



Having aches, pains, forgetfulness and fatigue? It may be your hormones not your age!

by David Pawsat, D.O.

It is amazing how often I hear family, friends and patients attribute their aches, pains, forgetfulness and fatigue to age. They shuck off losing their keys or waking up stiff to “getting old”. Although, the wear and tear of life inevitably slows us down, hormonal imbalances can accelerate by decades the normal natural process of aging.

How and where do hormones work?

Hormones work by sending instructions to cells to build, breakdown and repair. They play a role in reproduction, heart health, digestion, immunity, inflammation, bone health, muscle building, memory preservation, skin health and much more. *Every cell in the body is influenced by hormones.*

Do our hormones decline with age?

Many hormones decline as we age. This is a natural process and is part of the reason we age. Research is finding declines in hormones are associated with disease, disability and reduced quality of life and that replacement improves overall health.

What hormones are commonly associated accelerated aging?

All of our hormones are important in the aging process. Thyroid, estrogen and testosterone best illustrate how a decline affects our health.

Thyroid

Low Thyroid is an under recognized cause of forgetfulness, depression, fatigue, aches and pains. The thyroid is the accelerator hormone. It sends signals to tissues, organs and cells telling them to work at a faster rate. The body is constantly in a state of damage, depletion, repair and repletion. If thyroid hormone is low, the body works slow. If our body works too slowly, it cannot build, produce and replace needed substances fast enough for sustained health. Consequently, muscles become weak, joints stiffen and memory slows.

Thyroid treatment is a large part of my practice. It is common for patients to describe years of difficulty concentrating, poor memory, depression, fatigue, and joint pains. After thyroid proper hormone replacement, symptoms soon disappear.

Estrogen

Menopausal symptoms can begin as early as the late thirties. Imbalances in the sex hormones often progress slowly and symptoms begin to appear subtly. When estrogen levels begin to fall, forgetfulness aches and pains often appear. Replacing estrogen through natural means to levels that signal repair is a powerful way of alleviating these and many other symptoms of menopause.

Testosterone

Testosterone deficiency in men is associated with muscle loss, fatigue and weakness. A recent study of 2,587 men published in the October 23, 2006 issue of the Archives of Internal Medicine found low testosterone levels directly related to increased falls and reduced physical performance.

It is important to remember the rate at which we age is not simply a function of time, but also a result of physiologic imbalance. So next time you forget a name or have pains upon rising from a chair think of your hormones not your age.



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