticks better and lasts longer? I will frequently recommend hydrotherapy, exercise, yoga postures, cleansing programs, and/or specific homeopathic medications to start off a patient's treatment plan.

Structure- Misalignment in physical structure, or blockages in the energy flow which normally courses freely through the body, can often slow down the healing process. Aside from causing pain, these problems decrease the flow of critical, fresh nutrients and "chi" or healing energy to the problem area, wherever it may be. I use spinal manipulation, Bowen therapy, ultrasound/sinewave, and trigger point needling to help realign any potential problem areas. If the flow of blood and energy is impeded, recovery from disease or injury of any kind will be slower and less complete.

Genetics/Heredity- This area is the most difficult to affect. In homeopathic theory certain traits, or "miasms", can be inherited. These miasms may have an effect on a person's predisposition to certain health conditions. Homeopathic theory suggests that these conditions can be "treated" by the appropriately prescribed remedy. Another way to accomplish this is through the use of biotherapeutic drainage or "UNDA" remedies. I use both of these powerful treatments to assist in detoxification on the deepest levels, and to influence a patient's miasmatic tendencies.

Mind/Spirit- By far the most important factor in the recovery from an illness is the state of one's mind and spirit. A positive attitude, laughter, giving and receiving love, quieting the mind, and having a spiritual practice of some sort, will all help to nourish your soul. Physical illness cannot

exist in the presence of a healthy soul. I encourage many of my patients to pursue a spiritual practice of their choice and to introduce or maintain love in their life, in any way, shape, or form that they are able. I also recommend frequent, loud, side-splitting laughter on a regular basis.

Finally, I want to say thank you to everyone that I have met so far for their warm welcomes. I look forward to working more with all of you, and to meeting more of you in the future. Namaste.

TALES OF ROLFING® STRUCTURAL INTEGRATION

Ellyn Lindquist, LMT, Certified Rolfer

"I arrived at Ellyn's doorstep with chronic hip pain that had lasted more than 10 years. The pain bothered me during the day, but at night often prevented me from sleeping. I had been to doctors, chiropractors and massage therapists. I had tried exercise, yoga and dance and still the pain was there. Some of these therapies even aggravated the pain. I had even had an MRI and a CAT scan of my hip, and still no one knew what to do to help.

"Ellyn carefully listened to my story and through a patient trial and testing process she was able to discover the root of the problem. This is something no one else had been able to do! I am now pain-free which I still find amazing. I am very grateful for Ellyn's skilled work, and think of her often as I walk easily through the day and sleep peacefully through the night."

-Kay D.

If you have any questions about Rolfing or you would like to schedule an appointment, please call the Center at (503) 636-2734 or check out FAQ's and more testimonials on Ellyn's web site at: www.tryrolfing.com

MASSAGE AT THE CENTER!

Ellyn Lindquist, LMT, Certified Rolfer has increased her hours at the Center, and is now doing massage therapy again as well as Rolfing! Ellyn does deep tissue massage and also just gentle relaxation massage. Come in for a massage and receive \$10 off if you mention this ad!! Call (503) 636-2734 to schedule your massage appointment.

FREE ROLFING® DEMONSTRATION AND TALK

Friday, January 24th from 7:15-8:15, Ellyn Lindquist, LMT, Certified Rolfer, will give a free demonstration and talk about Rolfing. The talk will be at Holiday's Yoga Center, 510 SW 3rd (and Washington) Ste. 210. To register call (503) 224-8611.



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Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday:

8:00-12:30 & 1:30-5:00

Thursday: 8:00-1:00

MASTER YOUR SUGAR ADDICTION CLASS

Do you have a history of being "on" and "off" sugar? Do you alternate between a healthy diet and out-of-control sugar consumption? To stop this roller coaster we need both a balanced blood sugar and an awareness of our need for nourishment that does not come from food.

Certain foods can promote biochemical reactions that result in sugar cravings. Balancing blood sugar is simple with the right kinds of food. Many people successfully diet and feel better when they do. However, diets usually end because food isn't the whole problem.

Sugar can provide comfort, ease emotional distress, reduce pain, and subdue anxiety. Sugar can also be a distraction from the real reasons that people use food when they are not physically hungry. Sugar can be medication for a non-physical hunger. If we examine closely the times when we are "out of control" with sugar, we might find a deep current of powerful feelings we are not conscious of. If we were more aware of our feelings, we might make better choices that could affect our lives profoundly.

Join Dr. Lori Horan for her upcoming Master Your Sugar Addiction class. The class is designed to stop the roller coaster of binging and dieting and stop the "all or nothing" approach to sugar and obsession with food. In this class, you will learn to:

- * Explore the appropriate diet to balance your blood sugar and body chemistry.
- * Listen to your hunger
- * Find out why you use food when you aren't hungry

- * Break your obsession with food
- * Practice nourishing yourself in ways other than eating
- * Recognize the difference between physical and emotional hungers
- * Live More Fully

Introductory Lecture: Monday, March 3, 2003 7-9 pm
Cost: \$40.00

Master Your Sugar Addiction Follow Up Classes on Monday nights: March 10, 17, 24, and 31, 7-8 PM
Cost for four follow up classes: \$100.00
Call 503-636-2734 to register. Class size is limited.

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also addressing the imbalances that require change. Progesterone should not be supplemented until a hormone test reveals that a hormonal deficiency in fact exists.

The Five Element style of acupuncture is of particular assistance with PMS, as it comprehensively addresses both the body symptoms and the possibility of deeper unresolved emotional conflicts that tend to surface premenstrually. If you suffer from PMS and would like assistance in treating it, call CTM for an appointment with Dr. Horan today.