



# Wellness Minute

Health Information You Can Use On Your Path To Wellness



## All About Hormones

**“The new science is in, hormones are a major wellness factor, especially as we age.”**

Did you know, part of your brain called the hippocampus shrinks as you age? The hippocampus is the part of us that reasons and remembers. It's the part of us that is us. An interesting study from Yale called Medex assessed exercise and stress reduction via meditation using pre and post brain imaging to see if it could slow or stop the hippocampus from shrinking. Surprisingly, after 2 years they found neither consistent exercise at 300 minutes a week nor a type of daily meditation called mindfulness could stop hippocampus shrinking. However, there is research showing there are ways to prevent hippocampal shrinkage.

Dr. Devaki Berkson is the author of over 21 books and teaches physicians how to

assess and prescribe hormones. I attended a course she taught to over 100 doctors and was overwhelmed by the latest science related to hormones.

For example, she shared two studies that showed hormone replacement therapy can increase brain size. One study showed an increase in 6 weeks. The second study showed an increase in hippocampal size in 3 months. This is a profound concept to think that we can turn back the hands of time and actually grow the size of our brain, it's stunning.

Many doctors still remember the Women's Health Initiative that took place in 1993-1998. The study of 27,000 plus women was stopped in June 2002 because it appeared that

hormones were causing cancer. It was all over the news, and one of the companies that manufactured the hormones was heavily sued. Physicians were afraid of litigation and stopped recommending them. However, doctors outside the US continued to use them and data continued to mount showing hormones, when used correctly, have anti-cancer properties.

In fact, the evidence has been so compelling, that Wales, Scotland, Italy, France, and most Nordic countries give hormones for free because it reduces medical costs across the board. Seeing the positive effects of hormones in other countries, the same researchers who evaluated the data from the Women's Health Initiative

This is a transcript from a “video magazine” we send out each week called the Wellness Minute. If you're not getting our Wellness Minute videos each week, sign up at the front desk.

and said hormones caused cancer, took a closer look at the design of the study and realized it had major flaws. After tracking the women for 19 years, they discovered hormones reduced breast cancer 23%, and if someone did get breast cancer, the survival rate was 44% higher than patients who didn't get hormones. Dr. Berkson shared that one hormone, progesterone protects against cancer, bone loss, and cardiovascular events. It also protects the brain.

However, when natural progesterone is modified to make it patentable, it becomes a progestin. Progestins have been linked to bone loss, cancer, and cardiovascular events, and do not protect the brain. Most birth control pills contain progestins. Birth control pills also have anti-androgenic effects, meaning they reduce testosterone. That means less muscle mass, less interest in sex, and difficulty with weight loss. Oral contraceptives also rinse minerals out of the body and cause thick blood. However, topical and vaginal deliveries of estrogen showed a decrease in all-cause mortality, especially in 5 cancers: breast, ovarian, uterine, colorectal, and lung.

On a vanity note, estrogen makes collagen. It makes your skin look better.

Many people have a history of cognitive problems, even Alzheimer's, in their family and live in fear of what may happen as they get older. Hormone Replacement Therapy protects against APOE4, the Alzheimer's vulnerability gene. It turns down or calms the way APOE4 is expressed so it doesn't cause problems. Dr. Berkson shared it's best to start hormone replacement therapy early as it enlarges brain volume.

Dr. Berkson shared that hormone therapy can be used safely in older women even high-risk

cardiac patients. Hormones are signaling molecules and sit in docking sites and send signals to direct genes to make proteins and enzymes etc. All our hormones need nutrients like magnesium, zinc, iodine, boron, and vitamins B6 and A to make sure hormones dock in receptor sites properly and transmit sufficient information. So, nutrients play a huge role in hormone signaling. Hormones are by nature anti-inflammatory. And since as we age hormone levels decrease, unless you do something different, inflammation will increase.

As Dr. Berkson lectures across the country, doctors are constantly coming up to her and sharing that when testing hormones on young people, they are testing lower and lower. 20-year-old boys with low testosterone. Girls in their teens with low estrogen and progesterone.

All heavy metals like cadmium, mercury, lead, and arsenic are endocrine disruptors, meaning they block hormone docking sites. It doesn't matter what the blood, urine, or saliva lab tests reveal, it's whether the receptor sites are able to receive the hormone and that it can dock and sit on the appropriate receptor long enough to signal cellular energetics, growth, and repair. Plastics, pesticides, herbicides also block receptors.

In other words, if we want to maintain hormone integrity, we have to live a detox lifestyle that modifies exposure. Your wellness clinician can help you develop a detox lifestyle and measure your hormone levels. They will provide botanicals that will help the hormones you have be more effective. The science is in, hormones are a major wellness factor, especially as we age. Now that we understand them better, we can do something about it. And that's exciting.