

UNDERSTANDING YOUR HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (HRT) OPTIONS

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is a treatment used to relieve symptoms of hormone imbalance by replenishing hormones that are at a lower level as you approach and enter this stage of life. Knowing the types of HRT and what each offers can help you make informed decisions about your health. Here's a guide to help you understand your options:

ESTROGEN THERAPY

My Perspective: Estrogen therapy is foundational in managing menopausal symptoms, particularly for those of you who have had a hysterectomy and are not at risk of uterine cancer. It's remarkably effective at alleviating hot flashes, night sweats, and vaginal discomfort.

Who It's For: This option is most suitable for you if you've undergone a hysterectomy. Without a uterus, estrogen can be administered safely without the need for progesterone.

Delivery Methods: I offer estrogen in various forms, including pills, patches, gels, and creams, as well as localized vaginal treatments. We'll choose the method that best fits into your lifestyle and minimizes any potential side effects.

PROGESTERONE THERAPY

The Essential Role: For those with a uterus, adding progesterone is essential. This not only helps in managing menopausal symptoms but also safeguards against the risk of endometrial cancer associated with estrogen therapy.

Key Benefits: Beyond uterine protection, progesterone can improve sleep quality and mood, contributing to an overall sense of well-being.

TESTOSTERONE THERAPY

Understanding Its Role: Often associated with male health, testosterone plays a vital role in women's wellness too, particularly in boosting libido, muscle mass, and overall vitality.

Who It's For: Testosterone therapy can be a game-changer for women experiencing diminished sexual desire, muscle weakness, or a general lack of energy post-menopause.

Delivery Methods: Testosterone can be administered through creams, patches, or pellets implanted under the skin. We will determine the best method based on your lifestyle, preferences, and health goals.



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BIOIDENTICAL HORMONE THERAPY

My Approach to Personalization: Bioidentical hormones are custom-made to match your body's natural hormones exactly. They're an option I often recommend for their potential to closely mimic natural hormonal rhythms, potentially offering a more "in tune" therapy.

How They Differ: Unlike traditional HRT, bioidentical hormones are tailored specifically to your hormonal needs, aiming for a balance that feels right for your body.

Choosing the Right Type

In our journey together, we'll consider not just your menopausal symptoms but also your broader health history, lifestyle, and personal preferences. Our goal is to find an HRT strategy that not only addresses your symptoms but also enhances your overall quality of life.

FAQs

How long is HRT appropriate? Your journey with HRT is as individual as you are. We'll tailor the duration to your specific needs, with regular assessments to ensure it remains aligned with your health goals.

What are the risks? While there are potential risks associated with HRT, personalized care and monitoring can significantly mitigate these concerns.

Can I switch HRT types? Yes, adapting our approach as your body and health needs change is part of the process. Flexibility and attentiveness to your feedback are key.

Embracing an integrative approach means we look at your health holistically, including how hormonal changes affect your well-being. Together, we'll explore the most suitable HRT options for you, ensuring a path forward that resonates with your body's needs and your personal vision for your health. Let's journey towards balance, vitality, and wellness together.



SELF-ADMINISTERING SUBCUTANEOUS (SQ) INJECTIONS

Learning to self-administer hormone injections can seem daunting initially, but with clear guidance and practice, it can become a straightforward part of your healthcare routine. This handout is designed to provide you with step-by-step instructions for giving yourself a subcutaneous (SQ) injection, ensuring the process is safe, effective, and as comfortable as possible.

PREPARATION

Gather Your Supplies:

- Your prescribed medication in a vial or pre-filled syringe
- Alcohol wipes
- Sterile syringes and needles (if your medication isn't in a pre-filled syringe)
- A sharps disposal container

Identify Your Injection Site:

- The abdomen, avoiding a two-inch radius around the belly button, or the upper thigh are recommended sites for SQ injections. Rotating sites can help avoid tissue damage.

STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Clean Hands:** Start by thoroughly washing your hands to reduce the risk of infection.
2. **Prepare the Injection Site:** Clean the chosen area with an alcohol wipe and let it air dry. Avoid touching the site afterwards to maintain sterility.
3. **Prepare the Medication:** If using a vial, wipe the top with an alcohol swab after removing the cap. Draw air into the syringe equal to your dose, insert the needle into the vial, inject the air (to avoid creating a vacuum), and draw the prescribed dose. For pre-filled syringes, ensure the medication is at room temperature and check for air bubbles.
4. **Remove Air Bubbles:** With the needle pointed upwards, tap the syringe to move air bubbles to the top. Gently press the plunger until a small drop of medication appears at the needle tip.
5. **Inject the Medication:** Pinch a fold of skin at the prepared site. Insert the needle at a 45 to 90-degree angle into the skin fold. Release the fold and slowly push the plunger to administer the medication.
6. **Complete the Injection:** After the medication is fully injected, remove the needle and press an alcohol wipe against the site. Do not rub. Dispose of the needle and syringe in a sharps container.

SELF-ADMINISTERING SUBCUTANEOUS (SQ) INJECTIONS CONT.

AFTERCARE

- **Disposal:** Use a designated sharps container for all needles and syringes. Do not dispose of them in household trash.
- **Managing Injection Sites:** Apply a cold pack if you experience bruising or soreness. Remember to rotate your injection sites with each dose.

TROUBLESHOOTING

- **Bruising:** It's normal to experience some bruising. Extensive bruising may indicate injecting too close to a blood vessel; adjust your site accordingly next time.
- **Pain:** While some discomfort is expected, experiencing sharp pain may suggest the needle has hit muscle or a nerve. If this happens, stop, withdraw the needle, and select a new site.

FAQ'S

- **What if I miss a dose?** Take it as soon as you remember, unless it's nearly time for your next dose. Never double doses.
- **Can I travel with my medication?** Yes, but keep it in its original packaging with the prescription label visible. Check with your airline for specific regulations regarding traveling with needles and medication.