

# A case of Bioidentical Hormones (bHRT)

The reason for Barbara's initial consultation with me was obvious by the way she was fanning herself to keep cool. "I'm looking for a doctor to prescribe natural hormone replacement therapy. Do you do that?"

Being a medical doctor (M.D.) with a holistic mindset, I get a lot of requests for natural remedies. "Yes. I help lots of patients with hormone imbalances, and prefer to prescribe Bioidentical Hormones rather than synthetics which are more prone to causing adverse effects."

"That's what I meant, I guess. I'm just looking for something else besides the Prempro my gynecologist gave me."

"Tell me more about what's been going on with you."

"I'm pretty typical I guess. When I turned 43 my weight started climbing at the same time my libido fell through the floor. I started waking up every night at 3:30 a.m., and couldn't go back to sleep. That made me tired every morning and I began forgetting simple things ..."

"Why'd I walk into the kitchen? Oh yeah! To get my keys!"

"Exactly! That type of stuff. Anyhow, I'm now 48 and hot flashes have taken me by storm. You can see, I have to fan myself all the time, even when the thermostat is set low."

"The good news, Barbara, is that symptoms such as these are all fixable. You mentioned that your GYN prescribed Prempro. How'd that go?"

"I didn't like those pills at all. Though my hot flashes went down, I got all these other symptoms. I was bloated, swelling up with fluid so badly that I couldn't wear my rings. But the worst part was that I became impatient and snappy, even with my friends. I thought they were going to kick me out of my girls group."

"Artificial hormones can do that. When compared side by side, patients on bioidentical hormones definitely are more satisfied and have fewer side effects."

"After seeing how Oprah did better on bioidentical hormones, I did more research. That's when I figured out that Premarin was made from horse's urine. I don't like the idea of abusing horses to get medicine, so I was determined to find another way to control my menopausal symptoms. When I asked my GYN to switch me, though, she tried to convince me that bioidentical hormones were unsafe. Are they?"

"Your gynecologist is mistaken. There are at least 4 randomized trials comparing natural progesterone to Provera (the 'Pro' part of Prempro). While Provera causes osteoporosis, heart attacks and breast cancer, natural progesterone causes none of those things."

"Then why was she so against them?"

"I don't think she purposely meant you harm, I just think she's misinformed. It happens too often in medicine, especially in OB-GYN. Just remember, these are the same doctors who prescribed Thalidomide that caused birth defects and Diethylstilbestrol (DES) which causes cancer. Even though there are pretty damning journal articles about Premarin and Prempro, it continues to get prescribed due to the aggressive marketing efforts of it's manufacturer, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals."

"As for bioidentical estrogens, I agree there isn't much evidence out there that prove their safety. Unlike Premarin, however, there aren't articles out there that prove it is dangerous. And from your own experience, you know you were getting side effects when you tried taking Prempro."



“ Bioidentical hormones  
more effective,  
and less side effects ”

Perhaps we should try a different approach."

"So what do we do now?"

"I would like to test your hormone levels to see how low you are. I don't just use the "normal for the lab" reference ranges. I prefer to shoot for an "optimal range" that compares you to women who don't have symptoms."

Based upon Barbara's symptoms and lab work, I prescribed bioidentical estrogen, progesterone, and testosterone compounded directly to her specific needs. Two months later, she returned full of radiance.

"I don't have those hot flashes anymore and just feel so much more energetic now that I get a full night's sleep. And since I'm not puffy anymore, I can finally wear my rings again. See," showing me her diamond ring, "I just got it cleaned and boy does it sparkle!"

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