

Module 8 Lesson 1

Transcript

Today we're talking women's sex hormones, specifically estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. In this lesson, we're going to cover the basics on the production and function of estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone. How these hormones impact our health and our bodies, and where hormones need to factor into our work as helpers here? You're going to want to check out the handout on female hormones for more deep details, but I'm giving you the bottom lines for each one right now. So let's start with estrogen. Estrogen is produced in the ovaries, as many of you may already know. It's part of the endocrine system and it's also produced by fat cells and the adrenal gland. Estrogen plays a predominant role in breast development. It makes our hips curvy to deliver babies, triggers our pubic hair to grow and regulates our menstrual cycles. When we're pregnant, the placenta produces estrogen and estrogen also tells our breast to produce milk.

Some other fun facts about estrogen. Estrogen helps in the process of bone strengthening and formation. We need estrogen for sex and reproduction. It plays a role in libido and vaginal lubrication. It supports blood clotting and the thickness of the uterine wall and estrogen is also essential in skin and hair coloration, mucus membrane and pelvic muscles. Men also have estrogen just in smaller amounts. It's produced in the testes and adrenal glands and is responsible for sperm count. The reason that it is important is because men who are obese may have a lower sperm count due to the excess fat cells creating too much estrogen. Estrogen is just one of the factors that may be linked to hypo testosterone, the number one condition linked to male infertility and other disruptions in the endocrine system.

Now let's move on to progesterone. The gist with progesterone is that it's responsible for triggering the uterine lining to prepare for a fertilized egg by thickening the walls of the uterus. It keeps the body from ovulating when you're pregnant. Then if you don't have a fertilized egg, the body breaks down the uterine lining through menstruation and progesterone levels drop again. If you're pregnant, the placenta also secretes progesterone and ovulation is suppressed. Progesterone also plays a role in lactation production. You should also know that synthetic progesterone is often used in the treatment of hot flashes and in managing symptoms of menopause. It may also be used in the treatment of amenorrhea and vaginal dryness and in endometriosis, it's the hormone that will depress estrogen receptors and is used in the treatment of the disease. Low progesterone may cause miscarriages, uterine bleeding, and missed periods. When you're thinking of the love more pillar, you should also consider that it can play a role in low libido as well. So estrogen is the hormone at the driver's seat in women who are not pregnant. On the other hand, progesterone takes the wheel in

supporting fetal development by changing mom's body to prepare and inhabit a fetus and nourish a newborn.

Finally, testosterone is the male hormone responsible for fertility, muscle mass, fat distribution and red blood cell production. It's controlled by the brain and pituitary gland, and you should have testosterone on your radar because it absolutely impacts your wellness work. And lots of clients may not know they have a testosterone deficiency or may not think it's relevant to discuss with you. Low testosterone is linked to infertility and hypogonadism. It also impacts sexual health and self esteem. And like estrogen in women, testosterone is responsible for the development and maintenance of male sex characteristics. Men produce a little estrogen and similarly women also produce a little testosterone. Testosterone plays a role in sex drive, bone density and muscle strength in women, but too much testosterone can also make women experience male pattern baldness and infertility.

Okay. That was a lot of info on sex hormones, so let's take a moment to review. Estrogen is produced in the ovaries, fat cells and the adrenal gland. Estrogen plays a role in female development, bone strengthening, sex and reproduction. In men, it's linked to low sperm count. It's the hormone at the driver's seat in women who are not pregnant. Progesterone is a steroid hormone that plays a major role in fertility and menstruation. Progesterone supports fetal development by changing mom's body to prepare and inhabit a fetus and nourish a newborn. It triggers the uterine lining to prepare for fertilized egg and keeps the body from ovulating when you're pregnant. Synthetic progesterone is in some birth control pills and hormone replacements used to treat hot flashes and manage symptoms of menopause. It may also be used in the treatment of amenorrhea, vaginal dryness, and endometriosis. Testosterone is the male hormone responsible for fertility, muscle mass, fat distribution, and red blood cell production. It's controlled by the brain and the pituitary gland. Women have small amounts of testosterone and men have small amounts of estrogen.

This was more of a foundational lesson today, but understanding the sex hormones is important for every stage of the life cycle and will affect someone's overall health. So it's really important that you have a good understanding here. I'll see you in the next lesson.