

The Multibillion-Dollar Estrogen Myth

By Tysa Goodrich

Are you one of over 10 million American women taking the most widely-prescribed synthetic estrogen called Premarin? I write this article for you.

Since 1992, Premarin has been profiting the pharmaceutical industry over 700 million dollars a year, and is ranked among the top three drugs in gross sales of all time. More than 75% of HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy) drugs contain Premarin. At present, did you know that women are dying of abnormal blood clotting while using Premarin, PremPro, Prem-Phase and PremPac-C, but no

one is keeping track of these deaths? They're just being lopped into the ever-increasing 100,000+ fatalities a year due to medical mistakes in this country. Premarin-based drugs, even combined with what is mistakenly called progesterone -- like Provera and Cytrin -- are doing a lot of damage.

And one more thing, did you know that Premarin is named after its main ingredient, the urine of pregnant mares (pregnant-PRE mares'-MAR urine-IN)? Premarin's production requires the use of approximately 75,000 female horses annually. During six out of eleven months of preg-

nancy, each mare is confined to a tiny stall, hooked up to a catheter and collection harness, while all her estrogen-rich urine is siphoned (including an enormous amount of equilin, a horse estrogen that never occurs in humans).

During her confinement, she cannot turn around, groom herself, or lie down comfortably. At some facilities, she is forced to stand in position for the entire six months of "the season." The foal she bears is considered a by-product of the industry and is sold for slaughter. This -- the



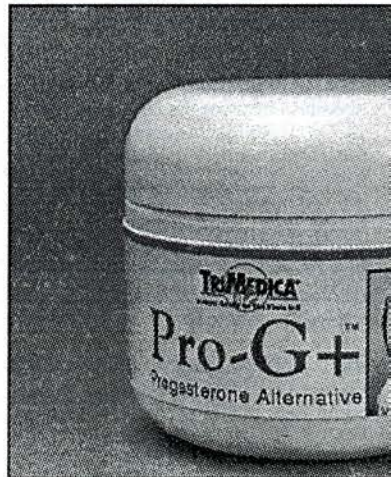
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What are we willing to give up in order to follow "doctor's orders?" How in God's name did we get here?

Hormone replacement actually dates back to the 1930s, but it wasn't until one little New York gynecologist in 1966 published a book called *Feminine Forever*, did the estrogen ball get rolling. Dr. Robert A. Wilson deemed estrogen replacement as the long-sought-after fountain-of-youth pill that would save "poor, fading women." He poured into the foundation of a birthing women's health movement the erroneous belief that menopause is an estrogen deficiency disease.

Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories (one of this country's largest research-oriented pharmaceutical companies) was the first drug manufacturer to produce this synthetic conjugated estrogen pill. Ayerst took advantage of a grand opportunity to popularize the drug, and funded -- together with the rest of the pharmaceuti-

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cal industry -- a major promotional campaign on the "good news about estrogen." These corporations generously contributed over \$1.3 billion dollars to Dr. Wilson's effort to publicize Estrogen Replacement Therapy (ERT), with Wyeth-Ayerth spending \$9 million on the advertising of Premarin alone. The Wilson Foundation was set up for the sole purpose of promoting the use of estrogen drugs. Thus, ERT (or HRT) began to "illuminate" the world, even though at the time there wasn't any solid research to back up any of its claims.

Dr. John R. Lee, in his recent book, *What Your Doctor May NOT Tell You About Menopause*, states that the original approval of estrogen as a prescription drug was based on a "dubious study with a relatively small number of women in Puerto Rico who took birth control pills." In this study, "20 percent of

increases the risk of breast cancer. But many doctors continue to prescribe estrogen and synthetic progesterone as some form of choosing the lesser of two evils (a matched philosophy shared by pharmaceutical companies when promoting their drugs). What two evils?

Dr. Raymond Peat in his book, *From PMS to Menopause: Female Hormones in Context*, states that "Physicians are not regularly taught in medical school or in continuing education courses that they should measure the amount of estrogen in the blood before they prescribe a treatment to 'replace' it."

HRT is the number one cause of increased rates of heart attacks in postmenopausal women, specifically causing the tightening of blood vessels. Estrogen does not prevent osteoporosis, and more than that, there are serious reasons for believing estrogen may be a factor in causing bone loss, as well as accelerated brain aging. Dr. Peat calls estrogen "not the 'female hormone,' but the shock hormone." He also says "there is no valid scientific evidence of its safety in any amounts."

The Journal of the American Medical Association was finally moved to publish a study this year concluding, "Postmenopausal estrogen use for 10 or more years was associated with increased risk of fatal ovarian cancer, persisting up to 29 years after cessation of use." HELLO?

We have more choices available to us than a lesser of two evils. Balancing estrogen dominance can be naturally and safely remedied using natural progesterone skin creams, oils, or under-the-tongue drops. The worst known side effect of progesterone is sleepiness, and that is only if taken in large doses. Interestingly enough, most women report they simply feel calm. What a concept.

I am 48 years old, and have been using natural progesterone cream to balance my hormones for the past three years. Between that, my attention to diet, and learning how to honor my feelings, I have lost every symptom I used to experience -- including raging PMS.

In our modern world, there are many factors contributing to the imbalance of hormones, our diet being one of the main causes. Pesticides used in non-organic foods are often estrogen mimickers. But so are the building blocks of polycar-



TriMedica's natural progesterone cream, Pro-G, was developed specifically to offer powerful, natural support to a woman's hormonal balance, which can help alleviate symptoms such as:

- Bloating
- PMS
- Hot Flashes
- Irritability & Insomnia

the women complained of side effects, but they were dismissed as neurotic."

Is there chauvinism in all this? Can you feel it? Dr. Wilson called menopause a time when women became "dried-up, cranky, sexless old hags," further decreeing that his magic pill would save them from their "tragedy," keeping them "feminine forever."

But do you want to know the truth? When we start developing symptoms such as breast tenderness, decreased sex drive, vaginal dryness, fatigue and depression, allergies, hypoglycemia, fibrocystic breasts, foggy thinking, headaches, PMS, bloating, thyroid dysfunction, bone loss and uterine fibroids, we are actually experiencing symptoms of ESTROGEN DOMINANCE -- what Dr. Lee calls EDS (Estrogen Dominance Syndrome).

In June of 1995, the New England Journal of Medicine reported that hormone replacement therapy (HRT)

"Many doctors continue to prescribe estrogen and synthetic progesterone as some form of choosing the lesser of two evils"

bonate plastics used in many common detergents, toiletries, lubricants, and spermicides.

Women (and men) need to be oh-so-careful when it comes to cooked fats. Trans fats found in fried and processed foods are far worse than even the saturated fats in animal products, though I personally don't recommend either. For instance, despite researchers heralding margarine as healthy because of its moderate amounts of trans unsaturated fat, it's still just liquid plastic, and an estrogen mimicker. Is a slightly lower cholesterol level better than cell membranes that can't function properly?

Why is it that medical doctors don't prescribe natural progesterone? Maybe because anything derived from a natural source cannot be patented, therefore a lot of money cannot be made, nor can this natural product be sponsored by a pharmaceutical company to be advertised in the medical journals and marketed to the physician-pre-

scribers.

Follow Your Heart (in Canoga Park), as well as Whole Foods Markets, carry three different brands of natural progesterone cream. There are also numerous reputable distributors of natural progesterone online, who also inform and educate. You need to look for a cream with "USP progesterone" as one of its ingredients, and a dosage of at least 450 mg/oz. Dr. Lee has a list in his book with products containing recommended dosages, although some of the newer companies (like "Source Naturals") are not listed.

Visit Dr. John Lee's website (www.johnleemd.com) as well as Dr. Raymond Peat's website (www.efn.org/~raypeat) for more information on natural progesterone. Educating yourself is the most empowered choice you can make, and it could change how long you live. Before I go, I would like to set one thing straight: Menopause is NOT a disease! It is a time of passage, a time when women make pivotal choices that affect the rest of their lives: "Will I pursue my wisdom, draw my intuitive sword, or will I recoil, retract into childishness and just follow orders, disappear, because that's what chauvinism would have me do?"

Exercise

Still the No.1 Prescription for personal fitness

Sticking with an exercise program can be the downfall of our fitness plans. But now a new study explains why we continue to disappoint ourselves and

Sample Workouts

Here are four sample fitness plans. Remember to check with your doctor before beginning this or any other exercise program

2. Circuit training. Try this variation on basic training:

Spend two minutes performing any aerobic activity, such as walking. Immediately follow the aerobic exercise with a resistance exercise -- for example, one minute of squats. Go back to another aerobic activity for two minutes, and continue the cycle.

VALLEY SCENE

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How do you make a fresh start and do it right this time?

Designing an exercise program isn't rocket science. Mixing it up a bit might be the key for you. While it's best to consult a fitness professional, you can certainly get moving -- and keep moving -- on your own.

Twenty to 30 minutes of any aerobic activity, such as walking, jogging, swimming, aerobic dance, or cycling.

Two sets (eight to 12 repetitions) of resistance-training exercises. Choose one exercise for each muscle group.

also break up your workout time with a fitness buffet. That is, ride the bike for 10 minutes, jump rope for five minutes, walk on the treadmill for 10 minutes, then try five minutes of stair-stepping. Still not inspired? Buy a new fitness video, or work out with a friend. *By Grace DeSimone*

It's not too late