



Lorraine Maita, MD

Hormone Effects

Any hormone if it's too high or too low will have side effects. You have been given prescriptions that may need adjustment along the way. We are all dynamic human beings and what you eat, drink, think, how much you sleep, exercise and stress as well as your environmental and toxic exposure will affect your hormones.

Depending on what prescription you are given, you may need to adjust the dose and when you come upon a dose that feels right, get your blood work drawn. It takes about 2 months for hormones to get their peak effect so be patient. Here are some guidelines to adjust hormones between visits. If symptoms do not remit, you must have blood work and schedule a consultation.

Estrogen

Estrogen is the hormone of Energy and growth. Think E = Estrogen = Energy + Growth. Too much estrogen will cause growth of cysts in the breast and/or ovaries, thickening and growth of the uterine lining and fibroids resulting in spotting, heavy and/or irregular periods, and widespread breast tenderness. Too much [estrogen](#)^[1] also leads to anxiety, irritability, insomnia, fluid retention, and other symptoms of PMS. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, stop the estrogen and progesterone until symptoms subside. When you restart, lower the estrogen OR raise the progesterone. Do **not** do both. If you were prescribed the estrogen patch, you can cut $\frac{1}{4}$ off the patch and take $\frac{3}{4}$ of the patch. Save the pieces to avoid waste and you can use them. If you were prescribed small doses of progesterone and told to take 1-4 capsules, increase the dose.

Progesterone

Progesterone is the hormone of Peace and calm. Think P= Progesterone = Peace + Calm. Too much peace and calm will leave you feeling groggy, foggy and depressed. Too much can also cause nipple tenderness. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms stop the progesterone until symptoms subside and then restart at a lower dose.

If you spot blood, take more progesterone or lower the estrogen. If you have a full period with bleeding, stop all hormones for 3-5 days to allow the uterine lining to shed. When you restart, either lower the estrogen or raise the progesterone.

Estrogen and progesterone balance each other and should be used together.



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Testosterone and DHEA

Testosterone and DHEA are the hormones of strength and well-being. Too much strength and well-being will cause acne, increased facial hair, hair loss and aggressiveness or being “testy.” If you are on both, stop both for a week. Restart only the testosterone at $\frac{3}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ the dose.

Once you stop hormones, the effects will go away. Be sure to get regular follow ups because early on, the effects are reversible but if you go too long without knowing your levels, cysts and fibroids can grow and they are not as quick or easy to reverse.