

Estrogen Dominance and Hormone Balance



Hormone Testing In Saliva

Epidemiology

Estrogen dominance refers to an excess of estrogen relative to progesterone. This condition can occur in women during the reproductive years, but tends to be particularly symptomatic for women in the perimenopausal and menopausal years. Estrogen dominance is worsened by women not ovulating, women being exposed to a higher estrogenic environment, or women not metabolizing estrogens correctly. Estrogen dominance is a term coined by John Lee, M.D. in the book [What Your Doctor May Not Tell You About Menopause](#).

The Problem

Multiple clinical studies associate high estrogen or estrogen imbalance with clinical symptoms and conditions. Conditions related to reproductive health, as well as breast disease including cancer, have all been found with estrogen dominance. Hormone imbalances triggered by medications like synthetic hormone combinations have also been found to contribute to estrogen dominance problems.

Symptoms of estrogen imbalance include:

- Fibrocystic and tender breast tissue
- Heavy menstrual bleeding
- Irregular menstrual cycles
- Mood swings
- Vasomotor symptoms
- Weight gain
- Uterine fibroids

Causes

Premenopause:

Lack of ovulation and/or reduction of ovarian production of progesterone.

Perimenopause (40s-mid-50s):

Lack of ovulation or erratic cycles, when estrogen levels fluctuate rapidly from high to low in the absence of adequate progesterone.

Postmenopause:

An imbalance of estrogen to progesterone ratio in waning reproductive years when ovarian production of estrogen can decline by as much as 60% and levels of progesterone can drop to nearly zero with the cessation of ovulation.

Clinical Utility

Women of all ages benefit from balanced hormones. Women with symptoms such as menstrual irregularities, PMS, endometriosis and infertility find testing helpful in understanding their underlying condition. Healthcare providers working with perimenopausal and menopausal women find testing a key step in developing a treatment program. Providers also find saliva testing invaluable for monitoring women using hormone replacement therapy.

Purpose

Saliva testing is a simple, reliable means for detecting estrogen dominance. Saliva testing detects the total bio-available hormone, the amount of hormone available to the tissues. This "bio-available" measurement can detect long-hidden hormone imbalances and more closely correlates with the clinical picture. Because hormones work together to create a balanced internal milieu, it is important to test all of the following to determine estrogen dominance:

- Estradiol (E2) the most potent of the estrogens
- Progesterone (Pg)
- Testosterone
- DHEAS
- Cortisol (Adrenal Function)

Benefits

At ZRT Laboratory, we compare symptoms with or without hormone usage and relate these back to tested hormone levels providing more diagnostic information than is available with standard test results. In this way, saliva testing can assist detection of previously undiagnosed disorders, and serve as a rational basis for physician treatment to relieve symptoms and restore hormone balance.



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