

Elizabeth Lipski, Ph.D., CCN



See How Easily
Natural Healing Improves
Women's Health and
Menopause Problems

With special guest **Laurie Steelsmith, ND**, author of
*Natural Choices for Women's Health; How the Secrets of
Natural and Chinese Medicine Can Create a Lifetime of
Wellness*

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Transcript from the February 16th, 2006
Access to Health Experts Teleseminar Series

With Special Guest Laurie Steelsmith, ND, author of
*Natural Choices for Women's Health; How the Secrets of Natural and
Chinese Medicine Can Create a Lifetime of Wellness*

Topics:

- Learn about why you might want to do hormone testing
- Receive practical ideas on how to control hot flashes, and PMS
- Find out how iodine and hypothyroidism contribute to breast issues
- Learn about a test that helps determine risks of getting breast cancer
- Resolve problems with vaginal dryness, and vulvodynia
- Discover natural ways of dealing with chronic vaginal infections
- Practical approaches for fibromyalgia
- Find natural solutions for the insomnia of menopause
- Learn more about uterine fibroids
- Tools to get a heavy menstrual flow under control

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Price: \$9.95

ISBN: 0-9776161-6-9

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Thanks so much for agreeing to protect the value of the work that I do.

I wish you the best of health.
- Dr. Liz Lipski

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LIZ LIPSKI, PHD, CCN, is a clinical nutritionist, an expert on integrative medicine, a national speaker and media personality with expertise in digestion, diet and disease, and the author of **Digestive Wellness** (McGraw-Hill, 3rd edition, 2004). She is the founder and president of **Innovative Healing** and **Access to Health Experts**.

Dr. Lipski is board-certified in Clinical Nutrition, and earned her doctorate in Clinical Nutrition with a specialization in Integrative Medicine from the Union Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio. In private practice for more than two decades, she also hosted the talk show “Health Matters,” on KKCR radio, out of Princeville, Hawaii. She is a regular guest on radio shows nationwide, and has appeared as an expert for Fox-TV, ABC-TV, and on Chicago’s WGN-TV, among others. She is oft-quoted in national newspapers and magazines, including a recent stories in *Newsweek*, *Women’s World*, *Men’s Health*, *Alternative Medicine*, *Let’s Live*, *First for Women*, *Today’s Health and Wellness*, and many more.

She lives and practices in Asheville, North Carolina, offering in person and telephone consultations, as well as teleseminars.



Introduction

Iwould like to introduce my guest tonight. She is Dr. Laurie Steelsmith. We are going to be talking about her wonderful book, called *Natural Choices for Women's Health; How the Secrets of Natural and Chinese Medicine Can Create a Lifetime of Wellness*.

Before we start, I want to introduce my self. My name is Liz Lipski. I am the founder of Access to Health Experts (www.AccessToHealthExperts.com) and we sponsor this teleseminar series. At least once each month, you will have the opportunity to listen as I interview one of the top experts in integrative health care in the country. We focus on topics that can help you rebalance your biochemistry in a natural way so that you can feel better (which is what all of us want to do).

You are welcome to invite your friends, family and colleagues to join us. All they have to do to receive information is to give us their or your name and E-mail information at www.InnovativeHealing.com.

I have a doctorate and I am a board certified Clinical Nutritionist. I am also the author of *Digestive Wellness*, *Leaky Gut Syndrome*, and in the spring, a third book called *Digestive Wellness for Children*. I have been interviewed for hundreds of radio shows, magazines and newspapers. I am in private practice in Asheville, North Carolina. I do consultations with people all over the country by phone. For information about my services, you can go to www.InnovativeHealing.com.

The advice that Dr. Steelsmith and I are offering during this teleseminar is not meant to be a diagnosis of your health problem or a prescription for its treatment. We are providing general information about various health issues, and about generally accepted treatments. If you have a health care issue, you should seek the care of a competent professional. Also, many of you have been referred to this teleseminar by your health care professional, or your local book store or your health food store. My policy is to encourage you to support the people and the businesses that sent you

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You are
welcome to
invite your
friends, family
and colleagues to
join us.
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here. That means that, even though I do sell books and supplements on my website, I encourage you to purchase your products from the person or business that sent you.

I have muted your calls to make the call easier to listen to. I will be unmuting the call in about forty-five minutes so you can ask questions. If you are like me, you have questions that pop up in your mind during the call. Write them down so that when I open up the lines, you will be able to ask Dr. Steelsmith.

Dr. Laurie Steelsmith

With that, I would like to introduce our guest, Dr. Laurie Steelsmith. I am so happy to have you here! I love your book, the way that it blends eastern and western natural medicine. I haven't really seen a book that is like this.

Dr. Laurie Steelsmith:
Thank you!

Liz:
Dr. Steelsmith is a Naturopathic physician. She also holds a bachelor's degree in Natural Health Sciences and a doctorate of Naturopathic medicine from Bastyr University. She has also earned a master's degree in Acupuncture and has been in practice in Honolulu since 1993, and specializes in women's healthcare. Dr. Steelsmith is the author of the book that we're going to talk about tonight, which is *Natural Choices for Women's Health; How the Secrets of Natural and Chinese Medicine Can Create a Lifetime of Wellness*. She writes a monthly column for the Honolulu advertiser, which is the most read paper in the Hawaiian Islands. She has also appeared on many television and radio shows.

Several of the people who I know who have interviewed you, like Dr. Meg Jordan have said, "Oh! You're just going to love Laurie." So I would love to welcome you. Hello and I am so glad you're here!

Laurie:
Thank you! I'm glad I'm here, too.

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Liz:

The first question that I want to ask you is what inspired you to become a naturopath?

Laurie:

I had an experience in Norway when I was sixteen years old where I learned a new way of life. Shortly afterwards, I worked at a health food store. I met my first naturopathic doctor, and I remember saying to him, “I want to know everything you know. Where did you learn this?” It was the first time that I had ever heard about becoming a naturopathic physician. I did end up going out to the northwest to study at Evergreen State College, which was a perfect match for me. I was a very motivated kind of student.

I then went onto Bastyr. While I was at Bastyr, which is a naturopathic college, I ended up having a health crisis. This health crisis affected my arms and hands. It got so bad that I ended up being unable to do dishes (which is a great thing). I was also unable to braid my hair. I was told by the clinician at Bastyr University and another physician outside of Bastyr University that I had a borderline Lupus condition which just floored me. After that, I went on a health quest to find out what was the underlying cause of my condition. I did end up treating it both allopathically and naturopatically.

Allopathic medicine treated my symptoms and just made them worse. Allopathic means your traditional medicine. With naturopathic medicine, after much trial and error working with clinicians at Bastyr University, I found out that I was able to reverse these symptoms. I found that I was able to completely clear them up through creating digestive wellness –this is the name of your book, *Digestive Wellness*. I was able to clear up my symptoms also by cleansing, doing detoxification, identifying food allergies, decreasing stress in my life and basically the symptoms of the Lupus have never returned since that time.

Now, I do have to try not to be under too much stress because if I push it too hard, for too long, I will start to have a little bit of muscle aches and pains. That has been the long path that has led me here.



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In Chinese medicine, (hot flashes) are more related to a deficiency of yin energy.”

Liz:

That is such a great story. I was just talking to somebody today about Lupus, and I was saying, “You have to look at digestion first, along with food sensitivities.” So often, it’s not really the food that makes the big change, but it’s like we have problems with stress, our auto-immune system, and inflammation, and food, exercise, and stress management are the places that we can affect. We can’t change our genetics or other things about ourselves, but we really can affect these other factors.

Chinese Medicine and Hot Flashes

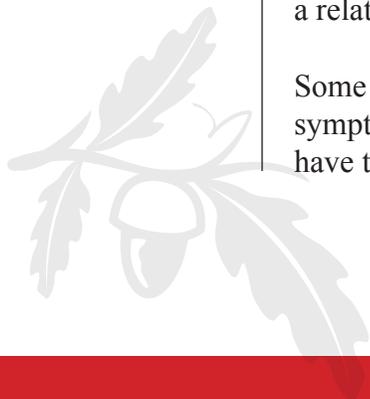
One of the things I love about your book is how you blend naturopathic medicine and Chinese medicine. I find, especially your writing about how the Chinese think of things, to be so poetic.

Laurie:

It is. It is lovely, actually. It is especially useful in situations that don’t really lend themselves to a scientific explanation. For instance, scientists still don’t really know what causes hot flashes in women. We do know that there seems to be, in some women, a surge of FSH, which is a follicle-stimulating hormone from the pituitary. However, that’s not always true with everyone. They do know that these are motor symptoms, that these hot flashes and night sweats can be related to low estrogen.

In Chinese medicine, it’s more related to a deficiency of yin energy. The yin energy can be due to stagnation of chi. Chi is our vital force. It’s our vital energy. Yin is the feminine aspect of chi. When we have a decrease in the feminine aspect of chi; we end up having more heat flaring. We have more fire flaring. You want to think of chi as having yin and yang--yin being the feminine and yang being the masculine – yin being water and yang being fire. We want to have those two things in balance with each other, but when yin ends up being more deficient than yang, we then have a relative excess of fire and that then causes hot flashes.

Some of the most affective medicines that I have found for treating these symptoms in women are Chinese herbal medicines. And women don’t have to boil up pots of herbs and drink some horrible-tasting stuff. There



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Not only will I use the Chinese herbs to help with a number of symptoms, but I then may choose from my naturopathic toolbox to take care of other things.

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are some very powerful, traditional medicines. They have been around for two to three thousand years that have been documented in China for nourishing yin. In fact, one of the products that I use is called Great Yin. It is so perfect that it is called that, because what it does is it helps to nourish the water aspect and thereby offset that relative excess of fire.

What I have done in my practice is incorporate both Western medical practice and Chinese traditional medicine. They work very well together. Not only will I use the Chinese herbs to help with a number of symptoms, but I then may choose from my naturopathic toolbox to take care of other things. One of the big issues – and I think we should probably talk about this in our discussion today – is vaginal and vulvar dryness.

Dealing with Vaginal and Vulvar Dryness

Laurie:

Women are not talking about this, but they're talking about it to me in my office. Honestly, when you think about water being more deficient in the body as women start to head into peri-menopause, you want to nourish that water. We want to think about our hormones as being yin in nature – our estrogen, our progesterone. They are much more yin in nature – more moistening.

The tissues of the vulva, vagina, urethra, and the clitoris are all estrogen-dependent tissues. What I have seen in a lot of my peri-menopausal and post-menopausal women is that the tissues become more dehydrated at the vulva at varying rates. Some women at fifty-five or sixty years old have been menopausal for five to ten years, and they say, “you know what? I can make love, I don't have any tenderness, and I'm fine.” I have other patients who really can't have intercourse at all because the tissues have become too thin and dry. Other patients are complaining of alternating yeast infections and then bacterial infections because once the estrogen levels start to decrease at these vulvar tissues, the tissues can then become very thin and the pH of these tissues change. Organisms can better thrive there. We're exposed all the time to E. coli, for instance, which, most of us know, is that bacteria that can create a urinary tract infection. We don't always get a urinary tract infection from E. coli, right? We get it when



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Some symptoms associated with a deficiency of yin . . . are: insomnia, agitation, anxiety, dry lips, thirst, . . . and feeling on edge.

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we're stressed out or when we've had intercourse. In fact, one of the types of urinary tract infections is called "honeymoon cystitis."

Many women who have had multiple episodes of intercourse in a row have this. That urethra is only a few millimeters from the vaginal opening, and just from the trauma of the tissue then E. coli can thrive. What we want to do in peri-menopausal or post-menopausal women who are experiencing some vaginal dryness, is to do what we can to keep these tissues hydrated. We can look at doing this from an herbal perspective, and we can also look at this from a natural hormone perspective. What I recommend to women who, for instance, have had breast cancer, or who are concerned about breast cancer who really don't want to use any kind of hormones at all, is to use ginseng. They can take this as long as they're not having lots of hot flashes, because if they are, the ginseng can actually make them hotter. It is really important to go with American ginseng if we're going to use ginseng at all in these patients who tend to be more deficient in the yin. They don't have as much yin, not as much moisture. It's really important that they also avoid foods that are hot and spicy because that's just going to put more fuel on the fire.

The Effects of Yin and Yang Foods

Liz:

Laurie, can you tell us more about yin and yang foods? I'm sure that many people are unfamiliar with this concept.

Laurie:

In your handouts you do have a list of foods that are cold, cooling and neutral. Pay attention to that. Even some warming foods are okay if you're having hot flashes or you're having insomnia. Some of the other symptoms associated with a deficiency of yin or a deficiency of water are the insomnia, agitation, anxiety, dry lips, thirst, feeling visceral-motor flushes, power surges, feeling hot flashes or night sweats (sweating at night), and feeling on edge. All of those things are symptoms of not enough water, not enough yin. What we want to do to nourish that yin is use the American ginseng. This ginseng will also help with the vulva and vaginal dryness – it will help to re-hydrate those tissues. We also want to



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For women
who feel like
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delicate, then
I will use an
estriol vaginal
cream.”

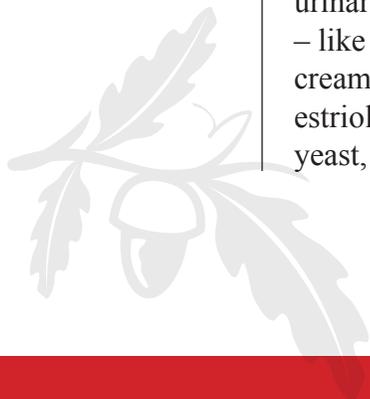
eat foods that are much more cooling in nature and avoid the hot and spicy foods, such as garlic, ginger. We would also want to change our lifestyle so that it is more nurturing. Instead of doing “hot yoga,” or Bikram yoga, or things that are hot and expansive such as surfing big waves in Hawaii. Let’s see, what are you guys doing out there?

Liz:
Skiing, maybe.

Laurie:
Skiing, yes! Okay, downhill skiing versus let’s say more of a relaxed yoga class. We would want to do things that are much more nurturing and nourishing, to not only our bodies, but also to our spirit. We could also just incorporate more of those activities and it would be more nurturing. When we sweat, we lose fluids. We want to make sure that we also replenish with lots of water and electrolytes. Looking also at the vulva and vaginal dryness, from the other herbalist perspectives that I use in my practice, some black cohosh vaginal suppositories can be quite affective for women. I also use vitamin E suppositories in coco butter, so it makes them pretty friendly. For some women, they actually use these before they make love because it helps the tissues and they feel better. It’s a very nice lubricant.

On the other end of the spectrum, for women who start to have more symptoms where they feel like the tissue has become very delicate, very thin, then I will use an estriol vaginal cream. Estriol is 72 times weaker than estradiol. Estradiol is our strongest estrogen. It is the primary estrogen in young women. We also have another estrogen called estrone. Estrone is twelve times weaker than the estradiol. Estriol is this weaker form of estrogen. It is 72 times weaker than the estradiol, and it is the primary estrogen that supports the vulva, vagina and urethra.

For women who are already experiencing incontinence, getting a lot of urinary tract infections, and tend to fluctuate between a bacterial vaginosis – like Gardinella – to a yeast vaginosis, I will use this estriol vaginal cream to stabilize them. It takes a little bit of an art to do it because the estriol can seed yeast. You really want to try to make sure you treat the yeast, and then you can introduce some estriol. Then, if you want to get



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I have had patients in their early sixties who simply can't cross their legs, they can't wear jeans.

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rid of the yeast, you can introduce some estriol, completely get rid of the yeast, and maybe introduce a little bit more. The estriol, because it is so much weaker, is a much safer estrogen. It is much safer than the estradiol. I know a lot of women are given a Premarin cream, but it's much safer than that because it has a very low dose, very little systemic absorption, although you will have some. It is also the primary estrogen in pregnancy. It is a very friendly estrogen for women who need it. I think women need to know about this. I have had patients in their early sixties who simply can't cross their legs, they can't wear jeans. You know, when you're in medical school, they talk about vulva and vaginal dryness, and it's a kind of a text book thing. Then you get into practice and you start to say, "Oh, my goodness! This is a very real event for women, and nobody is talking about it."

I think, girlfriends, we need to talk about it because it is a very real thing.

Liz:

It is a very real thing. I think a lot of women feel like they are they only one who have this problem.

Laurie:

I think you're right. It's kind of embarrassing, and they don't want to talk about it, but it is very important to address because if you're experiencing vulva and vaginal dryness at maybe 10%, you want to deal with it then. You don't want the tissue to become so dehydrated that you have to use much higher dose hormones in order to reconstitute the tissue. As such, we're looking at vulva and vaginal issues.

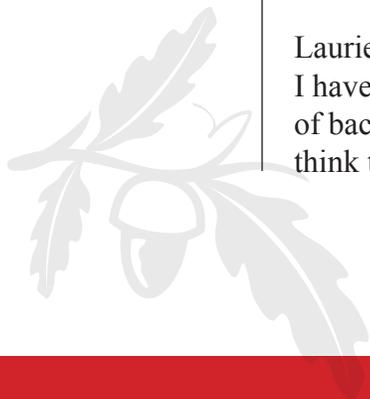
Natural Approaches to Vaginal Bacterial Infections

Liz:

Can you tell us a bit about bacterial vaginosis?

Laurie:

I have seen a lot of my menopausal patients and end up with an imbalance of bacteria in the vulvar and the vaginal area. I just want to stress this. I think that it is very important that women know this. Often, you'll end up



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going on a drug called Flagyl and it's used to kill off parasites, if you have Giardia, it's also used to kill off the bacterial vaginosis or the Gardinella—it's a specific kind of bacteria – and this drug is very toxic to the liver. There are natural ways to treat this bacterial vaginosis with golden seal, vaginal suppositories, tea tree oil suppositories, and a douche that is called Tanasem. This douche is a zinc tanate. It is very effective at clearing up bacterial vaginosis. However, once we have cleared the bacterial vaginosis, it is very important that we re-introduce a specific kind of lactobacilli or acidophilus and it's a hydrogen peroxide-producing acidophilus that will prevent the bacteria from thriving again.

The reason why women end up with bacterial vaginosis is because the pH of the vagina has shifted to a much more alkaline state, allowing a naturally occurring organism to thrive. So we want to re-acidify the vaginal and vulvar tissues by using this friendly bacterium, just like after you have an antibiotic. If you take an antibiotic – let's say you have a raging sinus infection – that was the right course of action, and what you want to do after that so that you don't end up with an imbalance of intestinal flora or yeast, then you want to go ahead and introduce good, friendly bacteria into your intestines so that you can prevent yeast infections and other opportunistic bacteria from thriving.

This particular kind of bacterium can be bought at the health food store. It's a vaginal bacterium called Gynatren that usually comes with 14 pills per bottle. One bottle is for oral use and the other bottle is for vaginal use.

Liz:

I was going to ask you, because sometimes it's wonderful to use probiotics as a vaginal suppository. They work really well.

Laurie:

Yes, they do.



Vulvar Pain in Younger Women

Liz:

While we're on this topic, I have been seeing a lot of women – young women – lately with something called “vulvodynia,” which is kind of equivalent for a young woman. It's very painful and the vulva is really irritated and inflamed, and making love is nearly impossible. What do you have to say about that?

Laurie:

I have a number of patients who have had this condition. In some cases, I have had great success, and in other cases I'm still knocking my head against the wall. It's a condition where women do find that sometimes it is excoriating to urinate. The tissue feels excoriated – it feels raw and irritated. There is a wonderful foundation called “The Vulvar Pain Foundation” for women who want to know about this. There is a test that can be done to measure urinary oxylates which I have done in the past with patients. They're thinking that urinary oxylates can irritate the vulvar tissues, and those women who do not process and deal with oxylates very well in their body end up with much higher levels in their urine. This, in turn, can irritate the vulvar tissues. Quite frankly, I think that the vulvar tissues are already irritated and the oxylates further irritate them. I think that it wasn't always that these women had this problem. I think that they have some sort of micro-organism like mycoplasma, or chronic ureaplasma that has infected their bladder, the mucous membranes of the vulva and the vagina, and because it is very hard to culture and test for these organisms, I think that a lot of these women have gone untreated.

If you think about the inside of your mouth, you know what it's like when you burn the inside of your mouth or your tongue when you have a hot drink? Well it's almost like the protective mucous membrane in these women has been altered in such a way that they are more prone to yeast infections, bacterial infections, and they tend to have more white blood cells, sloughing of the vaginal wall, and they tend to have more discharge, and pain at the vulva. I found something that worked well for two particular women. One of them is a post-menopausal woman, and the other is a young woman – both with vulvodynia.

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Remember I talked about that the Tanafem douche? (Available through health professionals/Scientific Consulting brand) These women have done well with it because it astringes the tissue. It dehydrates the tissue and whatever is in there irritating them, it's almost like we cut the grass. If the grass is growing two feet tall, we cut it down. Then they're fine for a little while, and then it seems like the grass kind of grows back. Then we do the Tanasem, and it's like we cut the grass again and they are okay again. So I don't think that it's getting at the underlying problem. I think that they need something that is more specific to the kind of mycoplasma, or ureaplasma, or whatever it is that is affecting their tissues there. I know that there is so much more than just some kind of spinal misalignment, or imbalanced bowel flora. There is much more going on. I don't think that anyone has really unearthed the actual underlying cause.

Liz:

I don't, either. One of the things that I have found sometimes helpful is a high dose of folic acid.

Laurie:

Great!

Liz:

This is because folic acid is so protective of mucous membranes and the inside of the vagina and vulva are mucous membranes. For some women taking as much as 10 mg a day of folate can be really helpful. This is based on the research of Butterworth in the 1980's. There is a great product called Folixor that is pretty widely available that contains 10 mg of folic acid in one tablet.

Hormone Testing for Peri-Menopausal Symptoms

We also had so many questions about peri-menopausal symptoms: hot flashes, insomnia, depression, so can you talk a little bit more about menopausal symptoms?

Laurie:

Oh, sure! I've got lots to say. One of the things I think that would be



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important for every listener is to have your hormones tested. If you're starting to have hormonal imbalances, go see a naturopathic doctor or holistically-oriented medical doctor. Although it's not my first choice, even just get a blood test – I know I say in my book that it's not really the best test because you're only able to test what's in the blood, but unable to test the free forms. Ideally you want to get either a saliva test or a 24-hour urine test. I like the 24-hour urine test best. It's a little humbug because you have to test your urine for 24-hours and then send it off to a lab. A saliva test, if you're using sublingual hormones, won't be very good for you because you will have contamination.

The 24-hour urine test is much better. In addition to that, I also will run a blood test just because I think that it gives a snap shot of where the patient is at the time. Ask your doctor to run a serum estradiol, a DHEA-S (so that's the sulfate form), testosterone, and it's a good idea to run a free testosterone, a total testosterone, and a percentage free testosterone. I also ask patients to have a progesterone test done. These are the four most important hormones. For women who have infertility, it's a little different issue. I also run cortisol tests and other tests as well. In fact, for just about every peri-menopausal patient I see who is tired, strung out, unhappy, and being ruled by hormones instead of the other way around, I do order an adrenal stress index.

Liz:
Good idea.

Laurie:
This is a great test because it's a saliva test. It measures cortisol – which is our stress hormone – and it's the hormone that, - you know when, in biology class, they talked about when a tiger is chasing you, you're going to release adrenalin. Well when you feel like a tiger is stalking you, you feel like it's stalking you all day, that's when you release cortisol. Cortisol is your stress hormone. When you release cortisol for long periods of time, high amounts of it, you end up gaining weight, creating hormone havoc with your whole body. Eventually what happens is that your adrenals kind of poop out. They get tired, and they don't want to keep releasing all that cortisol. Then, women just feel tired. They feel despairingly tired.



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 of your cycle
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 levels tend to be
 peaking.

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They feel like they just don't have the chi or the energy to just get on with their lives and do what they need to do. The reason why I order this adrenal stress index is that it will measure your cortisol in the morning, 8AM, Noon, 6PM and Midnight. That way you can see what the person's circadian rhythm looks like.

For women who have night shifts – nurses, etc. – their circadian rhythm is just really off the charts. For women who have a lot of anxiety, often I'll see it quite high or I'll see it extremely low. For women who just feel like they're agitated all the time, sometimes the cortisol can be okay, but then their DHEA will be really low. The DHEA will also be measured on the saliva test as well as progesterone, and insulin – which is a very important hormone to measure too. If you have high levels of cortisol for long periods of time, you will become more insulin resistant – which means that your cells don't allow glucose to be taken up very efficiently - they don't allow the insulin to shuttle the glucose or the sugar inside cells, so instead it just goes off to a fat cell to be stored. We don't really want to go down that path.

Because it measures all these different parameters, I think this test is very useful in assessing where the woman is and helping me in developing a therapeutic protocol in helping to support her. When I get these results back, then we make a decision on what we want to do. Also, this test gives women feedback, and it tells them, “You're not crazy. You have low estrogen, and that's why you're not feeling good,” or “You have low DHEA,” and then we can create a therapeutic plan based on the results and I think that it also is very affirming for women to see, “Oh! It is my hormones.” If you are a menstruating woman, you definitely want a test on day 21 of your cycle. That would be most ideal, if you have a typical 28-day cycle most of your life. If you've had a 40-day cycle, then don't test on day 21, you want to test on maybe day 34 or 35. You want to try to test in that second half of your cycle where hormone levels tend to be peaking.

Liz:

So people can ask their doctors, are there specific labs that you might recommend?



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For women who are experiencing insomnia associated with low hormones, especially in the second half of their cycle, progesterone will often help alleviate a lot of symptoms.”

Laurie:

I have them all in the back of my book. They're all there, and I also have tools to help correct a lot of these symptoms – mostly natural medicines; herbal, homeopathic, Chinese, and the natural hormonal medicines.

Check out the questionnaires in *Natural Choices for Women's Health!*

Liz:

One of the great things about your book is that you have so many tools that a woman can use to try to figure out what is going on with her. I love the sections on wood, metal, and the five elements. There are so many great tools and questionnaires, so I encourage everybody to buy Dr. Steelsmith's book. Her book is called, *Natural Choices for Women's Health*, and I think that it's widely available. If your local bookstore doesn't have it, they can get it in an instant.

Insomnia and Memory Glitches of Peri-menopause

Did you want to say anything more about insomnia or hot flashes?

Laurie:

Let's talk a little bit about hypothyroidism and the adrenals and progesterone and insomnia. I am forty-two, and I really shouldn't be having hot flashes yet, but I'm having some right before my period - about two or three days before my period, I just can't get to sleep as easily even though I'm exhausted. I think I know too much because I start to analyze it. I can see what's happening: my progesterone levels are starting to drop.

Taking progesterone is not for everybody. I don't think it's the latest panacea. I don't think that every woman needs to be on it. I think we've seen a lot of books that have come out that say, "Let's all bow to the progesterone cream." In fact, progesterone is a hormone and it does have effects on the liver, and not every woman with PMS should be on progesterone. However, there is a time and place for it. For women who are experiencing insomnia associated with low hormones, especially in the second half of their cycle, progesterone will often help alleviate a lot of these symptoms: agitation, mind going too fast, and other such symptoms.



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I want my patients to exhaust all the possibilities before they take hormones.”

Before you use progesterone, please, please test. I think it's very important to test and make sure that you really need it.

The second thing is that there are a lot of other things that can help bring cortisol down. That is the hormone that we mentioned that you release from our adrenal glands when we feel like a tiger is stalking us all day, or when you feel like you're running behind the bus all the time. One of the products that I use that I think is very effective (and I also have this in the Chapter 11 of my book – More on Mental Health), is called phosphatidyl serine. This product can not only help with your memory, but it can also be very calming. It has helped a lot of my patients with anxiety and trouble sleeping at night. Something as simple and safe as phosphatidyl serine should be tried before you jump into using hormones.

I want my patients to exhaust all the possibilities before they take hormones unless a patient comes in asking for them, crying, feeling mentally unglued and emotional (crying at commercials, for example). These are classic low estrogen signs. In cases like that, I may start on a very low dose of what's called Tri-est or Bi-est, which are combinations of those estrogens that I mentioned earlier – the estradiol, estrone and estriol. What is interesting about using these natural hormones is that in combination, we only use 10% of the estradiol, 10% of the estrone, and 80% of the product is estriol, so again, that's safer, weaker estrogen.

Now getting back to progesterone, it is a nervous system relaxant. So it is really important not to use it in the morning. I have had so many patients come to see me who had read maybe Dr. John Lee's book on progesterone (there are a lot of different books out there), and they would start slathering it on first thing in the morning, then by ten o'clock in the morning, they just feel like they want to go to sleep. Well, it's because it's a nervous system relaxant and we really want to make sure that if you're using progesterone, first of all that you need it, and if you're using it, then you only want to use it in the evening.

There are many other things that can help with insomnia. Eating a good meal at night, and making sure you have adequate protein will also help to bring that cortisol level down and help you stay asleep for a longer period of time. Those are some quick, easy things that women can do – making



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The nervous system and the muscles cannot relax unless they have enough magnesium.”

sure they have enough protein. There are some other things as well such as: don't exercise late at night, and try to create a calming environment at home. If you need natural progesterone, you can use it. Some of the other botanical medicines that I sometimes use are: the Chinese herbs, one formula of which is called "Calm Spirit." It has herbs in it which are very nourishing and calming to the nervous system. Other herbs people may have heard of before such as skullcap, valerian and passion flower. Even though everyone has maybe heard of this, it is still very powerful. Often, I think that people want to grab at something new. "Oh! The newest thing I think is going to be even better," but actually, some of these tried and true herbal formulas are very effective and very, very useful. They can help women through a difficult, stressful, tense time in their lives without having to go onto valium, or trasadone, or some of these other pharmaceuticals.

Liz:

One of the things that I love to use, which is so basic for relaxation, is magnesium or calcium and magnesium. The nervous system and the muscles cannot relax unless they have enough magnesium.

Laurie:

Excellent.

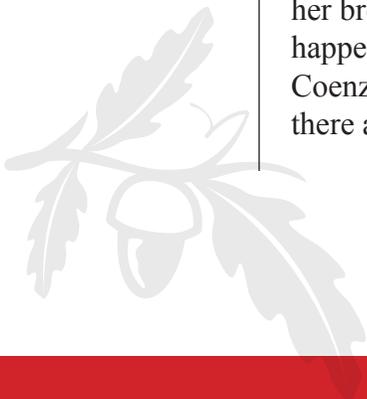
Breast Health and Breast Cancer

Liz:

Other questions that came in were about breast health and breast cancer. One question that was specific was about the use of CoQ10, 300 mg daily to help prevent spread of breast cancer.

Laurie:

There was a case where a woman had used 300 of Coenzyme Q10 to treat her breast cancer and her cancer went into remission. I think that what happened from that case is that everybody started prescribing 300 mg of Coenzyme Q10. I do put my patents on some Coenzyme Q10, but I see if there are more important things.



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Folic acid could also help with the formation of the friendlier estrogens as well as the omega 3 fats found in flax, flax oil, as well as melatonin.
 ”

Liz:
 Like what?

Laurie:
 First of all, another test that I recommend in my book is a test for your breast health. This test is also a 24-hour urine test, and it will measure your estrogen metabolism. Now most breast cancers are due to some relationship to estrogen – whether it was the estrogen which started the cancer or estrogen-receptive positive cancers, or if estrogen mimickers or toxins increase cell proliferation. I think it’s really important to assess your liver’s ability to conjugate or break down estrogens because in the liver, your estrogen can either convert into these happy, friendly antioxidant estrogens, or they can convert down into these unfriendly, more carcinogenic estrogens. Ideally, I want every patient that I have to take this test. The test costs around \$200, so it’s a little pricey. It is a 24-hour urine test, and it’s a little bit humbug to do, but for women who do it, it gives me a lot of good information.

I recommend that my patients use indole-3-carbinol (I3C); it is a compound found in cruciferous vegetables that helps promote the formation of the friendly and favorable estrogens in the liver. We want to stay away from those unfriendly estrogens – we don’t want to give them a chance. We definitely want to try to push the pathway up towards the friendly estrogens.

(Note from Liz: I just read an article suggesting that using DIM (di-indolymethane) rather than indole-3-carbinol is preferable. Although there is much research on the cancer protective benefits of I3C, there is some research that shows the opposite. DIM works in much the same way, is also from cruciferous vegetables and is safer. It’s also widely available.)

It is interesting that you had mentioned that folic acid can be so helpful for these women with vulvodynia because folic acid could also help with the formation of the friendlier estrogens as well as the omega 3 fats found in flax and flax oil, as well as melatonin. What we want to do is take things that can really push this pathway. We want to try to avoid forming the other kinds of estrogens. What is interesting is that if you form one of the



unfriendly estrogens and you have enough iodine around, it should then slip into estriol, which is our friendly estrogen.

Liz:
Interesting.

Iodine

Related to Breast Health and Sub-Clinical Hypothyroidism

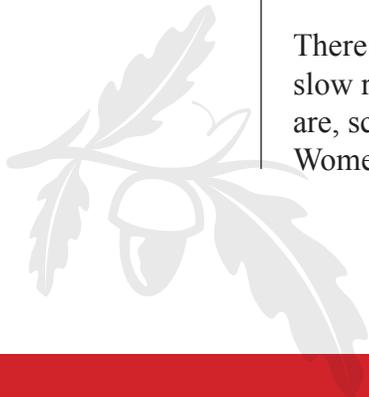
Laurie:
Iodine is also very beneficial for breast tissue and for estrogen metabolism.

Liz:
There is a simple home test you can do to see if you are iodine deficient. Basically you just put some iodine on your forearm, and in somebody who is really healthy, you'll still be able to see that red-orange color in your skin after about 24-hours, but for most of us, it disappears in just a few hours, which means that we really need more iodine in our supplements, or in our diet.

Laurie:
Right, so eating seaweed helps with that. Seaweed is a really great breast food. The other thing that I think is very important for breast health (also in my book) is to take the thyroid questionnaire. I use this in my practice and I felt compelled to put it in my book because it has been so useful to me. When I think someone might have a sub-clinical hypothyroidism, (and that means that it's not overtly evident on blood tests – in fact their blood tests look normal), but they have so many symptoms of hypothyroidism: dry skin, constipation, hair falling out, fatigue, easy waking, increased cholesterol despite the fact that they exercise and eat well, feeling tired and yet agitated.

There are a number of symptoms that women can have. They can have slow reflexes, little bumps on the back of their arms where their triceps are, scaly, dry skin, and puffiness where they retain water very easily. Women who tend to eat very little but gain weight so easily is a symptom

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beneficial for
breast tissue
and for estrogen
metabolism.
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 A sub-clinical condition means that it hasn't yet fully manifested, but you're experiencing a lot of symptoms of a disorder.
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as well. All these symptoms direct me toward having them take the hyperthyroid questionnaire.

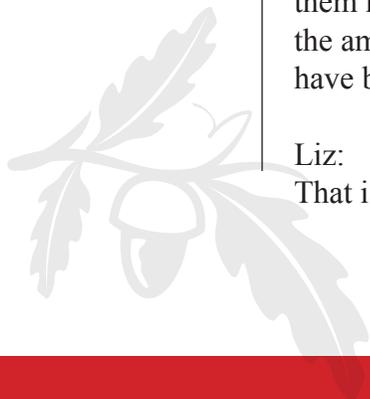
If the hyperthyroid questionnaire looks positive, then I'll also have them do a basal body temperature. A basal body temperature that is consistently below 97.8°F is suggestive of a possible sub-clinically low thyroid. What I mean by that is that if you have health at the top of the staircase and disease at the bottom, well you may not be at the bottom of the staircase, but you're certainly not at the top. You're somewhere there in the middle, ½ of the way down or ¾ of the way down, you simply haven't manifested it yet.

Remember when we started talking earlier and I mentioned that I was a borderline Lupus? Well I wasn't yet at the bottom of the staircase, but I certainly wasn't at the top of the staircase. I couldn't do dishes, halleluiahs, but I had problems writing essays, running track, and I had pain all the time. That, clearly, is not at the top of the staircase. A sub-clinical condition means that it hasn't yet fully manifested, but you're experiencing a lot of symptoms of a disorder.

In patients who have sub-clinical conditions, I put them on a product that helps not only with giving them some iodine, but also gives them nutrition for their thyroid (which is really important). It can also help with the conversion of the inactive form of thyroid hormone called T4. It would have to go to the liver and convert to T3. Of course, I always start my patients off on nutritional supplements that can help with these conversions. There is an Ayurvedic herb, called guggulipid that they have found can help with this conversion in animal studies. The T4 to T3 conversion in the liver is helped along. By using this, the patients that I treat have more active T3, which is the active form of thyroid hormone. Often, just by giving them the guggul-lipid, with the iodine, a little cystine and selenium, these patients feel so much better and I don't need to give them natural thyroid hormone which is your Armour thyroid, I decrease the amount of natural thyroid hormone prescriptions by about 80% since I have been using this protocol.

Liz:

That is very exciting because to me, the thyroid is one of the dominos that



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By giving the body the nutrition and tools it needs to function optimally, you not only get rid of symptoms, but you also really treat the underlying cause.

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seems to fall when we're stressed out. I often think that the adrenal and the thyroid are like two horses pulling a wagon, and when the adrenal gets tired, then the thyroid tries to pull that wagon, then the thyroid gets tired and they're both pooped out and the wagon is not going anywhere.

Laurie:
Perfect.

Liz:
Looking at both of them is so helpful. I love your approach because you're not jumping right into using Armour thyroid or other natural thyroids.

Laurie:
It's so much better to give the body the tools it needs to work better. That's what natural medicine is really about – whether it's Chinese medicine, or naturopathic medicine. First of all, it's about listening to the symptoms instead of just, “oh, I have a headache,” taking an aspirin and having it go away, or, “oh, I'm having irregular menstrual cycles, let's just go on the pill,” and the symptoms go away, but the underlying problem has never been addressed.

By giving the body the nutrition and tools it needs to function optimally, you not only get rid of the symptoms (because those are the red flags from your body saying, “hello! I'm here and there's something out of balance!”) but you also really treat the underlying cause. You can go off and have a higher quality of life.

Fibromyalgia

Liz:
Absolutely. Do you want to say anything about fibromyalgia before I open up the phone lines?

Laurie:
When we're looking at fibromyalgia, we have to address the gut. We have to look at the GI tract. Do we have abnormal flora in the intestines? Do we have food allergies? I saw that you did interview Dr. Russell Jaffe who is President of ELISA/ACT Labs. That is probably the best lab in the world.

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They will identify which food or foods you are allergic to. You can also do an elimination challenge test where you eliminate foods from your diet and then reintroduce them. I think that's one of the corner stones of fibromyalgia treatment. I also often use acupuncture because these patients have quite a bit of stuck chi. I also look at it as a mitochondrial problem where I recommend Coenzyme Q10 and acetyl L-carnitine. Things are going to help to mobilize toxins out of the cells.

A Couple of Announcements

Liz:

Great. I'm going to make a couple of announcements and then I'm going to unmute the line so that people can ask you questions because I know people are desperate to do that. Just a couple of quick things: I wanted to let you know about our next teleseminar which will be Wednesday; March 15, 2006. I will be interviewing Dr. Michael Murray, who is another naturopathic physician, about his new book called *The Encyclopedia of Healing Foods*. I hope you will join us because food really is our best medicine. It is what our bodies are made of.

I also want to remind you about our annual subscription service to Access to Health Experts. If you love these teleseminars but miss them, or find yourself buying the transcripts over and over, you may want to purchase a subscription. You will be automatically signed up for every teleseminar and you will also receive downloads of the audio and written transcripts every month. That way you can listen to them or read them and share them with friends. For information about that, go to www.AccessToHealthExperts.com.

If you go to www.InnovativeHealing.com, you will find that we have put up a couple of new supplement stores. We now have a Metagenics store and a Vital Nutrients shop. Again, if you just go to the website, you can set up an account on these sites and order your supplements. With that said, I am going to open up the phone lines.



Questions and Answers

Uterine Fibroids

Caller:

I have a question about fibroids. Should they be surgically removed or just let them fade away as we age?

Laurie:

It depends. Fibroids that are not causing heavy bleeding or impingement on the blood flow to your pelvis or legs, or that are small, can be left alone. For women who are bleeding extremely heavily and when it is compromising their heart and circulation, they have severe anemia; those people may need to have it surgically removed. There is a time and place to have surgery and there is a time and place where you don't need to. It really depends on size, and location.

Heavy Menstrual Bleeding

Liz:

There were a couple of question about heavy bleeding: breakthrough bleeding and peri-menopause. Can you address that?

Laurie:

Sure. First of all, we want to find out why. This is where we might need to get a biopsy. We need to make sure we don't have any endometrial hyperplasia where the endometrium has thickened significantly and we have potentially precancerous cells. We just need to rule all of that out. The second thing we need to do is make sure that there is no adenomyosis (Note: Adenomyosis is when we get an endometriosis in the uterus. This can trap our menstrual flow and cause severe cramping.) where women have almost like glandular tissue up into the uterus, into the endometrium. We want to make sure also that there are no polyps or cysts. We need to make sure to get a pelvic ultrasound, perhaps a biopsy. If everything is normal and it's just a dysfunctional uterine bleeding, that a patient is just bleeding and they don't know why, I would address the thyroid.

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There is a time
and place to
have surgery and
there is a time
and place where
you don't need
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Other nutrients
that can be
very helpful
in preventing
heavy bleeding:
number one is
iron. . . . Another
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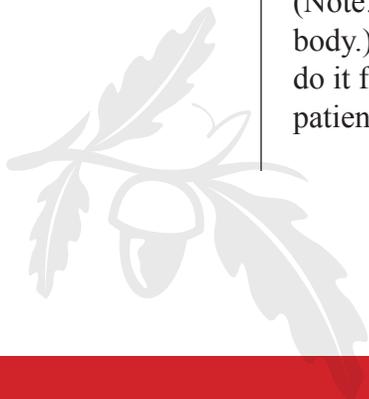
I had a case back when I was a rookie (I mean maybe a year into my practice), and this patient came to me with heavy bleeding who was scheduled for a hysterectomy. They found no reason for why she was having heavy bleeding. We really had nothing to lose. I said, “You know what? Let’s put you on some Armour thyroid.” She had all the symptoms of hypothyroidism although her blood tests looked normal. I put her on Armour thyroid and I’ll tell you: this patient stopped having heavy bleeding and she never had that hysterectomy.

Liz:
Amazing.

Laurie:
That was an amazing case – I love it, so simple. It wasn’t a very complicated case at all. Sometimes heavy bleeding can also occur when women have an imbalance in their hormones. Often I will give them natural progesterone after doing tests, and we will be able to compete with the amount of estrogen that is building up in the uterine lining.

Other nutrients that can be very helpful in preventing heavy bleeding: number one is iron. It sounds like your body wouldn’t betray you like this, but when you are iron deficient, you actually bleed heavier, which seems like the wisdom of the body would be to not bleed heavier, but for some reason, you do. So for some patients who have heavy bleeding, I put them on iron.

Another nutrient is vitamin A. It’s very important for women who are of child bearing years not to take over 10,000 IU of vitamin A. But, for women who are not of child-bearing years, not planning to get pregnant, and not having heavy bleeding I do put them on about 50,000 IU of vitamin A a day for up to two months. Then I will taper it. You can take about 100,000 IU up to three months before you have toxic symptoms (Note: toxic symptoms would be dry, gritty eyes; dryness throughout the body.), but I don’t like to push it that high, so I go up to 50,000 IU, I’ll do it for 2 months, and then I’ll taper it down. That has helped a lot of patients as well.



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If your liver isn't working very well breaking these hormones down, then you're going to have a lot of the symptoms (of PMS).
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Liz:

I know that high dose vitamin A is one of Jonathan Wright's favorite therapies for heavy bleeding too. I've also used it with clients.

Natural Remedies for Premenstrual Symptoms (PMS)

Caller:

About the saliva testing: which do you recommend for PMS type symptoms and the cortisol one sounds very much like what I would need, too. I'm on the website right now. Can you describe which one I would choose? I'm on www.SalivaTest.com. I thought that was the one you could order it from without a doctor.

Laurie:

I'm not in front of my computer right now so I can't look at that with you, but for PMS symptoms, I would definitely test your hormones on day 21, and I would definitely test your estrogen – specifically your estradiol, progesterone, DHEA, and you might as well test your testosterone too while you're at it. That would be a good idea as well. For PMS, can I elaborate a little bit on PMS?

Liz:

Sure.

Laurie:

There are many ways to look at PMS. From a Chinese perspective, we always want to look at the liver. When women have poor conjugation or break down of hormones, what happens is that the liver chi becomes stagnant – it doesn't move very well. When it does this, we become much more moody before our periods. One of the things – and this really doesn't have so much to do with hormones, it's where the western analytical naturopathic medicine doesn't completely jive with the Chinese direction where you have one tangent going one way and one going another, but in a way I can bring them together. If your liver isn't working very well breaking these hormones down, then you're going to have a lot of the symptoms that I mentioned.

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From a Chinese perspective, PMS is almost always related to stress, frustration and a stuck chi.

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From a Chinese perspective, PMS is almost always related to stress, frustration and a stuck chi. One of the best herbal formulas for moving this chi during the PMS time for women who get very irritated or irritable and moody is a product that is a classic Chinese herbal medicine called Xiao (or Siao) Yao Wan. I often buy mine through Health Concerns and it's called "Women's Balance." That product is very good for PMS. The other thing that is very important is calcium-magnesium and exercise. We need to move our chi. We are often not moving our chi enough and it gets stuck and stagnant, and irritated. That is actually what I would do first, then I would spend the money on testing the hormones – although I do think that testing the adrenals is a really good idea. That was the adrenal stress index testing your cortisol because sometimes PMS can be from poor adrenal function.

What we're discussing today is really the delicate balance of our endocrine system. Our endocrine system works as a whole – it dances together. A chapter in my book is called "Orchestrating Your Hormonal Dance," because if one gland that isn't functioning, another gland has to pick up the slack. It's like, what did you call it, pulling the wagon? For women in, let's say peri-menopause, we have basically the ovaries that are going through their career change. It's really the adrenal glands that have to pick up where the ovaries left off. If the adrenal glands are already kind of pooped out, they're not going to be able to do that very efficiently.

When women are going through the high level of hormones during the second part of their cycle at day 21 to a low level at day 28, it's kind of the same thing. It's like peri-menopause in a very short period of time. It's where we're having higher levels of estrogen and progesterone and all of a sudden they drop. We don't feel very good when that happens because we're used to this higher level. What we want to do at that time is also support our adrenal glands so that we can get a better transition. The adrenal glands do produce estrogen and progesterone. In fact, they release a hormone called pregnenolone which then cascades down into estrogen and progesterone. Think of PMS time as almost the same as a much shortened version of peri-menopause and what is happening.

Liz:
Maybe we should call it mini-pause.



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When I was about 21 years old, I discovered herbs and nutrients, and after that I never had another cramp.

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Laurie:
That's good.

Liz:
You know, one of the other thing that happens in PMS is that so many women start crying at soap commercials or stand in the middle of a room pouting but with no idea why. Our magnesium levels are often low right then. Taking extra magnesium might help that as well. Also, some women will notice that they get constipated or they get diarrhea. Sometimes if you're getting more constipated, magnesium really helps with that.

Laurie:
That's great.

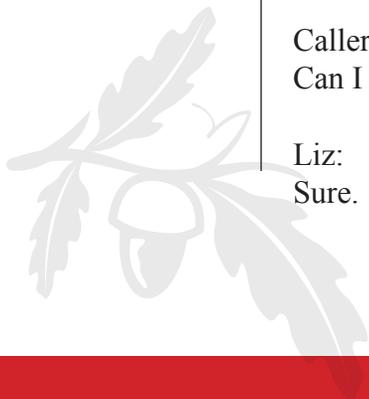
Liz:
There are so many things to try. I remember asking a naturopathic friend of mine a long time ago saying, "If you could treat one thing all day long with success, what do you think it would be?" He said PMS, and I said, "You know what? Me too," because it responds so well. So many women, when I ask them how their periods are, they say, "Well they're not that bad." I say, "No, no, no. That's the wrong answer. The right answer is they come and they go and it's like nothing." I have to say that when I was in my teens and my twenties, I would lay every period on a heating pad for about three days in excruciating pain. When I was about 21 years old, I discovered herbs and nutrients, and after that I never had another cramp.

Laurie:
Well that's fantastic!

Liz:
"It is do-able" and "Not that bad" are not the right answers. Let's see if anybody else has another question.

Caller:
Can I ask for clarification on that last one?

Liz:
Sure.



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 You'll know
 that you took
 too much
 magnesium
 because you'll
 have diarrhea
 from it.

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Caller:

How much magnesium are you saying per day?

Liz:

Well it varies from woman to woman. The more deficient we are, the more we'll be able to take in. Even if you start with maybe 400 mg of magnesium, you might find that works well. What I find with most of my clients is that you'll know that you took too much magnesium because you'll have diarrhea from it. I have people keep inching up – taking an extra 100, and an extra 100, and an extra 100 – until they get diarrhea, and then they back off.

In fact we have a whole teleseminar with Dr. Russell Jaffe that we did last June. One of the supplements that he has by the Perque line called Choline Citrate. It allows you to absorb magnesium more efficiently, so if you find that you're taking more than 1,000 mg a day of magnesium, probably you would benefit from taking a couple of teaspoons of Choline Citrate to help your body actually absorb it. As Laurie and I will tell you, many physicians will give people IV's of magnesium because when you're really depleted, you cannot absorb it well. The Choline Citrate is the only thing that I have found that helps you absorb the magnesium. I have had some people who got up to almost 3,000 mg without having any loose stools from it. You give them some Choline Citrate, and they're down to 1,000 mg or less.

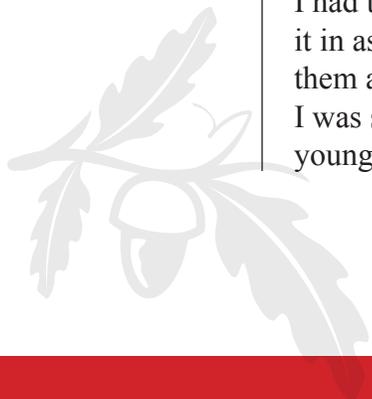
Fibroadenoma or Phyllodes Tumors of the Breast

Caller:

I have a question about fibro-adenoma of the breast, or the rare phyllodes tumor. Have you had success making them shrink?

Laurie:

I had those as an adolescent. In fact, I put my story in the book, and I put it in as if it wasn't me, but I named her Laura, so it was close. Yes. I had them as an adolescent. I had a fibroadenoma that I found in my left breast. I was sent to a doctor, and they told me, as an adolescent – this was very young, no one had touched my breast, and I didn't know this doctor –



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They told me
that they were
going to cut out
my nipple, scoop
out the fibro-
adenoma and
sew the nipple
back on.”

”

they told me that they were going to cut out my nipple, scoop out the fibro-adenoma and sew my nipple back on. I looked at him like, “no, you’re not.” Thank God my mother went and got a second opinion. I have to say that as a child, I was a coffee-a-holic. I had coffee ice cream, coffee yogurt, coffee syrup (most kids want chocolate syrup), and I think I developed these because I was ingesting so much methylxanthine and that created the cysts in my breasts.

The one in my left breast has almost disappeared, and the one in my right breast has gotten much smaller. Now girls who get this as adolescents – and I’m saying this to the whole audience – they’re just benign tumors, but I do see them on a spectrum. If you’re developing them, why? From a Chinese perspective, all breast conditions are connected and they are usually connected to stuck chi – the chi isn’t moving through the breast tissue. I have had success in treating fibroadenomas in woman who are chronically developing them as older women. I use a product called Bluplurum Entangled Qi. I mention this in the book. This product is also available through Health Concerns. I also put the women on iodine, anything I can do to help them conjugate estrogen (if they’re on birth control pills, I take them off).

I had a patient who, at eighteen, had Turner’s syndrome (a genetic disease that affects girls) who was getting a lot of fibroadenomas because they had put her onto birth control pills, and her body could not handle the amount of estrogen they were giving her. Her body kept developing these. We treated her by getting her off of that and onto a natural hormone. We did treat the fibroadenomas with iodine, we used the Bluplurum Entangled Qi, we used indole-3-carbinol, or Indoplex (which is the DIM form of the indole-3-carbinol), and we used essential fatty acids. I might have used some acupuncture with her, but I didn’t do it myself; I had recommended it. I probably did it one or two times while she was in Honolulu, but then she was back to the University of Southern California to go to school. So, I have had success in treating these. We need to look at them on a continuum. We don’t just have a breast mass that just appears and, “oh, it’s benign, so it’s okay.” It’s part of the whole body, and what is the body doing with its estrogen metabolism?



In Conclusion

Liz:

I want to thank you. This was so content-rich. You really packed a ton in and it was a lot to take in for people who aren't used to some of the language, but I think that there was so much practical information and I encourage everyone to get Dr. Steelsmith's book. Her book is called *Natural Choices for Women's Health*, and it is a wonderful book with so many useable practical tips. If you want to look at Dr. Steelsmith's website, you can go to www.DrLaurieSteelsmith.com, and her phone number in Honolulu is (808) 943-0330, if you would like to contact her.

I really want to thank you, Laurie. It was a wonderful wealth of information. Thank you so much!

Laurie:

It was my pleasure, I really enjoyed it. Great audience!

Liz:

I want to wish everyone well, and enjoy this Winter (or Spring) weather that we're having. Remember that Winter is not a time to not exercise just because it's cold out. Find something to do: put on a yoga tape, walk around a shopping mall, get out those cross country skis, go ice skating, or take a walk in the snow. Find something to do, and I hope that soon it will be warm most places.

Be well, and I look forward to hearing you on the call next month.

“
Find something to do: put on a yoga tape, walk around a shopping mall, get out those cross country skis, go ice skating, or take a walk in the snow.
”



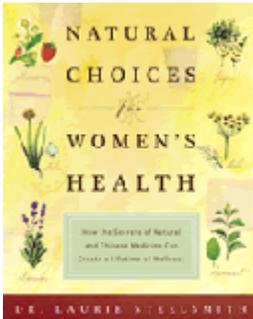
**Laurie Steelsmith
Naturopathic Doctor (ND)**



Founder of the Steelsmith Natural Health Center

Author of: *Natural Choices for Women's Health*

Dr. Laurie Steelsmith shows for the first time how women can create a lifetime of optimal health and wellbeing by blending the extraordinary benefits of natural medicine from both the Western tradition and ancient Chinese teachings.



As a strong advocate of prevention and the natural power of the human body to heal itself, Dr. Steelsmith uses therapies that are primarily natural and non-toxic. She prescribes medicines and lifestyle changes which stimulate the patient's healing process, rather than drugs which simply suppress the symptoms and may have multiple unhealthy side-effects. It is vital in her training and practice to diagnose and treat the underlying cause of disease.

Dr. Steelsmith treats people, not conditions. She works with the whole person as a unique individual, rather than just a particular organ or system. Mental, emotional, nutritional, genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors are fully taken into account, as well as any physical causes of illness. In order to care for her patients effectively, she spends an hour with them on first office visits and 45 minutes with them on follow-up visits.

Highly trained in both traditional Western science and alternative medicine, Dr. Steelsmith is uniquely qualified to determine what is best for a patient's specific needs. She blends centuries-old knowledge of natural therapies with the latest medical advances in scientific diagnosis and treatment.

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YIN	YANG
Darkness	Light
Water	Fire
Nighttime	Daytime
Feminine	Masculine
Cold	Hot
Inward	Outward
Passive	Active
Quiet	Noisy
Receptive	Projective
Downward	Upward
Moon	Sun
Contracting	Expanding

What to Look For When You Buy Organic Groceries

The key is the way the word "organic" is used on the product. Here's a summary of the USDA requirements:

- *If a product is labeled "**100% organic**" it must contain 100% organic ingredients.*
- *If a product is labeled "**organic**" the contents must be at least 95% organic.*
- *If a product is labeled "**made with organic (ingredients or foods)**" it must contain at least 70% organic ingredients.*
- *Products with less than 70% organic ingredients cannot make any organic claims on the package, except by listing organically produced ingredients in the ingredient statement on the side panel.*

Source: The U.S. Department of Agriculture

***Energetic Properties of Foods From a Chinese Medicine
Perspective
Fruits***

Cold	Cooling	Neutral	Warming	Hot
Mulberries	Apples	Figs	Cherries	
Persimmons	Bananas	Grapes	Litchi	
Grapefruit	Pears	Red dates	Peaches	
Papayas	Cantaloupe	Pineapple	Raspberries	
Watermelon	Honeydew	Apricots	Guavas	
	Kiwis		Kumquats	
	Loquats		Lemons	
	Oranges		Coconut	
	Plums			
	Pomegranates			
	Pomelos			
	Strawberries			
	Tangerines			

Vegetables and Leafy Greens

Cold	Cooling	Neutral	Warming	Hot
Asparagus	Alfalfa sprouts	Carrots	Cauliflower	
Bamboo shoot	Broccoli	Corn	Chives	
Burdock root	Cabbage	Olives	Mustard greens	
Kelp	Celery	Potatoes	Onions	
Lotus root	Eggplant	Yams	Pumpkin	
Summer squash	Lettuce	Beets	Scallions	
Cucumbers	Mushrooms			
Nori	Radishes			
	Soybean sprouts			
	Spinach			
	Sweet potatoes			
	Swiss chard			
	Turnips			
	Watercress			

Grains, Nuts, Seeds, Beans, and Legumes

Cold	Cooling	Neutral	Warming	Hot
Barley	Buckwheat	Adzuki beans	Chestnuts	Soybean oil
Tofu	Millet	Almonds	Pine nuts	
Tomatoes	Mung beans	String beans	Pumpkin seeds	
Water chestnuts	Wheat	Hazelnuts	Glutinous rice	
	Gluten	Oats	Walnuts	
	Millet	Peas		
	Sesame oil	Peanuts		
	Tofu	Rice		
	Wheat bran	Sesame seeds		
		Soybeans		
		Sunflower seeds		
		Rye		

Dairy, Meat, and Seafood

Cold	Cooling	Neutral	Warming	Hot
Clams		Beef	Chicken	Trout
Crab		Eggs	Lobster	
Octopus		Duck	Crayfish	
		Cow's milk	Eel	
		Oysters	Lamb	
		Pork	Goat's milk	
		Shark	Mussels	
		Squid	Shrimp	
		White fish	Venison	
		Sardines	Yogurt	
			Anchovies	
			Butter	

Other Foods, Drinks, and Spices

Cold	Cooling	Neutral	Warming	Hot
Salt	Marjoram	Honey	Alcohol	Black pepper
Soy sauce	Green tea	White sugar	Anise	Cayenne pepper
			Basil	Cinnamon
			Caraway	Dry ginger
			Cardamom	Sichuan pepper
			Cloves	
			Coffee	
			Coriander	
			Dill	
			Fennel	
			Garlic	
			Uncooked ginger	
			Molasses	
			Nutmeg	
			Rosemary	
			Saffron	
			Brown sugar	
			Thyme	
			Turmeric	
			Vinegar	

Information derived from *The Tao of Healthy Eating*, by Bob Flaws and *The Chinese Way to Healing: Many Paths to Wholeness*, by Misha Ruth Cohen.

The Essence of Your Naturally Healthy Diet

- Eat three meals a day, with snacks such as fruits between meals if you're hungry.
- Eat carbohydrates with a low glycemic index, such as brown rice, whole grain bread, and whole wheat pasta.
- Eat beans and legumes a few times a week.
- Eat moderate amounts of lean protein, such as low-mercury fish, skinless poultry, or eggs; if you are vegetarian, consume adequate quantities of plant-based protein.
- If you are not lactose-intolerant or allergic to dairy products, eat nonfat organic dairy products.
- Use quality fats in your diet, such as olive oil for cooking and flax oil in salad dressings.
- Eat ten servings of low-glycemic fruits and vegetables each day.
- Eat the highest-quality organic foods whenever possible, and emphasize whole foods in your diet.
- Drink at least 48 ounces of pure water every day.
- Keep your Qi strong by eating a balance of hot, cold, warming, and cooling foods.
- Avoid processed foods, fast foods, fried foods, soft drinks, and non-nutritive sugary foods such as cookies, candies, and pastries (unless, of course, it is your birthday or a special holiday.)

By Dr. Laurie Steelsmith from her book *Natural Choices for Women's Health; How the Secrets of Natural and Chinese Medicine can Create a Lifetime of Wellness* (Three Rivers Press/May 2005)