



A message from our Medical Director
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Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy (BHRT)

A natural way of helping our bodies perform as they should.

When people think of hormones, their minds immediately jump to either wild teenage boys' behavior or irritated menopausal women. While you can't control the kids, you can control what naturally happens later in life — to women AND men. But there's more to hormones.

Hormones control most of our basic bodily functions. They are the intercom, of sorts, communicating between cells from head to toe. They are the coordinators, the cheerleaders, the off and on switches affecting everything from digestion to appetite, growth to immunity, mood to sex drive. When your hormones are out of whack, even a bit, the impact on your health and wellbeing can be massive.

As the years rise, our internal hormone factories start shutting down. That never really mattered when our expected life spans rarely topped 50 years. One century later and things are different. We're addressing our health needs, paying attention to nutrition and generally taking better care of ourselves. What isn't any different today than it was one hundred years ago is our physiology.

We need to replace our hormones. And we need to do it naturally.

Enter Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy

Bioidentical Hormone Replacement Therapy can be used to provide relief for both men and women when their hormone levels drop or become unbalanced. It's most frequently used to ease symptoms of perimenopause and menopause in women and andropause in men. (Yes, men can get bitchy, too!)

It may also be used to improve symptoms of cancer treatment or to treat conditions such as:

Bioidentical hormones are man made derivatives from plant estrogens that are chemically identical to those the human body produces. Estrogen, progesterone and testosterone are among those most commonly replicated and used in treatment.

Creating Bioidentical Hormones

Some bioidentical hormones are made by drug companies. Others, known as compounded bioidentical hormones, are custom made by a pharmacy, according to a doctor's prescription. The latter is known as compounding. Compounding typically involves ingredients being combined or altered to meet the needs of each individual. At Revive Colorado, all of our BHRTs are compounded in state-of-the-art labs dedicated to customized formulations.

Synthetic vs. Bioidentical

Bioidentical hormones are different from those used in traditional hormone replacement therapy in that they're chemically identical to those our bodies produce naturally and are made from plant estrogens. The hormones used in traditional HRT are made from the urine of pregnant horses and other synthetic hormones.

Oral vs Cream vs Pellets

Anything we consume by mouth (prescription pills or supplements) is degraded by going through the digestive process. The biggest gatekeeper of the bloodstream is the liver. There, ingested substances are combined with proteins produced by the liver, bind with other hormones and reduce their positive impact.

Patches, creams and other topical delivery mechanisms of bioidentical hormones are somewhat limited by the skin itself. One of the functions of the skin is to keep stuff from getting in — including the good stuff. The other issue is compliance. You have to be vigilant about application. Every single day. While transdermals are the most widely prescribed, we direct our patients to pellets.

Subdermal pellets have been around since the 1930s. With the hormones extracted from yams, the pellets are composed of natural estradiol or testosterone and stearic acid. All three of these ingredients are found in the body and are therefore recognized. What isn't recognized is the pellet itself. The pellets are identified as foreign objects that must be dissolved. That's exactly what we want. Tiny blood vessels surround the pellets. With each heartbeat, a minute and

continuous portion of the pellets dissolve, freeing an effective and continuous dose in the bloodstream.

Pellets are the most physiologic way of delivering natural estrogen and natural testosterone to the body when ovary and testicular function are in decline.

Benefits of BHRT for women

BHRT is typically used as people age and hormone levels drop, particularly for women who are in perimenopause or menopause. It's used to increase the levels of the hormones that have dropped and improve moderate to severe menopause symptoms, including:

- hot flashes
- night sweats
- mood changes
- memory loss
- weight gain
- sleep issues
- loss of interest in sex or pain during sex

Good news for men

If erectile dysfunction wasn't running rampant, we wouldn't be subjected to so many TV ads touting assistance. What a lot of people don't know is that ED can forecast a cardiac event usually within eight years. What's the connection? The arteries in the penis are typically 1-3 mm in diameter and the coronary arteries are 3-5 mm. The largest organ in the body is the endothelium, the lining of every blood vessel in the body. Declining testosterone reduces the nitric oxide levels in the lining of the blood vessels. This, among other oxidative stressors and additional factors, will lead to the big cardiac/stroke event. That's a little frightening. So, here's some good news.

The positive effects of bioidentical testosterone include:

- improved erectile ability
- prostate protection
- cardiovascular protection
- lowered cholesterol

- increased HDL (good cholesterol)
- heightened energy
- Improved feeling of overall wellbeing
- reduced body fat
- increased muscle mass
- reduced anxiety and irritability
- improved cognitive clarity

There's more

In addition to helping with symptoms, BHRT may also reduce your risk for diabetes, tooth loss, and cataracts. There's some evidence that it can help improve skin thickness, hydration and elasticity — and even reduce wrinkles. Your older friend who looks amazing is probably on BHRT.

Potential side effects and risks of BHRT

Many people cannot take BHRT or any form of hormone replacement due to their health history. We'll discuss the pros and cons with you and make sure you're aware of potential risks including:

- blood clots
- stroke
- gallbladder disease
- heart disease
- breast cancer

While they are rare, there are potential side effects of BHRT as your body adjusts to the hormones:

- acne
- bloating
- weight gain
- fatigue
- mood swings
- increased facial hair in women

What's right you for you?

BHRT isn't for everyone. Take the BHRT survey on our website at Revive4Colorado.com > Services > BHRT. Send it to info@revive4colorado.com, then schedule a time to chat with one of our providers.