Hormone Imbalance and Weight Gain

Belly fat is a big problem for many people. Love handles aren't just unattractive; they can be a key indicator of a hormonal imbalance. Abdominal obesity is a health hazard and is worse than carrying weight on the hips or thighs. Extra belly fat may indicate one or more of the following hormonal imbalances:

- Elevated testosterone and/or DHEA in women
- Decreased testosterone in men
- Estrogen dominance (progesterone insufficiency) in men and women
- Adrenal dysfunction in both genders

A successful program to get rid of this stubborn fat must include proper diet, exercise, sleep and addressing hormone imbalances.

Elevated androgens (testosterone and DHEA) in women are most often an early indicator of evolving or established insulin resistance. As the body begins to struggle with glucose metabolism, androgens become elevated and contribute to male pattern obesity - the "apple" shape, or belly fat that many women struggle with as they age. Younger women with PCOS may also struggle with abdominal obesity. This abdominal obesity is especially dangerous as the adipose (fat) cells in this region are more insulin resistant, increasing the risk for developing heart disease and diabetes. Additionally, abdominal fat cells increase the aromatization of testosterone into estrogen. As estrogen levels rise, so does the tendency to accumulate more abdominal fat, creating a vicious cycle of blood sugar dysregulation and hormone imbalance. Male testosterone levels tend to taper off with aging, obesity and stress, but today men are experiencing testosterone decline much earlier in life. Low testosterone is associated with insulin resistance and with an increased risk of diabetes and metabolic syndrome. Researchers from the University of Washington found that men with low testosterone are more likely to develop a rotund abdomen and other body fat. They also found that testosterone may prompt the loss of body fat when deficient levels are replaced.

An additional hormonal factor in weight gain is cortisol; imbalanced levels (both high and low) can be contributory. Researchers at Yale University found slender women who had high cortisol also had more abdominal fat. More results published in the journal of Psychosomatic Medicine in 2000 established a link between cortisol and increased storage of abdominal fat. Low cortisol levels contribute to fatigue, cravings, and inefficient thyroid function. These findings support the hypothesis that cortisol secretion might represent a mechanism for the observed association between stress and abdominal fat distribution.

Weight loss is incredibly challenging for most people. While exercise, diet, and other lifestyle changes are essential components to any weight loss plan, imbalanced hormones may hinder your patients’ success. Testing for and addressing hormone imbalance provides the missing piece for many weight loss journeys.

References:

Dr. Jay Mead, Labrix and AFMA Team Up for March 2014 Functional Medicine Conference

Jay H. Mead, MD, FASCP, is the Medical Director of Labrix Clinical Services, Inc. and a visionary for innovative testing for discerning practitioners. He is a leading expert in salivary hormone and urinary iodine testing. Dr. Mead has been practicing as a clinician for over twenty years and understands the need and value of accurate, reliable laboratory testing. Dr. Mead is a board certified pathologist (AP/CP), a retired USAF Flight Surgeon and cofounder of a progressive full service complementary and alternative medical clinic. He also has board certification in blood banking and lead the Pacific Northwest Region of the American Red Cross as the Chief Medical Officer for over 10 years. Dr. Mead is the co-author of the well-received book: Slim, Sane and Sexy; Pocket Guide to Natural, Bioidentical Hormone Balancing (www.slimsaneandsexy.com).

Dr. Mead speaks at national and international conferences on topics including: Best Practices for State-of-the-Art Hormone Testing; Best Practices for Men's Hormone Health; Beyond Testosterone...Progesterone for Men, Youth's Best Kept Secret; Vitamin D: The Forgotten Hormone; Neurodegenerative Disease and Endocrine Balancing; an Integrative Approach; Thyroid Health and Prostate Health.

AFMA Conference Lecture Topic

Bioidenticals, Brain Chemistry and Baby Boomers:
Advances in Hormone, Adrenal and Neurotransmitter solutions for Menopause, Peri menopause, Andropause, Metabolic syndrome and more.

Besides hot flashes, peri-menopausal women also complain of low libido, fatigue, anxiety, depression and weight gain. They may also have begun to experience auto-immune symptoms; thyroid dysfunction, joint pain, allergies and more. In the usual care model; these women are sent home from a doctor visit with estrogen prescriptions, perhaps an antidepressant... end of story. Hormones are not tested, clinical intakes are brief if at all and these are provided few resources with which to manage their symptoms and their longer term health.

Ten thousand Americans turn 60 every day... that is equivalent to 3,650,000 new 60 years olds a year, 61,000 every week! This boom in our aging population will continue for another 17 years! This generation wants and demands real answers to their multiplying health complaints. A majority of them are now looking to the Functional Medicine practitioner for anti-aging solutions. If you are already practicing Integrative medicine you know that BHRT is an incredibly powerful and effective piece of building and maintaining vitality. But is Bioidentical hormone balancing enough? You also may know that there are more pieces to puzzle. Assessing adrenal function, considering GI health, plus evaluating brain chemistry and neurotransmitter balance is also
critical. We often equate neurotransmitters with mood disorders but balanced NT’s are critical in correcting adrenal, hormonal and GI dysfunction as well. This presentation will guide you through the clinical steps you can take to evaluate and treat the entire neuroendocrine system and thus bring real solutions to your patients.

Learning Objectives:

1. Obtain and understand the role of sex steroid hormones, adrenal hormones and neurotransmitters in health and well-being.
2. Be able to describe an in-depth approach for clinical assessment of patients seeking functional medicine solutions to their symptoms.
3. Gain treatment approaches that can be employed immediately Monday morning upon your return.
Register today at www.AFMAssociation.com or call 1-855-500-AFMA!

Use discount code AFMA1 to receive a $100 registration discount. Use discount code AFMA2 on second registration and receive $200 off, for a total discount of $300!

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