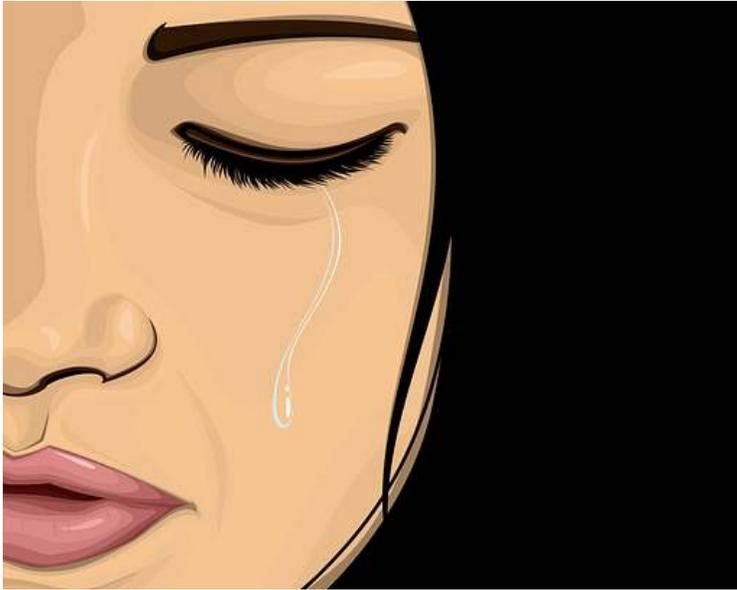


HORMONAL IMBALANCES:



Mood & Women's Health Concerns

There are many types of hormonal imbalances that naturopathic doctors work with, but “estrogen dominance” tends to be the most common type. “Estrogen dominance”, or a higher relative estrogen ratio to progesterone (the other female hormone), is a common term used in naturopathic medicine. Different factors in our Western lifestyle such as high stress, synthetic hormone use (birth control, hormonal replacement therapy) all contribute to the etiology of “estrogen dominance” and excess estrogen. Other factors involved in the development of this syndrome are anovulatory cycles (lack of ovulation) due to irregular menses, dysinsulinemia (blood sugar issues), hyperprolactinemia and calcium and magnesium deficiency¹.

Environmental exposures

Environmental exposures such as xenoestrogens and alcohol consumption have been shown to be involved in hormonal imbalances. Xenoestrogens are synthetic estrogen compounds found in products such as plastics, pesticides, PCB's and other industrial and pharmaceutical products. A cross-sectional analysis of premenopausal women showed a positive association with total alcohol intake and estradiol levels ($P = 0.03$)². Greater than five alcoholic drinks per week was positively associated with higher estrogen metabolite measures, including estradiol, compared to non-drinkers ($P < 0.0001$)². Xenoestrogens or other endocrine disruptors have been demonstrated to act as E2-dependent estrogen receptor (ER) alpha ligands, increasing estrogen-related hormonal effects physiologically³. This means that environmental estrogens and other factors act in the body the same way as your body's natural estrogen.

So you've been exposed to these hormone disruptors (birth control, HRT, environmental xenoestrogens, diet), or an underlying condition (blood sugar issues, PCOS) that have caused an imbalance – a naturopathic doctor can help determine how exactly your hormones have been impacted!

Symptoms & Diagnosis of Estrogen Dominance

Even when absolute estrogen levels are low, if the ratio of estrogen is higher than progesterone, symptoms of



excess estrogen levels can occur. You may come up with having low estrogen on testing but if this number is higher than your progesterone (E:P ratio)– then your body still thinks it has high estrogen! Estrogen dominance is quite common in young and middle aged women, yielding symptoms ranging from **insomnia, mood swings, anxiety, depression, weight gain, acne, menstrual issues, brain fog and infertility/miscarriages**¹. These are a lot of symptoms right? Hormones are powerful cellular regulators and are responsible for a variety of different bodily processes.

According to the American Associations of Naturopathic Physicians, estrogen dominance has been associated with a variety of other conditions ranging from fatigue, fibrocystic breasts, headaches and uterine fibroids³. This has brought up concern in patients and healthcare providers, especially around hypothetical risks of estrogen dominance and increased hormonal cancer rates. Higher absolute estrogen has been correlated with increased rates of hormonal cancers such as breast and endometrial cancers⁴. In post-menopausal women, the European Prospective Investigation in to Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC), participants in the top 20% of estrogen levels had a two-three-fold increase in breast cancer risk⁶. In premenopausal women, the Nurses Health Study II found that follicular (early day 3-5) estrogen was associated with increased breast cancer risk⁷. This may be due to the fact the estrogen, during the follicular phase, promotes breast cancer cell growth. If it is not counterbalanced by progesterone, as in estrogen dominance, then one may hypothesize that the risk of breast cancer is increased.

Hormonal testing through saliva or blood will show FSH, LH, estradiol (E), progesterone (P) and TSH. A normal level of estrogen is 27-123 pg/mL mid-follicularly, and between 0-40 pg/mL in post-menopausal women⁸. A normal range of progesterone is from 5 to 20 ng/mL mid-cycle, premenopausally⁹. Due to our environmental and lifestyle exposures, it is very likely that many women have estrogen dominance, or higher absolute estrogen levels. In naturopathic practice, there are suggested optimal E:P ranges as seen in various salivary lab testing. For example, Genova Diagnostics uses a P:E2 range of 23-

159 in the follicular phase, 25-141 luteally, and 33-116 menopausally to help in determining estrogen dominance as a naturopathic diagnosis¹⁰. These values, along with symptom assessment, will help your ND determine what exactly is going on with your hormone levels, and most importantly, help restore the imbalance.

Well Woman Assessments with Dr. Kaitlyn Zorn, ND.

Are you struggling with headaches, mood swings, brain fog, period problems or a history of breast cancer? You may have an underlying hormonal imbalance that can be detected through an assessment with a Naturopathic Doctor. A consultation will involve a Hormone Imbalance Questionnaire and Saliva Hormone Testing if required.

Book a **COMPLEMENTARY Well Woman Assessment** to see what may be going on with your hormones and learn more about what naturopathic medicine can offer.

Alternatively you can book a **Full Consult** where a detailed **Hormonal Intake and Saliva Hormone test** will be performed. Contact 519-821-1999 or email clinic@healingfoundations.ca to get started on your **Well Woman Assessment with Dr. Kaitlyn Zorn, ND** either in a complementary Meet & Greet session or Full Consult.

"I'm not waiting for the stars to align, just my hormones"

Kaitlyn Zorn, ND



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