



Holistic Medical Centre

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Hormonal philosophy

Hormones are a very interesting subject and traditionally only interested the medical profession when there was real disease such as when the adrenal glands have completely failed. This is called Addison's disease and does require very quick medical intervention. Being a general practice we have patients who visit us for many and varied reasons and a general practice is the first port of call for many people who are looking for answers to *quality* of life issues. These may not be life or death situations but the joy, satisfaction and vigour that one is currently experiencing in life may be compromised in some way. Whether these are important questions for the medical profession to resolve may be debated by those who enjoy debating such things. We, however, remain committed to our patients having the best quality of life possible for the longest possible time. This is obviously important for most individuals on the planet and or course involves many physical, emotional, mental and (for some) spiritual factors. While all of these things are part of the amazing creation that is a human life, our focus is on finding

out what can be done on the physical level to enable the best physical health possible that enables one to enjoy his/her life to the fullest. Over time we have come to recognise the importance of hormones and how their balance can impact quality of life in many ways. In this newsletter we want to give you a brief overview of steroid hormones. Cholesterol is the starter molecule for the synthesis of all the steroid hormones in the body. Right after cholesterol the grandmother/grandfather hormone of steroid hormones is pregnenolone. From pregnenolone arises progesterone, estrogens (E1-estrone, E2-estradiol and E3-estriol), corticosterone, cortisol aldosterone, and Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA). Pregnenolone is produced and found to a large degree in the brain and is known as a neuro-hormone. It is thought to increase cognitive function and may play a role in maintaining the structural health of the brain. It really is the parent hormone in the body and is the precursor to all the aforementioned hormones. Cortisol and its direct pre-

cursor Corticosterone are steroid hormones that are produced in the adrenal glands and become elevated during times of physical and mental stress. Corticosterone keeps inflammation in check and cortisol increases blood sugar levels in times of stress in order to supply fuel for the muscles. Cortisol is often elevated in women taking the contraceptive pill. Aldosterone is a hormone synthesised in the adrenal glands that acts on the kidneys to control the balance of salt and water in the body. DHEA is a well-being hormone synthesised in the adrenal glands. It is the precursor to estrogen and testosterone, has a positive effect on mood and is associated with a lower risk of some types of cancers. A deficiency in progesterone is associated with irritability, tearfulness, PMS, premenstrual headaches, anxiety and insomnia. A deficiency in estrogen can lead to vaginal dryness and thinning, bladder irritation and depression. In the next newsletter there will be more detail on healthy types and unhealthy types of estrogen. Lack of testosterone (in males and females) can lead to loss of libido, depression and lack of drive.

Our favourite quote

"Do not hold grain waiting for higher prices when people are hungry"
Zoroaster c.628 - c.551 BC

Health tips

Warfarin is a prescription medication used to thin the blood and prevent blood clots. Cardiologists often initiate this medication if they are concerned about a patient's cardiovascular health. It has come to our attention that patients who take Warfarin and begin taking probiotics to settle bowel disturbance have required an increase in their Warfarin dose. This is very likely due to the fact that the beneficial bacteria in the gut can synthesise vitamin K which assists normal blood clotting. Please pass this on to anyone you know who may be taking Warfarin.

Happy Patient File

The happy mum of a 4 year old child called to thank us recently. Her child had a cough which had lasted for 10 weeks after being ill. Antibiotics and ventolin had failed to help. We used magnesium, fish oil and an appropriate homeopathic remedy. Mum called within 24 hours to say how delighted she was as her child was well.

More information and recipes

Dr Inga Schader supplied a great recipe entitled Cashew nut gravy. Sauté 1/2 onion with 1/2 red bell pepper in olive oil with mixed herbs. Add 1/2 cup of plain raw cashews and sauté for 5 minutes. Add 1 cup of vegetable stock and simmer till cashews are soft. Blend together and add more stock as

needed. Serve over roast vegetables, tofu, fish or whatever you like.

Thank you all for your patience while Dr Helen Smith has been away. Dr Smith will be returning soon to train up some new doctors. We are aiming to make wait times a thing of the past while con-

tinuing with our longer appointment times to ensure that we still deliver the best holistic medicine possible.

Article fourteen from the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Article XIV

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other

countries asylum from persecution. (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.