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IT'S NOT YOU,
IT'S YOUR

hormones



*The essential guide for
WOMEN OVER 40 to fight fat,
fatigue and hormone havoc*

CHAPTER 2

TAKE THE QUIZ – FIND OUT IF YOU HAVE A HORMONE IMBALANCE

So firstly, you need to know if you even have a hormone imbalance, right?

You may feel you're too young, or your doctor may have told you there's nothing wrong (or offered you an antidepressant like mine did). But by looking at common symptoms, you may be surprised to find that it could be your hormones at fault.

In Chapter 1, I talked about the main symptoms of hormone imbalance that women experience in their 40s. If you want to know which ones you might have, take this short quiz and jump to the relevant chapters.

You can find this quiz in your accompanying workbook, which you can download and complete online at www.happyhormonesforlife.com/book.

The questionnaire is not designed to diagnose you. It is just a tool to give you an indication of whether you may have a hormonal imbalance and how you can help yourself using the Happy Hormone Code. I fully recommend you get personalized advice from a qualified medical or health practitioner if you have any serious conditions or want to get tested so you can implement a personalized programme (visit www.happyhormonesforlife.com/contact for more info).

Many of the symptoms in each part are the same and you may find that you have symptoms in more than one area. That's really

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common as hormones are so interwoven and one hormone out of whack will affect the others too. Usually there is one area that is the most dominant, and once you have addressed it, it often balances out the others. However, you may need to address all areas if your symptoms overlap.

The quiz

Rate the below symptoms from 0–3: 0 = does not occur, 1 = slight or occasional occurrence, 2 = moderate or common occurrence, 3 = severe and frequent occurrence.

Part 1 – Cortisol

Feeling wired/overwhelmed
Energy slumps during the day
Poor sleep
Anxious
Can't switch off
Mood swings, irritability
Low libido
Infertility
Fat around the middle (belly fat)
Salt or sugar cravings
Frequent colds/infections

Part 2 – Insulin

High waist:hip ratio (>0.8) (waist measurement divided by hip measurement)
Sleepy in the afternoon
Feeling 'hangry' (hungry / angry)
Dizzy or irritable before eating
Early hours insomnia (wake around 3–5)

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PMS

Excessive thirst/or frequent urination

Sugar/carb cravings or carb-heavy diet

Part 3 – Thyroid

Fatigue (all day)

Weight gain

Depression

Anxiety

Dry or puffy skin/brittle nails

Hair loss

Low libido or infertility

Cold hands/feet

Brain fog, memory loss

PMS

Outer third of eyebrows missing

Constipation

High cholesterol

Family history of thyroid conditions

Part 4 – Low oestrogen

Hot flushes/night sweats

Dry itchy skin

Vaginal dryness

Deep wrinkles

Memory Loss / Brain fog

Low libido or painful sex

Tearfulness

Mood swings

Weight gain (belly, hips, thighs)

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Part 5 – High oestrogen (or low progesterone)

Breast tenderness

Heavy or painful periods

Water retention

Mood swings

Acne

Anxiety

Fibroids, PCOS, endometriosis

Note your scores from each section in your notebook, or in the accompanying workbook. You can revisit this questionnaire when you have made some changes to see how your symptoms have improved.

If you have three or more symptoms in any one part then you are likely suffering a HORMONE IMBALANCE!

If you are dominant in Part 1 – jump to Chapter 3 for the low-down on **cortisol** OR straight to Chapter 7 for the Happy Hormone Code for what to do about it.

If you are dominant in Part 2 – jump to Chapter 3 for the low-down on **insulin** OR straight to Chapter 7 for the Happy Hormone Code for what to do about it.

If you are dominant in Part 3 – jump to Chapter 3 for the low-down on **thyroid** OR straight to Chapter 7 for the Happy Hormone Code for what to do about it.

If you are dominant in Part 4 or 5 – jump to Chapter 3 for the low-down on **oestrogen** OR straight to Chapter 7 for the Happy Hormone Code for what to do about it.

If you have symptoms in all 5 parts – please start the Happy Hormone Code immediately!

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Mind the Gap

Grab your notebook or workbook and complete the answers in the Mind the Gap section.

If you've just taken the quiz and realized that you do have a hormone imbalance (or several!), please just take a moment to think about how it's affecting you and your life.

The reason I'm asking you to do this is that it really helps to know exactly where you are now, so you can work out where you want to be instead.

So take a moment to ask yourself these questions:

- Are you low in confidence?
- Is fatigue stopping you doing things?
- How are your moods affecting your relationships?
- How does stress make you feel?
- Is brain fog affecting your work?
- Are you having embarrassing hot flushes?
- How do other symptoms affect your life?
- What does all this stop you doing?

And now I'd like to ask you to take a moment to think about where you want to be. Without knowing your destination it's quite hard to know where you're going and when you are there!

So, take a moment to answer these questions:

- How do you want your body to look?
- How do you want to feel?
- How would that affect your life?
- What would that enable you to start doing?
- Who would that enable you to start being?

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This last question was the one that really got me started. I didn't want to be the Grumpy Mum any more, I wanted to be Fun Mum...!

If there's a gap between where you are now, and where you want to be, all that you need is INFORMATION and a bit of SUPPORT.

Your big WHY

One of the keys to success in my programmes (and any programme that involves cultivating new habits) is motivation. This is the thing that goes out of the window very easily when things get tough. You've had a bad day at work, you have an argument with someone or you just haven't got the energy to keep going. That's when you need to call on your big WHY.

John Durant in his book *The Paleo Manifesto* says this:

Leading a healthy lifestyle is a two-pronged problem; 1) knowing what's healthy, and 2) doing what's healthy. Science has focused on the first – figuring out what's healthy while neglecting the second – motivating people to make healthy decisions. The prescriptions of our diet culture, based on reductionist science, just aren't meaningful to most people. Vitamins never got anyone out of bed in the morning. There is something missing from our diets, and it's not a macronutrient or a vitamin. It's something deeper: meaning. Meaning is the secret ingredient that turns a diet into a lifestyle. So find ways to care about what you eat.

Why do you want to sort out your hormones? This will be a bigger reason than you first think. You need a really big reason to make any changes in your life, especially diet and lifestyle! So many things and people are waiting for you to fail at this, so you need a damn good reason that will keep you going when

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things get tough. Life will get in the way (it's hard to eat well when you're really stressed, or unhappy or just exhausted) and people can be really unhelpful (they don't want you to show up their own inadequacies). So find your big reason and you will have the motivation to stick to your guns.

What is your WHY?

There are several layers to this answer. Let me explain with this example.

Answer 1 – 'I don't want to feel tired any more'

WHY?

Answer 2 – 'I want more energy to get more done during the day'

WHY?

Answer 3 – 'I want to start my own business'

WHY?

Answer 4 – 'I want to do something I really love and help others'

WHY?

Answer 5 – 'I want my family to be proud of me and my life to have been worth something'

Do you see how it takes a while to get down to the real reason you want to change? That's what you're looking for – that's your WHY and that will keep you going on the days where you want to give up.

When you've found your WHY, write it in your notebook or in the workbook. Then list 50 things you will be able to get out of

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improving your hormone health. Get that list out every time you have a slip up or a bad day, and start again.

My own WHY for hormone health is unashamedly selfish, actually. I love travelling and there are so many places I want to see. I want to visit them all and to do that I need boundless energy and enthusiasm. I want to spend my retirement with a suitcase in my hand! This motivates me to look after my body and mind. I won't be going anywhere if I'm exhausted and moody (I won't have a husband to go with either!).

If you don't have a WHY, then your chances of successfully improving your health are low I'm afraid. Go back over the questions until you can't answer 'why' any more.

Your main goals

Once you've got your big WHY, you can create some juicy goals to go with it. List them in your notebook or workbook.

SUMMARY

Identify which of your hormones may be out of balance:

- cortisol
- insulin
- thyroid
- low or high oestrogen
- a mix of all of these

Be clear on the main issues you want to resolve and identify and write down your big juicy goals!

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