

Tuesday Minute Transcript

This Week's Topic

Suppressing Aromatase Activity



“Here’s one of the keys in addressing excess estrogen in both men and women. ”

Don't you love the "aroma" of fresh organic coffee being brewed? It is one of my favorite smells. Here's another "aroma" word which actually has nothing to do with smells or coffee but has caught my attention lately. The word is "aroma"-tase.

Aromatase is an enzyme that synthesizes estrogen. Both men and women have hormones called androgens, namely testosterone and androstenedione. Aromatase synthesizes estrone from androstenedione and estradiol from testosterone.

Donna DiMarco, a licensed nutritional consultant, presented an intriguing webinar called "Understanding Male Hormones" and, being a male, I wanted to understand some of the factors which limit my hormones. You can see the link below to



get the notes and hear it in detail.

Here's the very very short version. Two major classes of problems may exist. First, is the pituitary talking to the gonads and are the gonads listening? The second class of problems is a little trickier. It's called peripheral signaling.

Peripheral signaling refers to these questions: Does the body have what is needed to make the hormones? Is anything causing the hormone

pathway to shunt in another direction? Is there something in our lifestyle that affects the enzymes or pathways? Is the liver breaking down or clearing hormones properly? Finally, is the gut carrying away the cleared hormones in such a way that pieces of the hormone are not being reabsorbed?

Let's look at a few of the things which can cause the peripheral signaling to go astray. The big gorilla in the room is an excess of refined carbohydrates

which will increase insulin and ultimately cause insulin resistance. Insulin is a major signaling hormone. One of the factors that cause increases in insulin is excess cortisol. So right off the bat we have to support adrenals and manage diet.

Dr. Robert Maki, the developer of the Control IT weight management program, has commented on many occasions that he sees testosterone returning to optimal levels when insulin and cortisol levels are brought under control. Not only is fat storage a result of insulin resistance or metabolic syndrome but the enzyme aromatase is increased.

Remember, as the enzyme aromatase is increased so is estrogen increased. For men, we want to make sure we don't lose healthy androgens to estrogen. You may remember from another Tuesday Minute that excess estrogen is required for certain cancers to grow. So women with a history of breast cancer don't want to have excess estrogen. An interesting side note is that aromatase is expressed at higher levels in human breast cancer tissue than in normal breast tissue.

As you might imagine, there is an exciting growing field to find ways to inhibit aromatase. Leading scientists are looking for foods that are natural aromatase inhibitors. Shiu-an Chen, Ph.D., is the Director of the Department of Surgical Research at the City of Hope in Duarte, California. His laboratory has found grapes, mushrooms, and red wine contains chemicals that can suppress aromatase activity. Perhaps the most exciting however is a grape seed extract - procyanidin B, which according to Dr. Chens' research,

reduces up to 80% of aromatase. Biotics Research makes a product called Bio-Cyanidins which is a source of proanthocyanidins. It contains 15 mg of Pycnogenol® as well as 35 mg of a 95% pure concentrated form of OPCs.

A few clinicians have commented to me over the years that Bio-Cyanidins help with chronic inflammation. Also, as highlighted here on the Tuesday Minute, one of the components of Bio-Cyanidins is Pycnogenol® which has benefits with ADD and ADHD.

The first person to suggest the use of Bio-Cyanidins to reduce aromatase was Dr. David Brownstein. Donna DiMarco's webinar has reignited my interest. In her clinical work, she starts by balancing sugar levels and adding button mushrooms to the diet. Next, she uses Bio-Cyanidins. One, three times a day does a nice job to bring levels into balance upon retesting.

I want to thank Donna DiMarco for a great webinar and hope you make time to become an expert in this exciting field of hormone enhancement. As a baby boomer myself, I can attest that we are all looking for an additional edge as we age. There is a huge market for those of you that enjoy this type of detective work. But even if you don't have time to study hormones and their pathways, helping your patients reduce insulin and cortisol will have a profound effect upon their health.

Thanks for reading this week's edition, and thanks again for responding with your comments. We read each one and really appreciate hearing from you. I'll see you next Tuesday.