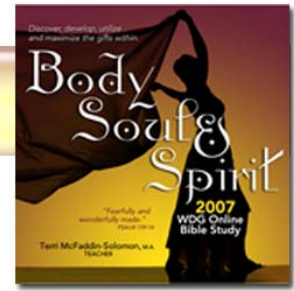


Body Soul & Spirit

I WILL PRAISE YOU FOR I AM FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE. PSALM 139:14



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For I am fearfully and wonderfully made Psalm 139:14

WDG BIBLE STUDY 2007

SERIES: THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF THE BODY

Lesson #2 - You And Your Hormones (Part 1)

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OPENING STATEMENT:

Without a doubt, every woman on the planet should know something about their hormones and how they work. The following is my attempt to put a very complex bodily process into terms that we can all understand.

1. **WHAT ARE HORMONES?** (Greek – “to set in motion”) Hormones are natural chemical messengers that are sent from one cell (or group of cells) to another. They are secreted into the blood system and sent to a “target organs.” For example, when we feel afraid a hormone called *adrenalin* is released from the adrenal gland into the blood. It sends a chemical message to the heart telling it to pump faster so that the body will have the strength to fight back or take flight.
2. **HOW DO HORMONES FUNCTION?** Hormones are involved in just about every biological process and organ function. They affect the immune system, the reproductive system; growth; and even control other hormones. For example, without the proper amounts of a hormone called insulin (produced in the pancreas), we will develop diabetes. Another hormone called thyroxin is produced in the thyroid gland and controls our metabolism and how fast the body works.
3. **HOW DO HORMONES AFFECT WOMEN?** In the book, “Resetting The Clock,” Dr. Elmer M. Cranton wrote the following: *“Hormones must be harmonized; they must be kept in perfect balance, just like the instruments in a symphony orchestra. As we age, that balance is interrupted by a disproportionate decline in some of the more essential hormones, creating an imbalance and discord in our bodies.”* Emotional and physical changes in a woman’s body can often be the result of changing hormones. Could it be that David’s wife Michal was suffering from a bout with PMS when she rebuked David for dancing in the street? (2 Samuel 6:20). Maybe menopause was the reason why Syntyche and Euodias were having such a hard time working together in the church at Philippi. (Philippians 4:2-3). Let’s take a closer look at what’s behind the mystery of female hormones.
4. **HORMONES AND PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME (PMS)** From puberty onwards, certain hormones, which include estrogen and progesterone, play a vital part in the reproductive process in

a woman's body. Each individual hormone follows its own pattern, rising and falling at different points in the menstrual cycle possibly causing physical changes and emotional highs and lows in women. The National Women's Health Information Center defines PMS in the following manner: PMS is a group of symptoms linked to the monthly menstrual cycle. The symptoms usually occur in the week or two weeks before your monthly period. The symptoms usually go away after your period starts. PMS symptoms can vary in each woman. When monthly periods come to an end during menopause, PMS also comes to an end. The cause of PMS is not clear but it is linked to changing hormones during the menstrual cycle. Stress and emotional problems seem to make it worse.

- a. **Symptoms are both physical and emotional:** Acne, breast swelling, joint pain, fatigue, trouble sleeping, bloating, constipation, headaches, back aches, mood swings, depression, irritability, anxiety, food cravings, trouble concentrating and memory loss are just some of the common complaints from women.
- b. **Recommended treatment for PMS:** No specific treatment works for every woman, so you need to talk to a doctor, nutritionist, or a naturopath and see what might work best for you. The National Women's Health Information recommends the following: Multi-vitamins – especially folic acid and calcium with vitamin D. Daily exercise. Eat healthy – fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains. Avoid processed foods and foods that are high in salt and sugar. Avoid caffeine and alcohol, especially when PMS symptoms are present. Drink lots of water and get at least 8 hours of sleep each night. Avoid stressful situations.

5. **HORMONES AND MENOPAUSE:** The National Health Information Center describes menopause as the time in a woman's life when her period stops. Typically "the change of life," as it is sometimes called, usually happens between the ages of 45 and 55 years old. This means there are no menstrual periods for 12 months in a row. Premature menopause can be the result of a hysterectomy or other illnesses or trauma. During the period leading up to menopause, (sometimes called perimenopause) a woman's body makes less and less of the hormones estrogen and progesterone. Menopause symptoms can range from mild hot flashes to constant dripping sweats all day and night. Some women spot for a few months, others bleed heavily for years. The loss of estrogen may not be the entire reason for hormonal imbalances and changes. They are also related to poor diet, a stressful lifestyle and genetic factors.

- a. **Symptoms of menopause:** Feeling extremely hot (sometimes followed by chills; Hair loss and thinning; Facial hair growth; Trouble focusing and feeling confused; Mood swings; Vaginal dryness; Trouble sleeping; Weight gain; Bone loss.
- b. **Recommended treatment for menopause:** Exercise and a healthy diet are extremely important. Vitamins also come highly recommended namely Vitamin B12-B (folic acid) and B Complex (especially for women of Hormone replacement therapy). Natural Vitamin B can be found in leafy green vegetables, nuts, peas and beans. Vitamin B3 is found in poultry, fish, beans and whole wheat bread. B12 is found in fish, poultry, eggs and dairy. Vitamin C can be called the anti-wrinkle vitamin. It helps with skin regeneration and also helps the body's immune system when we enter menopause. Vitamin C rich foods include citrus fruits, broccoli, kale and peppers. Finally, Calcium and Vitamin D are essential for ongoing strength and maintenance of bone mass. Foods include canned tuna, salmon, eggs and dairy products. There are also many herbal supplements available at health food stores for the treatment of menopause.
- c. **Pros and cons of Hormone Replacement Therapy:** Health professionals find that replacing the loss of natural estrogen reduces the risk of bone loss; reduces hot flashes and reduces the

risk of heart disease. But there is also an increased risk of cancer of the uterus; breast cancer and blood clots. Many health professionals believe that when both estrogen and progesterone are used together in hormone therapy it reduces the risk of cancer. This is a matter that you should carefully investigate before making a decision.

OBSERVATIONS AND PERSONALIZATION:

6. **DO WE HAVE ANY CONTROL OVER OUR HORMONES?** The proper function of our hormones can involve many different components.
 - a. **Family History:** If women in your family suffer from hormonal imbalance, there is a chance that you may have similar imbalances. However, your family members may suffer from poor health habits that cause hormonal imbalances. With prayer, a healthy diet and medical supervision, you can be the one to break the family curse.
Exodus 15:26 – “If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight and give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you.”
 - b. **Stress:** High levels of stress can also affect your hormones. Fear, tension and anxiety will send messages to your adrenal gland and other vital organs to prepare for battle. For every one day of stress, it takes three days for the body to recover and come back into balance. Prayer, worship, wise counsel and forgiveness can help calm your troubled hormones.
Philippians 4:6-7 – Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
 - c. **Diet:** What you eat can play a very important role in keeping your hormones balanced. Caffeine, sugar, high doses of salt and processed foods can overwork and damage the heart, kidneys, liver, pancreas as well as all of your bodily functions. Natural foods, like fruits, veggies, grains, fish and lots of water promotes health, healing and cellular renewal in the body. *1 Corinthians 3:16-17- Don't you know that your bodies are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys (abuses) God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.*
 - d. **Aging:** As we begin to age many of our hormones become depleted causing dramatic changes in our appearance, mental and bodily functions. Exercise, proper diet, mental stimulation and godly living will help to slow down the aging process. *Psalm 103:2-5 – Bless the LORD, O my soul and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases... who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.*

SHARE YOUR STORY:

Have you had a serious bout with PMS or menopause? How did the Lord help you deal with it?