

A PRIMER ON BIO-IDENTICAL HORMONES FOR PRE-MENOPAUSE

For the purposes of this discussion,

“bio-identical hormone” means a molecule created in the lab from another substance but having the *identical* molecular structure of the hormone that your body makes. (examples: Progesterone and 17-B Estradiol are two key female hormones made by the ovaries. These hormones are also routinely made in the lab from the extracts of yams or soy).

“Synthetic hormone” means a molecule created in the lab from another substance but having a molecular structure *different* from the hormone that your body makes. (example: Provera® is a progestin, a ‘cousin’ of progesterone. Because it doesn’t have the same molecular structure, it has different actions and side effects than progesterone).

“Natural” means derived from a plant or animal source. Both synthetic hormones and bio-identical hormones are derived from natural sources, usually soy or yams. The term “natural” is therefore purely a marketing term, used to confuse purchasers by creating the impression that something hasn’t been synthesized in the lab when indeed it has been.

“Foreign hormone” means a molecule obtained from an animal and purified in the lab, having a molecular structure different from the hormone that your body makes. (example: Premarin® is a mix of foreign estrogen hormones extracted from pregnant mares’ urine).

PremPro® is basically a mixture of Premarin and Provera; ie a combination of foreign and synthetic hormones. This is the drug used in the huge study from which the media concluded that hormone replacement therapy (HRT) in general is dangerous. The only real conclusion should be that PremPro® is dangerous! One should not castigate all hormone replacement medications because no similar study was ever done with any other female hormones, particularly with bio-identical hormones. It seems logical to us that if your body has been producing Progesterone and 17-B Estradiol since puberty, there should be little increased risk in supplementing declining levels during pre-menopause with the *identical* molecules made in the lab. Physicians treat hypothyroidism in exactly this way without hesitation, replacing thyroxine that the thyroid gland can no longer produce with the identical molecule, made in the lab. We feel that bio-identical hormones for the treatment of pre-menopause are much safer and have far fewer side effects than foreign or synthetic hormones.

This does not mean that bio-identical HRT is free of risk. There is evidence that the aging process itself increases the risk of various cancers developing. To minimize this risk during HRT, it is our conviction that you should duplicate what your body does:

(i) Do not take synthetic or foreign hormones. Take the identical molecules your body makes: bio-identical hormones.

(ii) Do not take hormones in bolus doses (pills or injections), where huge spikes in blood levels occur for a few hours and then the levels decline thereafter until the next dose creates another spike. Take the hormones in as close a way as possible to how your ovaries have always delivered them: trickling them into the bloodstream over 24 hours. In this way, a low and constant blood level of each hormone is achieved. We believe that gradual, low-dose hormone administration is the safest method because aging cells may be more susceptible to cancer as a result of being exposed to high levels of a hormone, even for a short period of time. The best delivery systems are transdermal or transmucosal. We recommend the 17-B Estradiol skin patch or vaginal ring for estrogen replacement and Micronized Progesterone transdermal creams or gels for progesterone replacement. We recommend Micronized Testosterone transdermal creams or gels for testosterone replacement.

It’s a tragedy that we will never know exactly how great or how trivial the risk of bio-identical HRT really is, because the medical scientific community is not prepared to repeat the PremPro® study protocol using bio-identical hormones, “for ethical reasons”. Therefore, ultimately, you’ll have to balance the improved quality of life you may attain as a result of bio-identical transdermal HRT (memory, mood, bone, skin, fat, heart stability) against the increased, albeit unquantified risk of breast/uterine/ovarian cancers. We urge you to research your options carefully.

LIPIDOCTOR FACE LOFT™ includes hormones only in its pre-menopausal formulation. The doses of estrogen and progesterone provided are sufficient only for local skin therapy and are not adequate for total body HRT.