

## The Patient

To achieve hormone balance, the patient needs to pay careful attention to symptoms and communicate this information to the practitioner. Using this information, the practitioner can direct the pharmacist in developing an effective hormone therapy.

## The Practitioner

The practitioner examines, evaluates, tests, diagnoses, and prescribes treatment. Once the appropriate hormone therapy is prescribed, the practitioner monitors the effects of the hormone therapy. Compounded bioidentical hormones can be adjusted in their dosing as well as their formulation, under the guidance of the practitioner, to achieve the goal of optimal hormone balance for each of their patients.

## The Pharmacist

The pharmacist provides quality assurance for each and every prescription compounded. The compounding pharmacist is available to the practitioner and the patient to provide information and resources about hormone strengths/dosages, formulations, and effects.

## Conclusion

Compounded bioidentical hormone therapy has significantly improved the lives of many people who suffer from symptoms due to a hormone imbalance. Awareness, education, and communication are key to optimal hormone balance.

## References:

The Hormone Solution - Stay Younger Longer, Thierry Hertoghe, MD, Harmony Books; New York, NY; 2002.

Natural Hormone Balance for Women, Uzzi Reiss, MD, Pocket Books; New York, NY; 2001.

The Miracle of Natural Hormones, David Brownstein, MD, Medical Alternatives Press; West Bloomfield, MI; 1998.

The Hormone Solution, Erika Schwartz, MD, Warner Books; New York, NY; 2002.

"Natural Hormone Replacement Therapy: Consumers Really Want," Dana Reed-Kane, PharmD, International Journal of Pharmaceutical Compounding, Volume 5, Number 5, Sept/Oct 2001.

Copyright © August 2010, Women's International Pharmacy. This newsletter may be photocopied for educational purposes only, provided that your copy(s) include full copyright and contact information.

LONDON WOMEN'S CARE  
803 Meyers Baker Rd. Ste 200  
London, KY 40741  
P: 606-878-3240  
F: 606-878-4309



## *Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy*

### What does BHRT stand for?

Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy. BHRT is the use of supplemental doses of hormones that have a chemical structure identical to the hormones that the human body naturally produces.

### What does BHRT do?

Treats the symptoms of menopause, perimenopause and post-menopause.

### What does Bioidentical Mean?

Although bioidentical hormones are created in a lab (not extracted from humans), they have the exact same molecular structure as hormones made in the human body. In determining the optimal hormone therapy for an individual, we will take into consideration the interactions of the different hormones with one another, as well as the other potential effects of each hormone throughout the body. For example, bioidentical progesterone protects the uterus and, at the same time, has positive effects on mood, memory, and sleep.

# ***Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy***

## **How are BHRT treatments created?**

A cocktail of hormones is created, uniquely tailored for each individual patient. Titer prescriptions are based on the symptoms that you have, sometimes with the help of blood or saliva testing. Many of the bioidentical hormones used are made from soybeans and wild yams, which contain unique compounds that are processed chemically and made into identical replicas of hormones the body produces. They are used for their cost-effectiveness as well as their ability to readily extract compounds and turn them into exact replicas of human hormones.

## **Why Compound?**

Compounding allows healthcare practitioners to prescribe medication specific to their patient's individual needs. One of the primary benefits of working with a compounding pharmacy is that a patient is not limited to the commercially available dosages, strengths, and forms; instead, compounded prescriptions can be changed to different formulations that may be more efficient or easier to administer. For optimal hormone treatment, we can fine-tune or modify the dose or prescription of a compounded BHT as your hormonal needs change. Another advantage to compounded BHT is that multiple hormones can be combined in a single dosage form to ensure better patient compliance.

## **What is BHRT like?**

Once we determine the right treatment for you, we will begin therapy and follow up a few weeks later to make sure that you are starting to feel better. If the dosage is appropriate, you should feel well and experience very little side effect, if any at all. Once we have achieved the best replacement for you, a visit every 6 months or so should be sufficient.

## **What are the different forms of BHRT?**

You may be asked to use the same dose every day of the month or sometimes we will adjust your treatment to mimic a natural menstrual cycle. Static dosing is one manner. There also is rhythmic cycling, which is based on the cycles of nature and is meant to mimic the time during which women are at their reproductive peak. Rhythmic cycling is a relatively new approach in BHRT.

## **How is BHRT taken?**

Bioidentical hormones can be taken different ways, such as a cream, a vaginal suppository, a pill or a patch.

## **Will any pharmacy fill my prescription?**

Since these hormones have to be compounded, they have to be filled at a certain pharmacy; we have several that we use. We will give you instructions on where and when to pick them up.

## **Pharmacies We Use:**

Office Park Pharmacy,  
Lexington, KY  
P: 859-276-3905

Thompson 4th Street,  
London, KY  
P: 606-878-7713

## **How much will my prescription cost?**

All insurance companies cover different amounts. You may call the pharmacy once your prescription is filled for pricing. Both of the pharmacies that we use offer low cost shipping.

## **Understanding What Hormones Do:**

Your body produces more than one hundred different types of hormones and, without them, you couldn't live. Hormones are chemical messengers that circulate in your bloodstream and orchestrate the continuous activity in the cells and organs in your body. From regulating your heartbeat and breathing, to controlling your blood pressure and metabolism, hormones are involved. Hormones also fight stress, soothe pain, calm anxiety, and stimulate your immune system. Sex hormones such as estrogens, progesterone, and testosterone play important roles in controlling sex drive, regulating the menstrual cycle, and allowing for pregnancy and birth.