

Akasha Center

FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE, LLC.

520 Arizona Avenue, Santa Monica, CA 90401

t 310. 451. 8880 f 310. 451. 8803

www.akashacenter.com

Healthy Aging and Bioidentical Hormones in Women

Objective: Bioidentical Hormone Therapy is implemented to optimize hormone levels in the blood, helping to reduce symptoms associated with low levels of these hormones.

What is Healthy Aging?

Today's society wrongly links such symptoms as aches and pains, elevated cholesterol, fatigue, weight gain, low libido, insomnia and memory loss to the "aging process." The wisdom of being wiser, more grounded, more resolved and better in touch with who we are as we age get lost among all the negative connotations that aging elicits. But aging does not have to mean any of that. You can feel vital, sexy, happy and ready for your next decade as you age. The Akasha Center's compassionate and well-trained integrative practitioners disagree that these ailments are part of the natural aging process. While these symptoms are common, they do not have to be "NATURAL." As we age, the needs of our body change. Thus, how we treat the body needs to change as well. At Akasha, we teach you to listen to the body's symptoms to identify its needs and correct any underlying imbalances.

While hormones do naturally decline with age, other variables such as diet, lifestyle, mindset, environmental toxins, stress, past medication use, gut health and liver health all contribute to a less optimal aging process. As part of a healthy aging protocol and after determining if hormonal replacement is the right choice for you, our doctors may prescribe bio-identical hormones. This is in addition to promoting a low allergy, anti-inflammatory diet while also supporting the adrenal glands, thyroid, liver health and digestive tract. An exercise regime and mindfulness are also often prescribed to help support the balance of mind and body. Our talented team of doctors and practitioners are passionately committed to helping you age with vitality.

What are Bio-identical Hormones?

- Bio-identical hormones are identical to the hormones our body produces.
- They're derived from soy and yams and made into hormones that have the same molecular structure as our own hormones.
- Because they look the same as our own hormones, our body cannot tell the difference between the hormones we produce naturally and bio-identical hormones.
- They naturally integrate into our own body's physiology and help to restore hormonal and metabolic balance.

Are Bio-identical Hormones Safe?

Given in the right dosage, proper route of administration and following all established safety protocol, current research has found bio-identical hormone therapy to be a safe and effective way of restoring both hormonal and metabolic balance during the aging process. Much of the concern about hormone safety stems from the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) which studied the non-bio-identical hormones, Premarin and Provera. This study showed a small increased risk of breast cancer, heart disease, stroke, and pulmonary embolism. Premarin (synthetic estrogen derived from horse urine) and Provera (a synthetic form of Progesterone) are not identical to our own hormones, yet they bind to the same cells

Our Vision of Medicine. Your Path to Wellness.

like our own hormones. We know that oral estrogen is inflammatory and can increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, and pulmonary embolism. This is why we ONLY give estrogen transdermally (either through a cream or patch). Provera (the synthetic progesterone) is known to increase breast cancer which is why we NEVER prescribe Provera for hormone replacement.

Estrogen is considered a promoter of breast cancer but not the cause of breast cancer. In other words, if you have a susceptibility to breast cancer, estrogen may stimulate it to grow. 90% of breast cancer is due to unexplained causes. Some of the factors involved in cancer risk are genetics, lifetime exposure to estrogen and environmental carcinogens such as pesticides, plastics, chemicals, air pollution, impure water, and heavy metals. At Akasha, we integrate bioidentical hormone therapy into a comprehensive nutritional and lifestyle program aimed at decreasing the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. In addition to addressing hormones, we also recommend a whole foods diet, exercise plan, stress management tools and an appropriate nutritional and/or herbal supplemental program. If needed, we may also incorporate one of Akasha's psychotherapists, Chinese medical practitioners or massage therapists into your treatment program. In addition to a comprehensive preventative program, we monitor your hormone levels closely to make sure your levels stay within a healthy range and that your liver is metabolizing the hormones optimally.

Monitoring While on Bio-identical Hormones at Akasha:

Before starting bio-identical hormone therapy, all women must:

- Comprehensive family history to assess the risk of cancer and other diseases.
- Have a baseline hormone panel.
- A pelvic ultrasound and a recent mammogram
- Labs will be ordered 3-months after starting hormone therapy and every 6-months while on hormone therapy. Pelvic ultrasounds and breast imaging will be ordered yearly.

Benefits of Bio-identical Hormone Therapy

- Decreased hot flashes
- Decreased vaginal dryness
- Decreased osteoporosis
- Decreased urinary incontinence
- Decreased strokes
- Memory Improvement
- Prevention of Alzheimer's disease
- Protects against recurrent urinary tract infections
- Increased libido
- Weight loss
- Increased skin elasticity and fewer wrinkles
- Heart health
- Increased insulin sensitivity
- Improved sleep
- More energy

Risk of Bio-identical Hormone Therapy

- Spotting or heavier menstrual flow that may necessitate ultrasound, sonogram or a D & C for diagnosis.

- Uterine Cancer: Unopposed estrogen promotes uterine cancer. If you have a uterus and you are exposed to estrogen, you must also be taking progesterone to protect the uterus.
- Fibroid: If you already have fibroids, estrogen may stimulate fibroid growth.
- Possibly more breast cancer

CONSENT FOR BIO-IDENTICAL HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY

Statement of Patient:

I understand that along with the benefits of any medical treatment or therapies, there are both risks and potential complications to treatment, as well as to not being treated. Those risks and potential complications have been explained to me. I have not been promised or guaranteed any specific benefit from the administration of these therapies and no warranty or guarantee has been made regarding the results of treatment. I agree to proceed with treatment and to comply with recommended dosages. I further agree to comply with requests for ongoing testing to assure proper monitoring of my treatments that may include laboratory evaluation of all hormone as mentioned above levels or another diagnostic testing by an Akasha Center for Integrative Medicine provider, or another specialist. I agree to see my primary care, gynecologist, or other practitioners for regular monitoring and for preventative measures that may include but are not limited to complete physicals, rectal examinations and/or colonoscopy, EKG, mammograms, pelvic/breast exams, pap smears, etc. at least on a yearly basis. I agree to immediately report to my practitioner any adverse reaction or problem that might be related to my therapy. Those risks and potential complications have been explained to me, and I agree that I have received information regarding those risks, possible complications and benefits, and the nature of Bio-identical and other hormone treatments and have had all my questions answered. I certify this form has been fully explained to me, that I have read it or have had it read to me and that I understand its contents. I agree not to undergo any treatments unless I fully understand the treatment and have discussed possible risks and benefits. I voluntarily agree to undergo therapy described above.

Signature of **Patient** _____ Date _____

Name (PRINT) _____

Statement of Provider:

I have explained the risks and benefits of the therapy as detailed above. The patient has verbalized to me his/her understanding of those risks and benefits and gives verbal consent to initiate this therapy. I have explained the therapy, its intended benefits and risks, and possible reactions to the patient. I have confirmed that the patient has no further questions and wishes to initiate bio-identical hormone replacement therapy.

Name of **Provider** Explaining Procedures _____

Provider Signature _____