

## **Karen Martel Nutrition**

### Part 3

#### **Cheat Sheet: Medications/Supplements/Lifestyle**

##### ***Bioidentical Hormone Therapy***

Women need the perfect balance of estrogen, testosterone, and progesterone to live well and feel great. After a certain age, most women experience an imbalance in these important hormones, which can create a host of negative effects. Bioidentical hormones have anti-aging properties, and because they're identical to the human body, are safe and even beneficial.

##### **Bioidentical versus Synthetic**

Bioidentical hormones have the exact same chemical structure as those produced by the body, making them easily absorbed and put into action. Bioidentical hormones act exactly like a woman's own hormones, because they *are* exactly like a woman's hormones.

Non-bioidentical hormones, often called synthetic, are made of substances that are foreign to a woman's body. Synthetic hormones are not exactly like a woman's hormones — so it is not surprising that there are many unwanted effects from synthetic hormones, which are not experienced by woman using bioidentical hormones.

A large body of evidence shows that Bioidentical Hormone Therapy is safer and more effective than synthetic hormone replacement.

## □ **Progesterone**

Progesterone plays a major role in the body and has many vital functions in women of all ages. Bioidentical progesterone therapy helps balance estrogen, regulates blood sugar and thyroid hormone production, builds bones, converts fat into energy, and has a calming emotional effect. Progesterone is also a natural antidepressant, helps to initiate sleep, and is a natural diuretic. It can be administered by cream or a pill and may be combined with estrogen and/or testosterone to help achieve overall balance. Can be purchased online without a prescription in the US must be prescribed by an MD or ND in Canada.

## □ **Estradiol**

Estrogen is a woman's energy and builder. It improves bone mass, and within the brain, estrogen acts as a natural antidepressant and mood stabilizer. Estrogen can be administered as a pellet, a patch, a vaginal ring, cream, or spray. Must be prescribed by an MD or ND in Canada and US.

## □ **Testosterone**

Testosterone is not just important for men — it's vital for women to live a healthy and fulfilled life. Testosterone gives a woman mental clarity, lean muscle tone, a better ability to manage stress, and a heightened libido. Testosterone can be given as a pill, shot, pellets or cream based on a woman's needs and preference. Must be prescribed by an MD or ND in Canada and US.

## □ **DHEA (Dehydroepiandrosterone)**

DHEA is the most abundant hormone in your body, made by several different tissues. It is secreted primarily by the adrenal glands and is responsible for maintaining an anabolic or protein building state. It reduces cardiovascular disease by decreasing visceral fat, it stimulates the immune system, restores sexual vitality, improves mood, decreases cholesterol and body fat. DHEA can be taken in pill form. Can be purchased online without a prescription in the US must be prescribed by an MD or ND in Canada.

## □ **Thyroid**

### **T4 only medication**

Your thyroid is responsible for setting your metabolism, for regulating heath production, for producing sex hormones, for helping you sleep, for allowing you to lose weight, for helping you feel like yourself!

This is a big deal and most Doctors and patients get this wrong. The current paradigm is to treat hypothyroidism **ONLY** using Synthroid/levothyroxine.

While few do great on T4-only levothyroxine medications like Synthroid, commonly prescribed by mainstream doctors, many of us continue to feel horrible on these drugs.

### **Natural Desiccated Thyroid**

Natural Desiccated Thyroid is a glandular medication that comes from animal sources. It combines T4 and T3 so often people feel better on this because they are actually taking T3 hormone. T3 is more biologically active than T4.

### **T3 only**

Though most patients reflect that they get the best results from Desiccated Thyroid (NDT), there are some who find it difficult to get NDT, so their next best step has been adding synthetic T3 to their synthetic T4 for much better treatment results.

But there are other issues where patients have reported needing T3-only by itself, or adding T3 to a greatly lowered dose of NDT like one grain....issues ranging from having [high RT3 \(reverse T3\)](#) due to [low iron or a cortisol issue](#), to having [Lyme disease](#) (which promotes RT3), to having a rare deiodinase enzyme conversion problem (problems converting T4 to T3).

Working with a knowledgeable practitioner or myself is best when navigating what is best for you and your body.

Must be prescribed by an MD or ND in Canada and US.

## **Supplements**

### **Karen's Favorite Formulas for the Five Hormone Dysfunctions**

#### **1. Thyroid**

- AOR Thyroid
- Designs for Health Thyroid Synergy

#### **2. Insulin Resistance**

- Designs for Health Berberine Synergy
- Pure Encapsulations Glucose Support

#### **3. Low Estrogen**

- Meno Smart by Lorna Vanderhaeghe
- Designs for Health FemGuard Balance

#### **4. Low Testosterone**

- Designs for Health Libido Stim F
- Maca by Brad King

#### **5. High Testosterone**

- Designs for Health Berberine Synergy
- Estro Smart Plus Lorna Vanderhaeghe

#### **6. High Cortisol**

- Designs for Health Adrenal Complex
- AOR Ortho Adapt
- Integrative Therapeutics Cortisol Manager

#### **7. Low Cortisol**

- Mega Food Adrenal Strength Formula
- Integrative Therapeutics Adrenal Complex
- Designs for Health Adrenatone

## *Lifestyle/Exercise Recommendations*

### **High Intensity Interval Training HIIT**

HIIT is fantastic for anyone wanting to lose weight, including those who have been working out and have seen little/ no results or those pressed for time and want to achieve a lot in a short space of time.

HIIT session involves a warm-up interval, followed by several short, maximum-intensity efforts separated by moderate recovery intervals, and finally a cool-down interval.

Studies have shown this method to be more effective at burning fat and maintaining muscle mass than long periods of lower intensity aerobic workouts. Some studies state that HIIT burns 9x more fat than traditional cardiovascular exercise. HIIT burns a lot of calories during the workout, but where it differs from traditional cardiovascular exercise it that your metabolism stays elevated for more than 24 hours afterwards! This means that you keep burning calories after you have finished exercising.

It is excellent and safe for those with hormonal dysfunctions as discussed in this program.

Recommendation: 1-3x a week of 10 minute all out high intensity exercises.

### **Weight Lifting**

Weight lifting is a vital part of weight loss. Building and maintaining muscle helps to boost metabolism and prevent losing muscle mass as your body fat decreases. According to the Centers for Disease Control, weight lifting boosts metabolism by up to 15 percent.

What's more, when you strength train, you get more calorie-torching bang for your buck. Working with weights keeps your body working long after you've stopped lifting.

Because of hormonal changes that women experience as they get older, they naturally lose bone density, putting them at increased risk for developing osteoporosis. Routinely lifting weights slows bone deterioration and can help your bones grow stronger, help you maintain strength, and reduce your chance of developing — or slow the effects of — osteoporosis.

Weight lifting has also been proven to help insulin sensitivity.  
Recommendations 2-4x a week.

### **☐ Moderate Heart Rate Activity**

Yoga/walking in nature/hiking/stretching are all moderate heart rate activity. Alternating HIIT with restorative exercises are essential for our well being and hormone health.

Recommendation: 2-7x a week.

### **☐ Spiritual Practice**

Meditation/Prayer/Mindfulness/Grateful Journal/Journaling/Deep Breathing/Heart Math

Most people link health exclusively to the physical body. While the physical body is important, when we only associate health with our physical body, we fail to recognize other factors that contribute to our overall well-being. Spiritual health is inextricably connected to mental, emotional, social, and even physical health.

When our spirit is healthy, our body is healthier, our brain is healthier, our relationships are healthier. Our entire *soul* is healthier. Stress is the number one driving factor in hormonal dysfunction so the importance of lowering stress and finding better balance in our lives is of the utmost importance. Having a spiritual practice can have huge impact on lowering our stress levels and finding that balance.

Recommended 3-7x a week.