



# Body Basics – When Hormones Go Awry

by Elizabeth Lee Vliet, M.D. © 2006

Founder of HER Place®: Health Enhancement and Renewal for Women, Inc.

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Why am I tired all the time?

Why is my hair falling out?

What do I feel so anxious and tense? I never had that before!

Why is my heart pounding and fluttering?

Why can't I stay asleep anymore?

Why is my PMS getting worse?

Why is my skin feeling so "crawly"? That's weird...

Why is my skin looking so "old" when I'm still so young?

Why don't I feel like being touched... and my sex drive is ZERO?

## *It's your HORMONES acting up again!*

Our marvelous ovaries and their hormones are intimately linked to ALL our body systems...every cell, tissue and organ we have! Estrogen alone is involved in over 400 functions in a woman's body. Is it any wonder, then, that women have a whole host of problems when their ovarian hormones go awry whether following a pregnancy, tubal ligation, hysterectomy, or during the perimenopause and menopause years?

If you forget to fill up your car with gas, do you think it will run? Of course not. You have to have enough gas, enough oil, enough water for your car's engine to work and do what you want it to do....take you places!

Same with your body. ALL our hormones provide "fuel" to run our bodies so we feel well and have energy and zest. If your hormones are dragging bottom, you won't feel your best. ALL of your hormones have to be "topped" at the right level YOU need... so your body can function the way it was meant to... so you have energy to "go places" with your life and work!

Hormones can be both marvelous and maddening—marvelous when they allow us to create new life and function at our best, maddening when they are out of balance or getting too low...whether caused by "stress," or by getting older. I know. I have been there. I know when hormones are out of whack, it really does feel "maddening."

All of us know about the hot flashes low estrogen can cause. But that's definitely not all. Many women, and a lot of doctors, do not know that falling or low estrogen can cause sad and blue moods, panic attacks, insomnia, heart palpitations, achy muscles and joints, chronic fatigue and memory loss. Estrogen helps regulate blood pressure, oversees immune functions, and (with testosterone) enhances sexual responses.

If your estrogen or testosterone are too low, you feel fuzzi-brained and tired, run down, can't sleep, feel anxious, irritable or depressed. Your hair loses its luster, starts falling out. Your skin looks saggy, old and dry. And these are just a few of the many problems that can happen.

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If your progesterone is too high, and your estrogen too low after your tubes are tied or you are going through perimenopause, then you feel fat, fuzzy, bloated, lethargic and crave sweets.

If thyroid and adrenal hormones are out of balance, you can have many of the same problems.

Disruptive symptoms or health problems that might once have gone unnoticed when women rarely worked outside the home can now get seriously in your way when you are holding down a full-time job, PLUS being a wife and/or mother, PLUS being active in the community, PLUS taking care of older parents!

Hormones are part of the body's great communication system to make it work properly, and I believe that measuring ovarian hormone levels should be a routine part of women's health care. You have to get your hormones properly checked if you are going to find answers to what is robbing your energy, aging your body, and sapping your spirit.

The good news is that once you understand that out-of-balance hormones can be a major cause of so many health problems, there are many options to help you feel better – from healthy diet, exercise, stress management to bioidentical hormones (many are FDA-approved, check my newsletter for a list), and sometimes other medications.

Hormone levels can be checked with simple, reliable blood tests. Download my free booklet to see what they are. Then talk to your doctor and get them done.

Get checked out correctly. A saliva test in a pharmacy on on-line is NOT the way to get sound, reliable medical advice. Do it right. Follow the directions in my free booklet, and my books. Work with your physician to get the answers and options right for YOU.

Once you know what your various hormone levels are, you can read my books for more information about what they mean, and all the treatment options to help you feel happy, healthy, strong and savvy.

One of the things I love about being a physician and studying medicine is that I am constantly learning about all the wonderful and miraculous things in our bodies that create us and keep us going, keep us balancing, responding, and accommodating as we live each day. This whole process is exquisitely orchestrated and intertwined. Very few things will throw off this balance in a woman's body as much as the loss of estrogen.

That's why I have written my *Savvy Woman's Guide™* series: to help you have a quick reference of how your body works, what happens when the hormones go awry, and what you can DO about it.

"But I don't have time to read a book," you say. Well, I know you are busy. That's why I designed the *Savvy Woman's Guide™* books to be small enough you can carry them in your pocketbook and read when you are waiting in traffic, when you are waiting at appointments or to pick up the kids....grab these "wasted" minutes in your day and use them to help you learn how to get healthy and full of energy again!

Read more on my website, [www.herplace.com](http://www.herplace.com) or my six books, available on Amazon or at your local bookstore.

Learn what YOU control to get your health back.

Get going, JUST DO IT.

YOU are all you've got.

Take care of YOU.