



The Hormone Survival Guide

Everything you need to know about your body & your hormones – And what's actually going on in perimenopause & menopause.

SECTION 01

What's Happening With Your Hormones

Perimenopause is the years-long transition leading up to menopause — and it can start as early as your mid-30s. During this time, estrogen and progesterone levels fluctuate unpredictably before eventually declining. Your testosterone levels gradually decrease each year in the background. Menopause itself is one day of your life – the day that you reach 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period. After that, you're in post-menopause, where your body produces little to no hormones for the rest of your life. Importantly, this phase of life is not an ending point – it's a new beginning, where your health and hormones continue to evolve.

Estrogen

Peaks & dips wildly in perimenopause, then drops sharply at the time of menopause. Affects mood, sleep, memory, heart, bones & more.

Progesterone

Produced in the body only after ovulation. As ovulation decreases and becomes erratic, so do progesterone levels. Key for sleep quality and mood stability.

Testosterone

Gradually decreases with age. Vital for libido, energy, strength, motivation & mental clarity.

SECTION 02

Common Symptoms

Symptoms can range from mildly annoying to truly life-disrupting. You're not imagining it — and you don't have to just push through. There are treatments available to give you back your quality of life and help you feel like yourself again.

- ◆ Hot flashes & night sweats
- ◆ Sleep disruption & insomnia
- ◆ Brain fog & memory lapses
- ◆ Mood swings, anxiety & irritability
- ◆ Irregular or heavy periods
- ◆ Fatigue & low energy
- ◆ Vaginal dryness & discomfort
- ◆ Decreased libido
- ◆ Joint & muscle aches, bone loss
- ◆ Weight changes (especially belly)
- ◆ Hair thinning & skin changes
- ◆ Heart palpitations



SECTION 03

Your Hormone Therapy Options

The good news? Hormone therapy is safe, effective, and life-changing for many women — and it's not one-size-fits-all. Here's a breakdown of all the key options.

Estrogen: Your cornerstone of hormone therapy

The most important hormone for hot flashes, sleep, mood, and protecting your heart and bones. Available as a patch, gel, spray, vaginal ring, or oral tablet. Transdermal (skin absorbed) estrogen is an option for most women due to its favorable safety profile. For women with a uterus, estrogen is always paired with progesterone.

Progesterone: Your protector & sleep ally

If you have a uterus, progesterone is needed to protect the uterine lining when taking estrogen. Symptomatically, it has calming properties that can improve sleep and ease anxiety. Oral micronized progesterone is the bioidentical form of progesterone available. It also has a favorable safety profile and is an option for most women.

Testosterone: The overlooked hormone for women

Women produce testosterone too — and losing it can tank libido, energy, strength, and mental sharpness. Low-dose testosterone therapy (as a cream or gel) can be a powerful addition for women. When used at normal female doses, it has a very favorable safety profile and is an option for most women.

Non-Hormonal Options

Not everyone wants or is a candidate for hormone therapy — and there are many options for treatment that don't include hormones. Non-hormonal options like SSRIs/SNRIs, fezolinetant (Veoza), and certain supplements can help manage specific symptoms. For women with a history of breast cancer, there is quite a lot we can do to ease symptoms and improve quality of life. We'll work with you to find what fits your unique history and your goals.

Finally get the care you've been looking for. You deserve to feel like yourself again.

* This guide is educational only. Always discuss treatment options with a qualified provider.

Ovella Health uses FDA-approved, bioidentical hormones where appropriate and an individualized approach for every patient.

SECTION 04

Health Conditions to Watch — and Prevent

The hormonal changes of perimenopause and menopause can raise the risk of serious health conditions. The good news is that early action and the right support can make a profound difference.

Bone Loss & Osteoporosis

Estrogen is essential for bone density. As it declines, bone loss accelerates — often silently. Prevention: Estrogen therapy, weight-bearing exercise, calcium & vitamin D, and regular DEXA scans.

Heart Disease

Estrogen has protective effects on the heart and vessels. After menopause, heart disease risk rises significantly. Prevention: Estrogen (esp when started early), healthy diet, exercise, and monitoring blood pressure & cholesterol.

Brain Health & Cognition

Estrogen supports brain function and memory. Brain fog in perimenopause may be an early sign. Prevention: Hormone therapy (timing matters!), quality sleep, regular exercise, and mental engagement.

Metabolic Health & Weight

Declining hormones shift fat to the abdomen and affect insulin sensitivity. Prevention: Strength training, protein-rich diet, hormone therapy, and blood sugar monitoring.

Mood & Mental Health

Estrogen and progesterone directly affect serotonin and GABA. Anxiety and depression are very common in this transition. Prevention: Hormone therapy, counseling, community, and lifestyle support.

Genitourinary Syndrome (GSM)

Vaginal dryness, recurrent UTIs, and bladder changes affect up to 80% of women — but are rarely discussed. Vaginal estrogen therapy is highly effective and safe for virtually all women.

You Don't Have to Figure This Out Alone.

At Ovella Health, Dr. Kelly Baxter and Dr. Kelsey Sherman are Menopause Society Certified physicians who specialize in hormones. We offer personalized, evidence-based care — with telemedicine, easy scheduling, and a doctor who actually listens. Accepting new patients in: Colorado, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.

Find out more at: ovellahealth.com

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Coming Soon: Ovella Health Courses

We're launching in-depth courses to help you go even deeper on hormones, health, and thriving through midlife. Follow us on Instagram and visit ovellahealth.com to be the first to know when they are available!