



Hormones: Havoc or Harmony?

Don't Let Menopause be a Home Wrecker!

by Betty Dahlhausen

Panel: Bonnie Merkle, Jeanne Keck, Leslie Davis

*I will give thanks to You
for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
Wonderful are your Works, and my soul knows it very well.*
Psalm 139:14



Definitions:

- **Menopause** – The period marked by the natural and permanent cessation of menstruation, occurring usually between the ages of 45 and 55. (American Heritage Dictionary)
- **Perimenopause** – This is the time you begin experiencing menopausal signs and symptoms, even though you still menstruate. Your hormone levels rise and fall unevenly, and you may have hot flashes and other symptoms. Perimenopause may last four to five years or longer. (www.mayoclinic.com)
- **Postmenopause** – Once 12 months have passed since your last period, you've reached menopause. Your ovaries produce much less estrogen and no progesterone, and they don't release eggs. The years that follow are called postmenopause. (www.mayoclinic.com)

1. What are the symptoms you've experienced?

2. When we experience these emotions caused by hormonal change, is it manifesting a spiritual problem that we have?

3. Did you realize at the time you were experiencing these things that they were related to hormone change? How did that affect the way you responded to them?

4. Did your husband and your children know what was behind your “unusual behavior” and how were they able to help you?
5. How would you advise women who have husbands who are uncomfortable talking about these kinds of issues or are struggling knowing how to handle the situation?

6. What can we do spiritually that will help us cope with the emotional problems? How have you learned to deal with the emotional issues?

The Medical Side

by Debbie Pruden

Hormones

They are what makes me me and you you. When God said we are *fearfully and wonderfully made*, He knew all about our hormones.

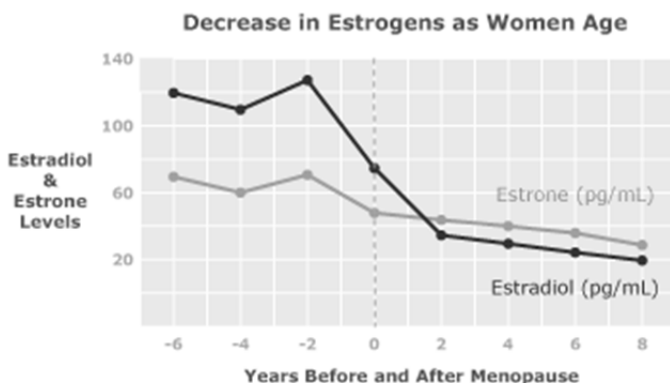
Hormones change daily and can vary from hour to hour – and I hate to inform you – even minute to minute. Women are often seen as being effected by their hormones. As a result they are said to be subject to hormonal “tides” or hormonal “storms”. Aren’t you glad we know the One who can calm the storm!!!

There are 67 hormones in our bodies all rising and falling at different times. Even the endocrinologists cannot explain all that is going on inside you as an individual every moment of the day. We are all unique with unique combinations of these hormones. For our concern here we only will mention a few.

- ✂ Estrogen – part of an entire class of hormones that include estriol, estradiol, estrone. This class of hormones is what makes us women or what gives us our feminine traits. Men also have estrogen in smaller amounts.
- ✂ Testosterone – yes, we have this too and it gives us sexual interest.
- ✂ Progesterone – causes moods and emotions but more importantly, the ability to have children.

We are a very complicated creation made by our Lord for His glory!

In this graph the most noticeable drop is BEFORE menopause, roughly about age 50. It continues to drop and then levels off nicely. Did I say I hate rollercoasters!



34 Menopause Symptoms

Menopausal symptoms affect about 70% of women approaching menopause. Typical menopause symptoms, such as hot flashes or night sweats, are caused by changing hormonal levels in the female reproductive system. Almost all women notice early symptoms while still having periods. This stage of gradually falling and fluctuating hormone levels is called perimenopause, which often begins in the early 40s.

The symptoms of menopause usually last for the whole menopause transition (until the mid 50s), but some women may experience them for the rest of their lives. The most common symptoms are: hot flashes, night sweats, irregular periods, loss of libido, and vaginal dryness. However, there are a variety of treatments that can be considered to deal with these symptoms.

List of the 34 Menopause Symptoms

Common Symptoms

1. Hot Flashes
2. Night Sweats
3. Irregular Periods
4. Loss of Libido
5. Vaginal Dryness
6. Mood Swings

Changes

7. Fatigue
8. Hair Loss
9. Sleep Disorders
10. Difficult Concentrating
11. Memory Lapses
12. Dizziness
13. Weight Gain
14. Incontinence
15. Bloating
16. Allergies
17. Brittle Nails

18. Changes in Odor
19. Irregular Heartbeat
20. Depression
21. Anxiety
22. Irritability
23. Panic Disorder

Pains

24. Breast Pain
25. Headaches
26. Joint Pain
27. Burning Tongue
28. Electric Shocks
29. Digestive Problems
30. Gum Problems
31. Muscle Tension
32. Itchy Skin
33. Tingling Extremities

Others

34. Osteoporosis

Suggested Readings

The Afternoon of Life: Finding Purpose and Joy in Midlife

– Elyse Fitzpatrick

Emotional Phases of a Woman's Life – Jeanne Lush

Menopause and Hormone Book: Making Informed Choices

– Dr. Susan Love

Out of the Blues – Wayne Mack

Practicing the Presence of God – Brother Lawrence

Small Changes – Elizabeth George

The Wisdom of Menopause: Creating Physical and Emotional Health During the Change – Dr. Christian Northrup

