Bossier Healthcare for Women

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Hormone Pellets

What is pellet therapy?

Hormone pellet or implant therapy uses hormones derived from natural plant sources to replicate the body's normal hormonal levels. Estrogen pellets may be implanted alone or together with testosterone pellets.

Unlike typical oral and patch therapy - which may produce "roller coaster" hormone levels, resulting in mood and energy fluctuations for the woman - hormone pellet therapy is the only form of hormone therapy that provides sustained hormone levels throughout the day and night, for 3 to 6 months. without any "roller-coaster" effect.

Because the hormones used are completely natural, pellet therapy is ideal for women wanting the benefits of a natural hormone, without the drawbacks of a synthetic.

What are pellets?

Pellets contain a natural plant source of estrogen (a female hormone) and testosterone (a male hormone). The estrogen or testosterone utilized in the pellets is compounded by hand and formed into a pellet shape.

These pellets-, which are smaller than a grain of rice - are then placed into the fatty tissue under the skin using local anesthesia. They are usually placed in the upper outer quadrant of the buttock, or sometimes in the abdominal wall. The implantation procedure is easily performed in the office.

Why Should I choose pellet therapy?

Women who have had hormone implants have experienced the following:

1) The best method to increase bone density - up to 8.3% per year.
2) Assists in reducing menstrual migraines.
3) Helps with mental clarity.
4) Improves energy
5) Mood swings, anxiety, irritability and headaches eliminated.
6) Sex drive improved if testosterone pellet also implanted.

This method is convenient especially for women who have had hysterectomies. If the uterus is still intact, oral progesterone will need to be added.

The main drawback to the implants is that they would be difficult if not impossible to remove if the woman did not like it.
(Unlike the Norplant contraceptive implants, which are silastic and will never dissolve, hormone pellets are much smaller and dissolve slowly in the fatty tissue.)

However, the majority of women presently using the pellets are happy with them and find them to be the most convenient of all the estrogens, especially if they have previously tried pills, patches, creams or injections.

Some physicians hesitate to use the estrogen implant because it is not FDA approved for hormone replacement therapy. This is because it is a plant-derived estrogen (Estradiol), which in its pure form cannot apparently be patented. Therefore it is unlikely that a large US drug company will spend the millions of dollars necessary to have it approved by the FDA. However, it makes sense that if it is pure Estradiol (which in the oral, patch and injectable form IS approved by the FDA), and if it relieves symptoms of menopause, and if the woman using the implant maintains estrogen blood levels in the normal range, then it is probably true that this woman is receiving all the benefits of hormone replenishment therapy.

In summary:
The "pros" of pellet implants-

1) Convenience of not having to remember to take medication or change a patch or worry that a patch will wash or fall off.
2) **Blood levels are more consistent** than with oral forms or creams.
3) Bypasses the liver initially. This may be helpful to women who achieve adequate estrogen levels with oral forms but who continue to have vasomotor symptoms (“hot flashes or flushes") due to estrogen being converted to anti-estrogen substances in the liver.
4) Many women who have testosterone pellets implanted in addition will experience an increase in libido.

The "cons" of pellet therapy-

1) Requires an office visit every 6 months.

2) Temporary soreness at implantation site.
3) Although extensively used in Europe, pellets are not recognized as conventional therapy in the U.S. for women and consequently may not be covered by some insurance plans.

If you think that hormone pellet implants may be an option for you, please call my office at 212-7840 for more information.

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