

Hormonal Deficiency and Nutrition; How to Achieve Better Hormonal Health Through Diet

Ever since I was a child, I've had an enlarged goiter. Doctors repeatedly ordered thyroid levels for me but the results would come back normal every time. I was an athletic, young girl but I was always sick with colds or stomach aches, and the older I got, the less energy I seemed to have. By age 17 in high school, I knew there was something wrong with me. My friends all noticed it. I was tired, I'd walk slowly, it seemed like I was always daydreaming. I couldn't pay attention in class for more than a minute, I was anxious and eventually depressed.

It was not until the age of thirty three when I visited an endocrinologist for a different matter, that he noticed something unusual around my thyroid gland. He ordered an ultrasound and some labs, and it was determined I had a small, benign nodule sitting on my thyroid gland, that was in fact affecting the production of thyroid hormone in my body. So, here we are, one college degree and two kids later, they're now finally confirming that I have an under-active thyroid. To think that I was hypothyroid throughout my two pregnancies and the implications it could have on my children really bothered me but there was nothing I could do about that now. I started taking a thyroid supplement right away, and the doctor played around with the dose until he was satisfied with the blood levels he saw.

So, I'd love to say that that the one thyroid pill was my savior and I've had an abundance of energy and liveliness since I've been on it. But unfortunately, that has not been the case. I'm still exhausted and in a "brain fog" most of the time. I'm short-tempered and anxious, overweight and over-emotional!

As a pharmacist, I have known for a while that my current thyroid regimen is not adequate for me, but I left the drug selection to my doctor. It's always difficult to second-guess your physician, especially when you know how educated and knowledgeable he is. But I've had it. I feel like I'm doing my children a disservice. I'm usually moping around the house, struggling to get some work done, while other moms are out with their kids, going from one park and sports activity to the next.

I will find a better solution for my thyroid problems. The first thing I will do will be to switch to a bio-identical thyroid supplement, which will be better processed by my body.

Also, in my quest for better health, I've found that a big part of achieving better adrenal or hormonal health has to do with what we eat. There are foods to be avoided, foods to eat less often, and foods to eat more of. There are also foods you should not eat together, which was very interesting for me. I would like to list some of the information I've found here. This list also covers important nutritious points for patients with other hormonal deficiencies.

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Try to eat more of the foods your body was designed to digest. That would be fruits and vegetables, in the more clean and pure form. Our bodies were not designed to consume high amounts of animal protein. We were made to eat fruits and vegetables, fresh and containing no chemicals and pesticides. As humans developed agricultural skills, they introduced grains and dairy products to their diets. Things that their bodies were not able to easily digest. Even cooked grains are not easy for the body to digest, that's why we get bloated and gassy after eating grains! Have you ever experienced drowsiness after eating grains? Some people refer to these foods as "heavy" because of the way they feel after consuming them. So, cut down on your grains consumption.

In addition, some foods made of grains, for example bread, contain yeast which contributes to overgrowth of yeast in our digestive system, which will result in disrupted sugar and hormone levels, along with bloating, flatulence, dandruff, general itching, eczema, and sugar cravings. Eat sprouted grains and buy bread made exclusively of organic, sprouted grain. There are plenty of options to choose from nowadays. While we are on the topic of yeast, it's important to talk about vinegar and alcohol which are "yeast-friendly" and are to be consumed in limited amounts if you are experiencing hormonal deficiency of any kind.

Doctor Thierry Hertoghe, a member of the International Advisory Board of the American Academy of Anti-Aging says "the diet our ancestors followed didn't mix too many kinds of food at one time... Different foods require different acidity to digest food properly...Keep it simple." When different types of foods are consumed together, some of the food will take longer to digest, which will add to the yeast problems in our system. Keep your plate simple and light. Give your digestive system a break.

Doctor Hertoghe also believes in eating raw foods, fruits, and vegetables, however, he believes they should not be consumed later in the afternoon when our digestive system is tired.

Eat fruits by themselves. Don't have your fruit while you're having a meal, space them out by half an hour before food, or three to five hours after your meals. This is because when fruit which is high in sugar is consumed with the other foods that are more difficult to digest, the fruit will sit there and its high sugar content will add to the yeast growth in your gut, which in turn will cause the bloating, gas, and drowsiness.

Also, eat more whole fruits than juices for the same reason. You're consuming the fruit sugars without the fiber.

Limit meat consumption, and when you cook meat, cook it at low temperatures so that the unwanted organisms are destroyed but the high temperature does not destroy or change the structure of the fats in the meat. The substances that are produced disrupt digestion, cause fatigue, and can also be carcinogenic.

This also goes for other food groups. One reason French fries are deemed dangerous to health for example is because they are cooked at very high temperatures and go through structural changes.

At the end, eat your food in a calm manner, chew slowly, don't make your meals one more chore to get done during the day. Relax, take walks in fresh air, and enjoy the sunshine.

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