

PREMENOPAUSE WITH ESTROGEN DOMINANCE

CASE 1 PRESENTATION:

36 year old woman who is slightly overweight (BMI = 26) * complains of anxiety and irritability 10 days before her cycle. Fertility is not an issue in this case.

* CDC classifies BMI 25.0-29.9 - overweight

KEY SYMPTOMS:

- Allergies
- Decreased stamina
- Anxiety
- Nervousness
- Weight gain – hips
- Fatigue (moderate) AM and PM
- Constipation
- Hair loss (mild)
- Breast tenderness

HORMONE TEST	IN RANGE	OUT OF RANGE	UNITS	RANGE
E2 (Estradiol)	2.4		pg/ml	1.5-3.0
Pg (Progesterone)		90 L	pg/ml	100-600
Pg/E2 Ratio		37 L		50-200
Testosterone	32		pg/ml	20-50
DHEA-s	4.7		ng/ml	3-8
AM Cortisol	3.4		ng/ml	3-8
PM Cortisol	0.5		ng/ml	.5-1.5

ANALYSIS:

- Estradiol is right in range.
- Progesterone levels are just below normal suggesting anovulation and the ratio of estrogen to progesterone is low.
- Estrogen dominance symptoms are reported such as breast tenderness, anxiety and nervousness, weight gain – hips. NOTE: breast tenderness is thought to be “normal” by many women when in fact it can be corrected.
- Testosterone and DHEA-s are in within range.
- AM and PM cortisol are low normal. A rise in morning cortisol is needed for its immune and anti-inflammatory effects.

(www.endotext.org/adrenal/adrenal1/adrenalframe1.htm)

CLINICAL PEARLS:

Functional hypothyroidism (reported symptoms of hair loss, constipation and fatigue), is often due to a relative high estradiol and low cortisol.

TREATMENT CONSIDERATIONS:

- Progesterone replacement.
- Consider thyroid testing (TSH, free T3, free T4, TPO) if symptoms of fatigue, constipation, hair loss and depression continue.
- Adrenal support program is recommended that includes nutrition, herbal support and lifestyle changes:
 - Vitamins such as B5, B6, C and E are specific for improving adrenal function.
 - Herbal support: Siberian Ginseng (*Eleutherococcus senticosus*), Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*) Licorice Root (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) or *Rhodiola rosea* will provide adrenal and immune support and increase stamina.
 - Nutrition with whole foods is a place to start. All simple carbohydrates need to be avoided to reduce blood sugar surges. Avoid all caffeinated products (coffee, tea and colas). Hydration with purified water is essential.
 - Life style changes are the basis of all adrenal support.
 - Sleep (8-10 hours per night) is necessary for health neurotransmitter release and healing.
 - Relaxation techniques such as meditation, quiet music, or relaxing hobbies should take a priority in everyday living to reduce anxiety and irritability.
 - Moderate enjoyable exercise 3-5 X a week (walking, swimming, golfing, etc.) is balancing and healthy and additionally releases stress.

Reference for specific treatment protocols: Wilson ND, DC, PhD, James L, Adrenal Fatigue: The 21st Century Stress Syndrome, Smart Publications, Petaluma, CA 2001.