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BAD AIBLING

# DR. DOUWES, MD *informs!*

## Progesterone the important Hormone for Women and Men

Progesterone is known as our calming, mood, sleep, libido and bone-enhancing hormone. What many men don't know is Progesterone functions as a precursor in our body to produce testosterone, while also acting as a balance to decrease **estrogen**. As men age the level of progesterone starts to decrease. Natural production by the testes and adrenals in men starts to decrease with aging and can lead to an imbalance, not only of progesterone, but also lead to decreased testosterone and an increase of estrogen. *Balance between Testosterone, Progesterone and male Estrogen is the key to being healthy.*

### Symptoms of Progesterone Imbalance Look Very Similar to Testosterone Imbalance:

- Decreased or lack of energy
- Decrease in libido or sex drive
- Difficulty in sexual arousal with weaker erections
- Erectile dysfunction
- Cognitive concerns
- Weight gain
- Thinning of bones or bone loss
- Thinning and dry hair

### Testing For Progesterone Imbalance:

At St. George Hospital we recognize the importance this hormone can have on the body and have contracted with several certified laboratories to provide cutting edge testing options. This helps us to diagnose a progesterone imbalance.

### Treating Progesterone Imbalance:

The good news is Progesterone imbalance can be treated. At St. George Hospital we have several specialized departments besides oncology and infectiology (mainly Lyme and Coinfections) we also have a specialized outpatient department and offer individualized bioidentical male hormone replacement therapy, Anti-aging and Age Reversing medicine. The goal of our treatment plan is to restore the balance of hormones to improve vitality and health. By restoring the balance between all hormones such as Testosterone, Estrogen, Progesterone, Cortisol, and Thyroid in the body, symptoms can be alleviated and even eliminated. Optimal progesterone levels also lower health



concerns such as prostatitis, anxiety, inflammation, fat metabolism, libido, elevated blood sugar, osteoporosis and insomnia. ***When many of us think of progesterone, we think of it as being a strictly female hormone for women only. Wrong!! Men need progesterone, too. WHY?***

- Progesterone helps to control the actions of estrogen, to keep both men and women safe.
- Progesterone helps protect men's reproductive tissue from adverse effects of excessive estrogen as men age.
- Progesterone helps battle "the beer belly gut" that excess estrogen makes it difficult for maturing men to shed.
- Progesterone also helps men preserve their masculinity.
- Progesterone is a precursor to the male sex hormone, testosterone.

### **Estrogen dominance.**

When men age, testosterone levels start to decline, and estrogen levels start to steadily rise. These levels can potentially increase even faster if testosterone is supplemented/replaced in men by an enzyme called aromatase to more estrogen. This causes "bad estrogen dominance" in men, similar to how it can occur in women, in which excess estrogen levels signaling adversely affects brain and body functions.

Estrogen dominance is a term introduced by John R. Lee, MD, describing a condition in which a person has more estrogen than can be kept under control by progesterone. Even if a man's estrogen levels are high, or even are low, he may have symptoms of "estrogen dominance" if his progesterone is low. Other causes include environmental factors such as hormone receptor disrupters (plastics) and hormonal substances in our food (milk and meat). Additionally, alcohol above moderation, chronic stress and particularly adiposity (too many fat cells) add insult to injury. It is in our fat that we aromatize or convert our precious testosterone to estrogen and the estrogen tends to make men and women even fatter, a negative vicious cycle!

### **Progesterone protects brains.**

Even in men progesterone delivers its signals to progesterone receptors. The brain is flush with progesterone receptors in all of us— girls, boys, men and women. Progesterone, in fact, is so important for protecting nerve and brain function it is actually manufactured locally right inside the brain itself. Some neurologists knowing this are giving small amounts of progesterone replacement to children with epilepsy or attention deficient disorder to help stabilize brain function. When someone undergoes brain injury, progesterone is secreted locally and aids brain neurons to heal faster and better. This happens in boys and girls as well as women and men.

- Progesterone naturally calms the brain.
- Progesterone may be involved with a sense of satiation after eating.
- Progesterone increases dopamine-controlled signaling
- Progesterone replacement may be seen in the future in other diseases.
- Progesterone promotes neuroprotection (brain and nerve) and repair.
- Progesterone acts similarly to barbiturates and Propofol, which decrease the over-excitement of sick nerve cells. (These synthetic drugs are commonly used in medically-induced coma for traumatic brain injury).



## Progesterone is now recommended:

- In traumatic brain injury and spinal cord damage (both acute and chronic) progesterone is now being recommended by avant-garde neurosurgeons.
- Nerve impingement (vertebral disk disease) and peripheral neuropathy from diabetes, etc. and MS improve in many cases when progesterone replacement is added to the mix. (This is why MS patients who become pregnant—progesterone levels rise during pregnancy—often go into remission).
- For insomnia in mid-lifers, progesterone replacement boosts the production of neurosteroids (Allopregnanolone), which modulate GABA type A receptors (similar to the action of Valium) and promote restorative sleep and tranquility.
- Treatment for acute and even protection against stroke as progesterone is involved in a variety of steps that affect nerve health.
- Ischemic brain injury.

Bioidentical progesterone is presently being tested in a multi-center study in various head trauma centers, given to girls, boy, men and women who have had brain trauma to *try to enhance healing and decrease complications.*

Progesterone boosts small increases in serotonin in an area of the brain that regulates body temperature, energy, and sexual behavior. Men with low levels of progesterone have greater risk of anxiety, low libido, hair loss, weight gain, fatigue, depression, erectile dysfunction, impotence, bone loss, muscle loss, prostatism (blockage of urine at the base of the bladder due to overgrowth of prostate cells) and even cancer.

The brain/nerve/psychological effects of progesterone are best achieved by its metabolites formed enzymatically in the liver. Thus, taking progesterone for the brain, sleep, calming, nerve protective effect is best achieved by taking it orally. Oral dosages have to be much higher than the dosage of taking progesterone trans dermally or on mucous membranes (inside the mouth, vagina, or around the anal area). Taking progesterone for erectile dysfunction can be done as a cream in much lower dosages.

The oral dose may vary from as little as 25 mg to as much as 400 mg at a time. One may not confuse the synthetic *PROGESTINS* (Provera, Clinovir, Megestat etc.) with the natural bioidentical - *PROGESTERONE* (Uterogest). Progestins have a *higher degree of adverse reactions than the bioidentical progesterone in their oral or transdermal form. Therefore, we prescribe synthetic hormones rarely and only in very specific conditions.*

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