

Transcript: EP 342 - The Impact of Hormone Shifts on Your Health

Dr. Taz: It's actually not just a shift in their hormones and a shift in their gut health but an expression of inflammation. I've seen a lot of IBDs, inflammatory bowel diseases, show up in periods of hormone shifts. So all of these, very much a testament to the power of our hormones.

Hi everyone, and welcome to Super Woman Wellness. I'm Dr. Taz. I've made it my mission throughout my career in integrative medicine to support women in restoring their health using a blend of Eastern medical wisdom with modern science. In this show, I will guide you through different practices to find your power type and fully embody the healthiest and most passionate version of you. I'm here for you, and I can't wait to get started. This is a Soulfire production.

Welcome back everyone. Welcome back to another episode of Super Woman Wellness, where you know I'm determined to bring you back to your super powered self. And a fundamental part of that equation is your hormones.

How many of you are thinking about your hormones, checking your hormones, really diving in and understanding what your hormone rhythm is? When I listen to your stories in the exam rooms at CentreSpring or even if you come to me on social media or even through the podcast, oftentimes I can identify where many of your symptoms, many of your conditions are connected to hormone imbalances. But as you've told me many times, and I know I experienced this myself, when you go in to get those hormones checked, bam, that door is often shut in your face.

Well, we know medical gaslighting is an issue. We know that we need to change the narrative around women's health. But what I want to do today in this particular episode of the podcast is to really help you understand how hormones are impacting you and how important it is for you to identify your hormone story.

Let's start by talking about symptoms that you might not think are related to your hormones, but they actually are. This information is valid for everybody, by the way, but people that experience these hormone shifts most dramatically are our teenagers from about 11, 12 to 14, 15, and then those of us in perimenopause after about 40 or so going into about 55. The reason those age ranges are so critical is because the hormones are swinging all over the place.

Now, I say that, and as I'm saying that, I'm thinking about all the women in their 20s and 30s that are getting pregnant, having babies, breastfeeding, so hormones are up and down and out and all of that stuff. So honestly, this is for all of us.

But when we're thinking about the role of hormones, there are a couple of things to think about. First of all, there are many symptoms that are connected to our hormones that often get dismissed as being stress or anxiety or we're getting old or whatever we're being told nowadays over and over again.

But let's kind of pummel through this list. So here's sort of my top five or six, and these are the things by the way, that we ask about all the time in the exam rooms when we're seeing patients in my clinic. So for example, your energy. I feel like energy is such a great sign, and I wish I had dialed into it and paid a lot more attention to it when I was having my issues in my 20s. I'm 51 now, and I'm very conscious that when my energy is shifting, it is often a symptom of a hormone change or a hormone imbalance, and I'm able to go check it or tweak what I'm doing and then get back into some sort of equilibrium.

But here's the thing, energy, where are you? Energy, and I always talk about energy, there are about four different types of energy. There's cognitive energy, which is how we think and process information. There's emotional energy, which is how we feel on any given day. There's physical energy, which makes us do this hard hitting workout or go run or bike or whatever it is that we like to do. And then there's sort of, I would say, life energy where we're excited about participating in our lives or we are excited about doing things.

If energy shifts in any of those areas, you might be having a hormone shift. Hormones are connected to all of that. So that's a big bucket of symptoms or a particular symptom that is connected to many different hormones.

All right, super women, I'm excited to share a product with you that I use every single morning, so much so that it has become essential to my routine. AG1's mission is to empower people to take ownership of their health with a simple daily foundational nutrition habit. And with just one scoop, I get the nutrients and gut health support that helps my whole body thrive and helps me to cover my nutritional bases.

Since I've been drinking AG1, I've noticed an overall increase in energy and mental clarity. And now if you want to take ownership of your health, it starts with AG1. Try AG1 and get a free one-year supply of vitamin D and five free AG1 travel packs with your first purchase. Go to drinkag1.com/drtaz. Again, that's drinkag1.com/drtaz. Check it out.

I would say the second most common kind of sign is weight changes. You're doing the same things, you're kind of humming along, same diet, same routine, nothing dramatically different, and boom, there's 10 or 20 pounds that you didn't expect. That's a sign of a hormone shift, not a sign that you've been good or

you've been bad. That's the dialogue I frequently hear. This is not you doing something that's now impacted you. Your hormones have changed. And there's so many different ways the hormones impact weight and belly fat, a decrease in muscle mass and more.

Fluctuations in your weight are a great sign that your hormones have shifted. We've talked about energy, we've talked about weight, let's talk about sleep. For many of us, and again, you can experience this again, 13 through 70, quite honestly. If your sleep cycle is changing and you don't have an explanation, no recent major stressor, you didn't drink a lot of caffeine or alcohol before bedtime, you're not loading up on sugar, but now you're having trouble falling asleep or you're waking up between that 2:00 and 3:00 AM as sort of witching hour is what I call it, then you're having a hormone shift.

I think the other signs and symptoms, things like hot flashes and night sweats and those type of things, those are much more obvious. Those are very much connected to hormone shifts. So again, important to get your hormones checked, understand what your hormone levels are.

Fatigue, weight, sleep, mood. I've sort of alluded to this, if you're having more anxiety, more depression, the brain is filled with serotonin and dopamine receptors that are dependent on estrogen, and we never talk about this. So if you're seeing huge changes in swings and moods, and I've experienced this with patients, I distinctly remember a woman who as she entered perimenopause and her estrogen and progesterone levels were swinging, went into full-blown depression with her family not sure how to handle her, but the minute we put her on some hormone replacement, she was better. So your mood, highly dependent on hormones as well.

I mean, I could keep going. Let's do another one. I think hair and skin, maybe that's too obvious. So changes in hair, losing hair, acne, changes in skin texture, wrinkling, these are all signs of hormone shifts.

Let's do one that's maybe a little bit more surprising. How about joint pain? So many women start to experience joint pain, and that actually is connected to hormone shifts. Here's why. When the hormones change, there is a spike in inflammation in the body, and it's often a time where many autoimmune diseases express themselves or find themselves.

These symptoms, again, people will dismiss as that's rheumatology, that's neurology, that's not related to your hormones. False. Those are also hormone-based symptoms, and hormones are a major part of that equation when it comes to shifting and changing things around.

I want to do one more. I thought I'd limit it to five. Let me do one more, your gut health. Wow. Does gut health really play a role in hormones, and do hormones really influence gut health? Here's how it works. Our gut is responsible for breaking down and metabolizing hormones. When it can't do that, then you start having a lot of different hormone patterns that work against you. And we'll talk about hormone patterns in just a moment.

But your gut is really a major part of the hormone manufacturing machinery, as is your liver. So we need the gut to work, but when the hormone shifts, this is like a chicken, egg situation, when the hormone shift and we start to have big fluctuations in estrogen and progesterone or a changing thyroid level, or really high cortisol levels, the gut changes too. Our microbiome changes our ability to empty, something called gastric emptying, shifts and changes. That means for us more bloating, constipation or diarrhea, abdominal pain, reflux.

These are many of the symptoms people experience when they have shifts in their hormones. And for some, it's actually not just a shift in their hormones and a shift in their gut health but an expression of inflammation. So I've seen a lot of IBDs, inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's or ulcerative colitis show up in periods of hormone shifts after a woman's had a baby, after she quits breastfeeding, as she goes into perimenopause. All of these signs and symptoms and diseases, very much a testament to the power of our hormones.

I have an exciting announcement. My new book, *The Hormone Shift: Balance Your Body and Thrive Through Midlife and Menopause*, is out this October and is available for pre-order right now wherever books are sold. Most women, and I'm talking about all women, have been led to believe that entering midlife means existing at the complete mercy of our mysterious hormones. When we take our concerns to our doctors, we're told that our debilitating symptoms are normal or we're fine, or it's all in our head. And I'm here to tell you that fine is not good enough and is absolutely not in our head.

I want all women to thrive through every life stage, so I've devised a hormone reset plan that blends together the best of Eastern and Western medicine to bring your body back into balance, minimize unwanted symptoms, and have you feeling like yourself again. It's not you. It's your hormones. And this is not your mother's perimenopause or menopause. Are you ready to thrive and really embrace this next phase of your life? Go to prh.com/thehormoneshift to pre-order your copy now.

So what do you do with this information? You're like, "Okay, Dr. Taz, I got it. I've got symptoms. They're connected to hormones. What else do I need to know?" Well, here's what we really want. Here's what I in particular really want. Beyond,

of course, changing the dialogue around women's health and the narrative here, what I really want is for each of us to be able to identify your dominant hormone pattern.

Remember, I talk about this a lot, and I have this on my website. There's seven major hormones. It's in our hormone guide that you can download, but there's seven major hormones that all of us should be tracking and checking at least twice a year at a minimum. And if you're starting hormones and hormone therapy, then you might want to be checking that a little bit more frequently.

Those include estrogen and its sister hormones, estradiol, estriol, and estrone, progesterone and its derivative, 17 hydroxy progesterone and pregnenolone, testosterone, which is the family of androgens, and free testosterone, DHT, and even an AMH, which by the way is an androgen. That's anti-mullerian hormone.

Insulin levels, multiple ways to measure that, a fasting insulin, a hemoglobin A1C, which is a three-month average, a fructosamine level, even a leptin level, all can give you information about what your insulin levels are doing. Cortisol, which again is kind of the stress hormone but directly impacts blood sugar and insulin. And then thyroid hormones, TSH, T4, T3, all of those really critical in understanding the overall hormone rhythm or hormone pattern.

Those are kind of the major groups. Let's see, make sure I got them. Estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, insulin, cortisol, thyroid. Who are we missing? We're missing one, FSH and LH, understanding the hypothalamic pituitary relationship to hormones. Those are kind of the seven major hormones that you need to be tracking and need to be on top of throughout your hormone journey.

For those of you listening who may be over 65 and are thinking, I'm way past that, I don't need to deal with that, partially true. You still need to be looking at stored levels of estrogen, and you still need to be also looking at testosterone, insulin, and some of the androgen levels as well. So keep that in mind as you're thinking about hormones and your hormone journey and what you should and should not be checking.

Now, once you're checking that information, here's what I really, really want. I want everyone to be able to identify their hormone pattern. For example, do you have estrogen dominance, meaning you're storing estrogen? Are you insulin resistant? Are you having adrenal fatigue?

These are some of the concepts and the ideas that we really want to latch into and figure out which of them is your major pattern. That's really what we want to go

after. What's your major pattern of hormones? And then that creates a very clear, concise roadmap for you to correcting and fixing your hormonal imbalance.

All right. That's a lot of information in a nutshell there, but I break all of this down in my new book, *The Hormone Shift*, available this October to really help us all understand what's happening with our hormones, how to identify it, how to check them, how to rebalance them.

Rebalancing hormones is not just about taking hormones, not just about going on a hormone. It's also about getting your gut nutrition, your lifestyle, your sleep, all in alignment so that the hormones can work in the rhythm that they were meant to, and we continue to stay in our power and embrace this hormone journey as a fundamental part of our identity.

All right, lots of info there. I hope I didn't confuse anyone. A lot of words as well. But remember, we're going to be talking all things hormones. *The Hormone Shift* is out, lots of hormone information on my website. If you go to doctortaz.com, join the Super Woman Circle if you need help navigating through the information in the book.

And then we're doing a 12-week program, the 4 Hour Hormone System. That signup is on my website as well to help all of you systematically work through 12 weeks to balance your hormones but to also bring all those different bodies and elements of yourself into alignment.

All right. Thank you for watching and listening to this episode of Super Woman Wellness. I'll see you guys next time.