



HOT FLASHES

This is probably the most common sign and symptom of perimenopause and menopause. Most women experience hot flashes and/or night sweats to some degree. To what degree depends on the health of the woman. So what causes hot flashes and what can be done about them?

Hot flashes are disruptive, uncomfortable and can be embarrassing. Oftentimes an overwhelming feeling of anxiety accompanies the hot flash. Even though this will subside, the soaked clothing remains. Night sweats can cause considerable sleep disruption which can lead to sleep deprivation. When the night sweats are relieved, normal sleep is usually restored. As a cycling woman transitions into a non-cycling or menopausal woman, our estrogens and progesterone shift from rising and falling to being relatively level. This is how our bodies were designed, and in an ideal situation that transition should be graceful and easy. However, in today's woman, our lives are jammed packed with taking care of children, husband, parents, a home, and a career. This puts a tremendous amount of stress on our adrenal glands. Our adrenal glands main job is to keep us out of stress and keep us in homeostasis or balance. When our lives are built on one stress upon another, the adrenal glands don't get a rest and they, in turn, become stressed! When our stress handling glands are stressed, we are in trouble! As our uterus and ovaries tone down their production of hormones, it is the adrenal glands that need to take up the slack and produce progesterone. Estrogen is continued to be produced in the fat cells. Without strong adrenal glands, not enough progesterone is produced and that creates a hormone imbalance called Estrogen Dominance.

Another cause of hot flashes and/or night sweats can be a disconnection between the brain, the HP Axis, and glands or organs. When synthetic hormones have been used through birth control or HRT, this can disconnect the communication signaling from the pituitary/hypothalamus gland to the adrenal glands, thyroid (which can then cause thyroid issues), and sex organs. This, too, will cause an imbalance of hormones. It is an important step to reconnect proper signaling.

When addressing hormone issues, it is most important to receive proper testing. Saliva testing is the simplest, most cost-effective way to test the bioavailable hormones in our body. While blood tests the protein-bound inactive form of the hormone, saliva only houses the active available hormone. For a woman who is still cycling, multiple samples are important to see the whole cycling picture as the hormones rise and fall. Blood tests typically use a one sample test which gives only a portion of the

whole picture. Saliva tests will also give us the pituitary hormones to see if an HP Axis disruption has occurred.

With proper testing and proper protocol, the body has an amazing force that drives us towards health. We simply need to understand where the imbalance lies, provide the proper nutrients, and allow the body to heal itself.

For more information please contact Dr. Maegan Davis. (See contact information below.)