

FEMALE HORMONE IMBALANCE - POLYCYSTIC OVARY SYNDROME

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is a common hormonal disorder that affects 5-10% of women of reproductive age.

Symptoms of PCOS:

- Obesity
- Acne
- Male-pattern body hair growth (on face or chest)
- Irregular or absent menstrual periods
- Infertility
- Ovarian cysts found on ultrasound tests
- Blood sugar imbalance (insulin resistance causing high blood sugar)
- Male-pattern hair thinning on the head

How is Blood Sugar Involved?

Blood sugar imbalance is a triggering factor in upsetting the delicate balance of hormones in a woman's body. Eating foods high in sugar and high in refined carbohydrates (white rice, pasta, bread, pastries, muffins, etc) causes the pancreas to release large amounts of insulin.

Women with PCOS are less able to effectively process refined carbs and sugars and their body's start to ignore the actions of insulin. This situation is called "Insulin Resistance." High insulin levels

then stimulate the ovaries to produce male hormones.

How Does Stress Play a Role in PCOS?

The adrenal glands are our main source for producing stress hormones and over-functioning adrenal glands can contribute to reinforcing the complex hormonal imbalance in PCOS. Women with PCOS tend to over-produce the stress hormone called "cortisol." Also, in this over-stimulated state, the adrenal glands can produce excessive amounts of male hormones. This is why stress management and treatments to support and balance the adrenal glands are a very important part of healing for women with PCOS.

Naturopathic Treatment of PCOS

Exercise and healthy dietary changes are foundational aspects of treatment aimed at improving blood sugar balance and rebalancing male and female hormones. For example, First Line Therapy is a healthy lifestyle program that has an immensely positive effect on PCOS. Nutritional supplements, herbal medicines, acupuncture and other natural therapies are also safe and effective ways to rebalance hormones.

SOURCE: **DR. AMANDA GUTHRIE**, BSc, ND, Naturopathic Doctor
28 Park Road (Yonge & Bloor), Toronto, ON M4W 1M1
416.944.9186 WholeHealthToronto.com

