

Detoxification for Women's Health

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Chemicals in the environment can disrupt the normal activity of estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, and other hormones in women. [1] These chemicals are known as “hormone” or “endocrine disrupting compounds”. [2] Women are exposed to hormone disrupting compounds every day, often without knowing it. The exposure to chemicals is coming from numerous sources including;

1. Pesticides on found on fruits and vegetables
2. Non-organic meat and dairy products tainted with dioxins
3. Fish that have high levels of mercury and pesticides
4. Bisphenol-A and phthalates in plastic beverage bottles, tablecloths, shower curtains, and plastic food wrappings, and plastic food storage containers
6. Unfiltered well water and city water
7. Household cleaning products, cosmetics, perfumes, dry cleaning, carpet, and vinyl floors
8. Furniture air fresheners, mattresses, and shampoos [3-9]

Studies have shown that low-dose daily exposure to these chemicals can affect women's health. [10,11] These chemicals affect the hormonal system leading to such conditions as infertility, fibroids, endometriosis, fibromyalgia, thyroid disease and more. [12,13,14]

Detoxification

Chemicals that build up in the body will start to affect a woman's health if they are not removed. The basic principle behind detoxification is to remove the toxins stored in your body. This is done by releasing chemicals from fat tissue, organs and extracellular spaces that have been stored for years. Once they are released, they will re-enter the blood stream and will be metabolized through the liver. This is where it is critical to support liver phase-one and phase-two detoxification pathways. Next, the organs of elimination need to be supported to get the toxic byproducts produced from the liver out of the body.

The four steps in detoxification include mobilizing stored toxins, supporting liver metabolism, elimination from the body, and avoid re-exposure to chemicals in the environment. The first part of detoxification involves getting the stored toxins to be released back into the blood stream.

Methods used to mobilize pesticides, solvents, and other fat-loving chemicals include:

1. Caloric restriction
2. Sauna therapy
3. Chelation

Caloric restriction can release chemicals stored in adipose tissue back into the blood stream but they don't get eliminated from the body without support for liver metabolism and excretion. These chemicals can then get redistributed to other organs and tissues. [15,16]

Sauna therapy can also be used to mobilize and excrete chemicals that are stored in the body. Several studies have been published on the Hubbard Protocol form of sauna therapy. A study done on 7 rescue workers from the World trade Center disaster showed that sauna therapy reduced symptoms as well as blood levels of chemicals. 7 rescue workers from 9/11 had health complaints since working at Ground Zero that ranged from headaches, breathing problems, muscle and joint pain, and skin rashes. The study measured their blood for levels of PCBs, dioxins and polychlorinated dibenzofurans. After undergoing the Hubbard Sauna therapy protocol all 7 had a reversal in symptoms and PCB levels declined by 65%, and dioxins and dibenzofurans were below detection limits. [17]

Chelation is the pharmacological mobilization of heavy metals from storage sites, and is another method for mobilizing toxins. The three main chelating agents in the U.S. are calcium ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid (CaEDTA), dimercaptosuccinic acid (DMSA), or 2,3-dimercapto-1-propane sulfonic acid (DMPS).

Once the chemicals are released from storage they need to be broken down so they can be eliminated from the body. Liver phase one and phase two metabolism need to be supported. A good multivitamin and mineral is required to provide cofactors for liver phase one and phase two enzyme pathways. A good multivitamin and mineral should include; vitamin A (from mixed carotenes), vitamin C, vitamins D and E, all of the B-vitamins, calcium and magnesium, zinc and copper, molybdenum, kelp and iodine, selenium, choline and inositol.

Other nutrients to consider include:

Whey
Green tea
Curcumin (Turmeric)
Arcticum (Burdock)
Taraxacum (Dandelion root)
Silymarin (Milk thistle)
Beet root
Artichoke
DIM
Calcium-D-Glucarate
NAC
ALA
Methyl B12
Methyl Folate

Once the liver breaks down the released chemicals they need to be eliminated from the body through the kidney and bowel. Methods to support elimination include; castor oil packs and sauna therapy, fiber, coffee enemas, and colonics. Lastly, it is important to educate women on how to avoid re-exposure to chemicals in the environment.

How to avoid toxins in your daily life:

1. Buy only organic fruits and vegetables that are free of pesticide residues.

2. Buy hormone and antibiotic free meats and dairy products.
3. Buy fresh or frozen foods and avoid canned foods lined with plastic.
4. Eat wild fish low in mercury, such as wild Alaskan salmon, blue crab, flounder, haddock, pollack, and trout.
5. Do not store or heat food in plastic containers; use glass.
6. Buy in bulk to decrease plastic packaging.
7. Store food in glass jars when you get it home.
8. Drink water out of glass containers rather than plastic.
9. Filter your own water.
10. Use a home air filter.
11. Use earth-friendly, detergent, cleaners and soaps.
12. Try to rework your conception of what looks beautiful, and avoid herbicides and pesticides.
13. Use natural pest control instead of insecticides.
14. Replace vinyl mini blinds, shower curtains, and placemats with fabric.
15. If you're building a home or remodeling, use earth-friendly, non-toxic materials.
16. Use a non-toxic drycleaner, or air out dry-cleaning before bringing it into the home.
17. Use natural, organic, non-bleached tampons without a plastic applicator.
18. Avoid the use of fragrances, and remember that unscented is not fragrance free.
19. Use only non-toxic cosmetics, lotions, shampoos, deodorant and other products.
20. Remove your shoes when you enter the home.

Summary

When evaluating women's health conditions, there are many factors to consider including chemicals that women are exposed to through the air, food, water, and plastics. Evaluation begins with an in-depth exposure history. Testing for heavy metals, pesticides, solvents, phthalates, Bisphenol-A, parabens and other chemicals, is available from various labs. After completing a 4-step liver detoxification plan it is important to prevent re-exposure to these chemicals by educating women on how to avoid toxins in their everyday life.

You can learn more about the environmental links to women's health conditions including methods of exposure, testing, treatment, and avoidance, in my book. *"8 Weeks to Women's Wellness: The Detoxification Plan for Breast Cancer, Endometriosis, Infertility and Other Women's Health Conditions."*

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