

The Truth about Hormones

How Profits Have Trumped Our Health

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Know to Protect Their Daughters from Breast Cancer, sounds the alarm about the looming breast cancer tragedy facing younger women and offers effective holistic solutions. Through her books, articles, media appearances, lectures and seminars, Dr. Sellman has helped people all over the world make more educated and informed choices about their hormonal health as well as encouraging them to take great responsibility for their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

ACRES U.S.A. It's a recognized fact that the American GI has served as a test animal in the hands of the military. Now you're telling us that the women of the United States are test animals in the hands of the pharmaceutical industry. Is that a correct assessment?

SELLMAN. That's how I perceive it, and it's based on 10 years of research I have conducted as a journalist and women's health writer. I've been investigating these issues and the way women are being treated and misinformed about their health

ACRES U.S.A. How did this situation develop?

SELLMAN. It began when in 1966 a book called *Feminine Forever* was published. This book was written by Robert A. Wilson, a gynecologist who was actually president of the Association of Obstetricians and Gynecology, and he basically said that at menopause a woman begins a downhill slide. She becomes the equivalent of a eunuch and enters a time

of decrepitude. These are all characterizations from his book, and the solution he offers is the use of estrogen, which he calls the "feminine forever hormone." Wilson basically characterized menopause as a disease that causes the ovaries to fail and cease production of estrogen, necessitating replacement with pharmaceuticals. Everyone bought this argument hook, line and sinker. Thousands and thousands and thousands of women were knocking on his door and doors of gynecologists around the country. Hundreds of magazines wrote about this, it was written up in medical journals, and Wilson's beliefs actually were instituted in the teachings in medical schools. What was little known was that his *one study* — upon which this whole theory was based — was discredited by the FDA, he himself was discredited as a reputable researcher, and it also came to light that he became very wealthy from this book through a trust fund to which the manufacturers of estrogen made extremely generous donations — to the tune of \$200 million or more. This was the begin-

ning of medicalizing menopausal women and continued for the next ten years using estrogen-replacement therapy.

ACRES U.S.A. But you've said yourself that some of the baggage goes clear back to the father of medicine?

SELLMAN. When I began looking at how women have been perceived throughout the ages, I actually found a quote from Hypocrites, the "father of modern medicine," who asked the rhetorical question, "What is woman?" and responded, "Disease." Throughout the ages we see a bias toward women — that their reproductive organs make them more prone to illnesses or are the source of many of their health problems, not to mention psychological and emotional problems, and whenever possible these organs have been removed. We did this in the Victorian era quite commonly, removing the uterus and ovaries from women, and this practice has continued to this day, as has this whole perception that women's bodies and their natural cycles are somehow flawed and that nature made this design fault in women that puts their health at risk because of their female reproductive organs and other physiological predispositions.

ACRES U.S.A. Now there's medication to control the female cycle — would you comment on that?

SELLMAN. I think we need to appreciate a couple of things. First of all, the U.S. government has a list of known human carcinogens. It comes out every two years. And what has been put on that list is estrogen. In the latest update, from December 2002, all steroidal estrogens found in hormone replacement therapy and oral contraceptives are listed as known human carcinogens. The other component found in things like hormone replacement therapy and oral contraceptives is synthetic progesterone — known as Progestin, often in

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the form of Provera or Depo-Provera — these also have been listed as known human carcinogens. So the two ingredients of HRT and oral contraceptives are known human carcinogens. Recently the trend is medicalizing and pathologizing women's natural cycles by telling them that their menstrual cycles are dangerous, unnecessary, and basically can be totally eliminated by a continuous low-dose Pill. Young women are being encouraged to use this therapy for no reason other than they consider their menstrual cycles a bit of an inconvenience. This involves using the pill for 83, 84 days, then stopping for seven days — you are actually regulating and controlling and, in a sense, obliterating women's menstrual cycles, primarily because as soon as a woman is put on the Pill — and few women understand this — the synthetic hormones in the Pill chemically castrate a woman — this is the term used for the action of the Pill, "chemical castration." It shuts down a woman's ovaries and in a sense commandeers them with these synthetic, carcinogenic drugs that impair a woman's fertility, compromise her immune system, deplete her body of key minerals and vitamins, and basically put her on a road of compromised health for many years to come — including increased risk of breast cancer.

ACRES U.S.A. Exactly how does the Pill work?

SELLMAN. It literally shuts down the ovaries by putting hormones into the body that mimic pregnancy. During pregnancy, a woman is making the highest levels of hormones she'll ever be making in her life, particularly estrogen and progesterone, so the Pill has high levels of these hormones. By the way, the amount of hormones found in the Pill is actually higher than found in hormone replacement therapy. We know how dangerous HRT is now — well, the Pill has higher amounts of these same hormones! By tricking a woman's body, then, into believing it is pregnant, it literally stops the body's ability to ovulate. This happens naturally during pregnancy, these high levels of hormones are communicating to the body that the woman is pregnant, no longer needs to ovulate. The ovaries are in a sense shut down — we no longer, during pregnancy or when we take the Pill, are producing eggs and maturing eggs and releasing the hormones that happen when that cycle occurs. This means a woman's body is continuously in this pseudo-pregnancy state. The Pill also alters a woman's cervical mucous, which makes it more difficult for sperm to be transported, but it

also creates a mucous that enhances the growth and development of sexually transmitted diseases such as human papillomavirus (HPV). They actually thrive in environments that have been altered through the use of the Pill. That's why women on the Pill are more at risk not only for sexually transmitted diseases, but also for cervical cancer.

ACRES U.S.A. What else does it do to the body?

SELLMAN. Well, the Pill depletes the body of vitamins, all the vitamin Bs, which includes folic acid and B₁₂, now known as important factors for supporting good heart health and also healthy babies. Babies that are born of mothers with low folic acid and B₆ and B₁₂ are more prone to birth deformities and spina bifida, which is on the rise. It depletes the body of vitamin E, vitamin C, of magnesium, zinc, selenium and copper. All these nutrients are vital for a healthy immune system and for healthy fertility. The Pill also raises triglyceride levels, increases cholesterol levels, interferes with digestion, and this is very scary, studies recently have shown that women on the Pill actually experience bone loss because the synthetic hormones interfere with proper bone metabolism — so women on the Pill are showing up with bone loss and are at risk of osteoporosis. These are young women.

ACRES U.S.A. Then this bone loss is not necessarily a post-menstrual situation?

SELLMAN. No, you know it never really was, because we start losing bone much earlier in life. Around menopause there seems to be a little bit of an acceleration, by 1 or 2 percent, but we have found that bone loss has always occurred much earlier in life, and now we're finding these very young women, women in their 20s and in some cases even teenagers, who are behind in their bone development, and the Pill is a major factor. This is a serious problem, because if we are not developing our bones earlier in life, we are at greater risk of osteoporosis as we get older. One other theory of risk factors for the use of any of these hormones, either in the form of the Pill or HRT, is the risk for breast cancer — 70 percent of breast cancers are caused by exposure and stimulation of too much estrogen, which of course is what the Pill does. This is occur-

ring now, breast cancer is occurring in 20- and 30-year-old women.

ACRES U.S.A. What can people do about this osteoporosis in preventing it and remedying it, is there anything at all?

SELLMAN. There is so much we can do! First of all, we need to dispel the myth that osteoporosis is caused by menopause, is caused by estrogen deficiency or calcium deficiency, and that we must use hormones to replace it. Osteoporosis is really a disease created by lifestyle. There are cultures around the world where population, men and women in their 70s and 80s, show no sign of increased fractures, no sign of real osteoporosis, and that tells us something right there. If there are populations that can have healthy bones up to their last breath, then what are we doing that is interfering with the body's ability to create and maintain healthy bones? It's because of the diet we're eating, the mineral-depleted soils that deplete minerals in our food. It also has to do with poor digestion, compromised digestion that prevents us from absorbing and assimilating nutrients.

ACRES U.S.A. Are you saying junk food?

SELLMAN. I'm saying junk food. Right at the top of the list.

ACRES U.S.A. Processed food?

SELLMAN. Processed food, junk food, sugary foods, trans-fatty acid foods, and of course, we have to place homogenized, pasteurized, non-organic milk right on the top of that list as well. There has been a myth out there that milk helps prevent osteoporosis, but the five leading dairy-consuming countries in the world have the highest rates of osteoporosis. We have to make distinctions between the pasteurized and the raw, because I am a big fan of organic, raw milk. But milk that is pasteurized, homogenized and non-organic, this milk actually contributes to osteoporosis and bone loss.

ACRES U.S.A. Let's talk about milk for a minute. What happens when they homogenize it? We know a little about what happens when they pasteurize it, but what happens when they homogenize it that would interdict the development of proper bone structure?

SELLMAN. They are taking the fat and kind of dispersing it evenly throughout the milk. You don't really get the fat molecules that are in milk, the good, healthy fat.

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ACRES U.S.A. They break them down.

SELLMAN. They break them down. What we fail to understand is that good, healthy fats are essential for good bone health. We need them to transport vitamin E and vitamin A. We know now that vitamin B is such a vital nutrient and that it's soluble, it needs to be in the fat. Fats are an essential part of a healthy body, and they're an essential part of building healthy bones. When we don't have access to good, healthy fats, we're interfering with many key physiological processes. When we drink low-fat milk, we are taking out of the milk one of its most important ingredients, the healthy fats. You know, I actually go to a dairy that makes organic raw milk, and everyone there is just appalled at people that come in and ask for 2-percent milk or non-fat milk, they can't quite get it across to people how important the whole milk is

precisely because of the availability of these fats.

ACRES U.S.A. But the gurus that prescribe what constitutes essential foods and diets, they have a completely different view, and the milk codes get thicker every year.

SELLMAN. I see that just about everything we are being told in this country about what's healthy and what's going to affect our health, be it our hormones or our diets, comes from or is heavily influenced by vested interests and is designed to sell their products, not really to look after the health and well-being of the population. This is why it's so important to get information and be curious and inquisitive and become more savvy on what we're doing. Certainly in my experience with women and their health, we have been misinformed and mislead every step of the way. For decades, probably for centuries, the real wisdom and healing avenues available to us have been eliminated through the media's emphasis of what their sponsors want us to know and what they want us to buy. At every stage of a woman's life we have the capacity to

remain healthy and whole and vital, if we understand what our body really needs and how to look after it. You know, I tell women that all hormonal imbalances are due to poor health — that means we're deprived of essential proteins and vitamins and minerals and essential fatty acids. We are putting poisons into our bodies. We're eating food poisoned with chemical sprays and taking toxic drugs marketed by a profit-driven pharmaceutical industry. We're stressed, we do not know how to honor the rhythms of our bodies, and all of this results in serious hormonal imbalances and other health problems — which ultimately come from a lack of true knowledge and wisdom.

ACRES U.S.A. Take people who have curvature of the spine — osteoporosis running rampant. What can they do at that stage in life?

SELLMAN. We need to understand that we have the capacity at any stage of our life to reverse bone loss and strengthen our bones. In fact, there was study done out of Tufts University, discussed in a wonderful book called *Strong Women Stay Young*, in which they went into a nursing



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Physiology of Hormones

by Sherrill Sellman

Women and hormones equal big business these days. Like animals lured into a snare by a trail of crumbs, women have been cajoled with scientific studies, media advertising, patient handbooks and drug samples to accept hormone replacement therapy as a magic potion. HRT is praised as the cure for hot flashes and all the other symptoms assigned to the menopause pantheon. It is even considered an anti-aging medicine, acting as a talisman to ward off osteoporosis, heart disease and even Alzheimer's.

Millions of menopausal women flock to their doctors' offices each year seeking relief from such complaints as hot flashes, night sweats, bloating, indigestion, allergies, headaches, insomnia, fatigue, depression, high blood pressure, weight gain, head hair loss, facial hair growth, mood swings, aging skin, irritability, foggy thinking, lack of concentration, anxiety attacks, heart palpitations, bone loss, and heavy bleeding.

The common panacea prescribed for all these symptoms is HRT. All these presenting symptoms are lumped together into the menopausal pigeonhole, estrogen deficiency is the diagnosis, and synthetic estrogen replacement becomes the cure. An obvious and simple solution for hormonal imbalance! Or so we are led to believe.

But what if these symptoms that most plague 40- and 50-year-old women are not at all about menopause? What if it's not estrogen deficiency but rather estrogen *excess* that is the cause of these discomforts? What if the real physiological problems are, in fact, being ignored, misdiagnosed or misunderstood? And what if the pathological condition of "menopause," the supposed cause of a mid-life woman's lament, doesn't even exist?

Unfortunately, women have been intentionally led on a wild hormone goose chase. While medicalizing and pathologizing of menopausal women with potent, carcinogenic and dangerous steroid drugs has filled the coffers of the drug companies and doctors alike, the real cause of these health problems has been ignored — and so have safe and effective solutions. Menopause, far from being a stage in a woman's life that leads her into a dark dungeon of discomfort and decline, is actually a time when the abuses of lifestyle, poor diet, environmental toxicities, and stress finally take their toll.

Hormonal imbalances are, in fact, symptoms of poor health. If the symptoms are addressed only with various HRT formulations, the real underlying problems are not simply ignored — in all likelihood, they are worsened. When you add in the possible 120 side-effects of HRT, you have a frightening recipe for disaster.

DIGESTION, MALABSORPTION & CANDIDA

A healthy digestive and a gastrointestinal system is the key to good health. It begins with the first bite. Proper digestion depends on the proper secretion of digestive enzymes and the digestive system's ability to assimilate and absorb foods. Most health problems begin here. No matter what foods are eaten, everything in our diets is composed of proteins, carbohydrates and fat, sugars, and fiber.

The essential digestive enzymes (protease, amylase, lipase, disaccharidase and cellulase) are necessary to break these elements down during digestion. Without adequate enzymes, people become intolerant to certain foods, leading to a whole host of

home and worked with 80- and 90-year-old people, many of them confined to wheelchairs. Within three months of doing a simple training routine, the researchers confirmed that these people had stronger bones, stronger muscles, they were able to be more self-reliant, they could get up and walk where they couldn't before, look after themselves in ways they couldn't before, and their mental state improved.

ACRES U.S.A. What's the secret to this kind of success story?

SELLMAN. There are key things that we need to understand about creating and maintaining healthy bones, and they start with digestion. If we don't have strong digestive systems, we will never be able to absorb and utilize the vitamins and minerals from our food. So we have to create a healthy digestive system, and generally, that relies on putting good gut flora into our digestive system, using kefir, fermented foods, sauerkrauts, probiotics and digestive enzymes. As we pass the age of 35, our digestive system starts to get weaker, so we need to support it. Number two, we have to alkalize our body, because an acidic body will contribute to bone loss: the body will pull calcium from our "reserves" — our bones —

to maintain the proper alkaline balance, without which we die. What causes an acidic body? Sugar, junk foods, overconsumption of protein, trans-fatty acids, the bad fats, all these things are contributors. We need to eat a diet high in alkaline foods — fruits, vegetables. Minerals are the most powerful alkalines of all. And we must drink adequate amounts of water. We must also take a careful look at the minerals, which doesn't just mean calcium. Calcium is not the whole answer to bone health, because our bones are made up of many, many minerals, and *all* minerals work effectively when they are in supply. We have a synergistic relationship with minerals, so we need a source that provides us with the key minerals, the trace minerals, on a regular basis. Minerals are so essential for all aspects of health, especially for women. Women require six to eight times more minerals than men. And minerals, a full spectrum, are required for maintaining and helping to reverse bone loss.

ACRES U.S.A. What about the role of hormones in bone development?

SELLMAN. Here's something that most people aren't aware of: one of the key hormones in a woman's body that helps to support the development of new bone

cells is progesterone. This is a hormone made by the body, and it stimulates the production of these osteoblasts. We are also seeing that increasing levels of progesterone when appropriate for women — in some cases even for men — has helped to support healthy bone growth and helped to repair bones. In some cases, then, the use of natural progesterone (which is available over the counter) has been very effective in coordination with changing all these other factors in a person's life.

ACRES U.S.A. Do you have any thoughts on soy milk? The industry is rapidly trying to replace cows' milk with soy milk, which is high in estrogen, and we wonder about that.

SELLMAN. I used to be a very big soy drinker because I used to be kind of quasi-vegetarian — which I have to say I'm not any longer — and I've looked into this area. I am quite concerned about how soy is being promoted, especially for women and children. Many mothers are

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food allergies. When the enzyme deficiency is left untreated, serious health problems inevitably result.

Enzyme deficiencies include a compromised immune system, chronic infections, fluid retention, chronic constipation, hypoglycemia, moodiness, depression, irritability, anxiety, impaired bone metabolism leading to osteoporosis, blood clots, allergic reactions, diabetes, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and varicose veins.

Our modern-day lifestyle has contributed to the depletion of digestive enzymes. Enzymes are destroyed by poisonous pesticides and chemicals, genetic engineering, food irradiation, hydrogenated oils, microwaves, radiation, fluoridation, heavy metals and mercury amalgams. Supplementing one's diet with plant-based digestive enzymes available from the health food store is becoming necessary for people of all ages.

Another serious digestive problem leading to many health problems is a condition called candidiasis. Approximately one in three American women suffer from this toxic yeast overgrowth, caused by eating large amounts of sugar, prolonged or repeated use of antibiotics, birth control pills, estrogen therapy and cortisone. Candida has been found to produce 79 different toxins known to wreak havoc with the immune system.

There is a long list of symptoms associated with a candida overgrowth. They include depression, anxiety attacks, mood swings, lack of concentration, drowsiness, poor memory, headaches, insomnia, fatigue, bloating, constipation, bladder infections, menstrual cramps, vaginal itching, muscle and joint swelling and pain, hypothyroidism, and skin problems.

To rid the body of pathological yeast and improve the immune system, it is important to eliminate sugar in all its forms, eliminate foods that are difficult to digest, eat organic foods, use natural antifungal remedies such as grapefruit seed extract, oregano oil, probiotics (friendly bacteria), cultured foods and digestive enzymes.

It is obvious from the long list of above symptoms that so-called menopause affliction could be due to chronic digestive problems. And it is interesting to note that both the Pill and HRT cause impaired digestion and candida overgrowth. In fact, candida feeds on estrogens. The vicious cycle continues.

HYPOTHYROIDISM

The thyroid gland is an important component of the immune system. It is a small butterfly-shaped endocrine organ at the base of the neck. The thyroid is the body's thermostat, controlling body temperature, energy use, the rate at which organs function and the speed with which the body uses food. The thyroid is implicated in the functioning of all body process and organs.

Thyroid problems are also of epidemic proportion in women — 15-20 times more prevalent than in men. It is estimated that as between 50-80 percent of Western women suffer from hypothyroidism, an underactive thyroid.

Hypothyroidism has a direct effective on women's hormonal health. Seventy percent of women with infertility and miscarriages have hypothyroidism. In addition, fibrocystic breast disease, fibroids, ovarian cysts, endometriosis, PMS, menopausal symptoms and multiple sclerosis are caused or worsened by an underactive thyroid. Other symptoms include fatigue, depression, weight gain, cold hands and feet, skin problems (itching, eczema,

giving their children soymilk because they think that regular milk isn't good for them. Many mothers are giving their children soy infant formula, which is a total disaster. What are some problems with soy from my perspective? Well, aside from the fact that the majority of the crop is genetically engineered, I actually lived in a Chinese community in Malaysia, so from my perspective of living in that community, soy has never been a staple of their diet. It has always been more of a condiment, and generally, soy in Asia is eaten in fermented versions because it is known that only the fermented version makes soy digestible and provides access to the nutrients. Soy interferes with thyroid function. For those of us who are gluten intolerant, including myself, it's worth noting that soy has a high gluten content, which is the protein content, so it's a very allergic food. Allergies are a big problem that contributes to many chronic degenerative diseases. Soy also contributes to many hormonal imbalances for women.

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ACRES U.S.A. If we continue to feed soy as a health food, especially to the male population, will they start lactating?

SELLMAN. We don't really know! We're in a massive experiment. I travel throughout the world and talk to thousands of people in my lectures. When I've discussed how potent estrogen is estrogically, many parents have told me about their infants or their young male children who are either developing breasts or their genitals are affected or they're going into early puberty because of this driving effect of estrogen and the development of early puberty. This is a terrifying problem, and I see it looming in societies around the world. We are providing children with highly estrogenic foods like soy, and the environment contains many estrogenic-like chemicals that are driving this early puberty development as well as hormone disruption in children. One other thing about soy that is of great concern for me is that in the unfermented form it has an effect on suppressing the thyroid, and thyroid imbalances are behind most hormonal problems as well as a component in things like breast cancer. Our compromised thyroid development affects the development of the brain of infants and children, as well. It's a disaster. So I am no longer a fan of

unfermented soy products in any way, shape or form. I think they are a health disaster, and we have no idea what we are doing to the ongoing health problems of this generation and future generations.

ACRES U.S.A. Nevertheless, we are using an awful lot of soy in the hamburgers being put out in the McDonald's and Wendy's and those kinds of places. Do you think that this has an affect on the sexual development of these young kids that practically live on them?

SELLMAN. I think it is one more factor seriously affecting and altering the proper health and growth and development of these children. We're getting hormones from milk sources, we're getting hormones from meat sources, we're getting estrogens from soy sources. When you put all of this together and then add the chemicals — the hormone-disrupting chemicals sprayed onto all the vegetables and that are in the animals — and the compromising effect of antibiotics, we are creating a concoction of factors that are a disaster to the health of young children, which has been diminishing with each generation for the past three generations.

acne, dryness and scaliness), loss of memory, lack of concentration, migraines, muscle aches, swelling of eyelids, constipation, brittle nails and poor vision.

A deficiency of thyroid hormone can also lead to elevated cholesterol and triglyceride levels, putting older women at greater risk of heart disease. Hypothyroidism weakens the immune system and makes women more susceptible to recurring infections.

While hypothyroidism is one of the least understood health conditions in the medical profession, the causes are readily known in alternative medicine. Radiation is probably the greatest environmental cause, both ionizing and non-ionizing forms. Another significant cause is estrogen dominance (an excess of estrogen in relation to progesterone). Estrogen dominance interferes with the uptake of thyroid hormones and can result from taking birth control pills, estrogen replacement therapy, or exposure to pesticides, powerful estrogen mimics and other environmental toxins. Stress and nutritional deficiencies such as selenium, glutathione, iodine and zinc also have a key role. And once again an imbalance in microflora of the gut decreases the body's ability to uptake thyroid hormone.

Other thyroid inhibitors include excess intake of unsaturated fats (liquid oils at room temperature), fluoride, heavy metal poisoning, mercury amalgam fillings, low-protein diet, soy products, raw cruciferous vegetables (cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, etc.), and endurance exercise. The most popular thyroid medication, Synthroid — which is an inactive form of the thyroid hormone — actually shrinks the thyroid gland, suppresses the pituitary, and suppresses cellular respiration. Another side-effect of Synthroid is osteoporosis.

We live in a thyroid-toxic culture and environment. No wonder it is such a common disorder. However, there are very effective natural approaches to help in regulating the thyroid. Natural progesterone balances the thyroid-inhibiting effect of estrogen dominance, as does supplementation with thyroid glandular extracts, enzyme therapy, and herbal remedies such as the Auyurvedic herb, gulgulipid.

Dietary recommendations to support thyroid function include getting adequate protein in organic beef, poultry, eggs, fish and cultured milk products such as kefir and yogurt. Another great thyroid-promoting food is coconut oil, which not only stimulates thyroid function but also promotes weight loss in those who are overweight. Thyroid healing foods include these high in the B vitamins such as wheat germ, whole grains, nuts, seeds, dark greens, legumes and brewer's yeast. Other foods include seaweeds and wheat germ oil (or vitamin E).

Unfortunately, most of the standard thyroid tests often fail to pinpoint an underactive thyroid, leading physicians to make erroneous diagnoses. Subclinical conditions abound. However, there are effective self-diagnostic tests, such as taking an underarm temperature reading with an oral thermometer first thing in the morning for five consecutive days. Leave it under the arm for 5-10 minutes. It is even more effective if you keep your eyes open and have exposure to bright lights for half an hour before taking the test. Remember to say in bed and remain inactive. A low-functioning thyroid will show an average temperature of under 97.5 F. Also check the resting pulse — less than 85 beats per minute plus a low basal temperature may indicate hypothyroidism.

ACRES U.S.A. To what extent do you feel the genetically engineered grains and foods figure into this?

SELLMAN. We're participating in a massive experiment. There have been no studies, no tests to show the safety hazards of interfering with nature in this manner, and we now are seeing evidence that genetically modified foods are having all sorts of consequences in our digestive systems, compromising our immune systems. The body doesn't even recognize that this stuff is food — our bodies attack it as a foreign invader. I shudder to think what we are creating by bringing this in, convincing people that this is actually a form of nourishing food. This is an experiment on the population once again, and the population that's most vulnerable happens to be our children because they have the least developed immune systems and are most susceptible to the influence of these drugs and hormones.

ACRES U.S.A. So we recapture what we started out with in this conversation: We're taking the population and turning it into test animals.

SELLMAN. To be more precise: We're being turned into test animals in order to fill the coffers of agribusiness, pharmaceutical industries, chemical industries, which are all one and the same, in the

final analysis. We are the lambs being led to the slaughter — for profit.

ACRES U.S.A. The head of the UN, Kofi Annan, said that he intends to become a farmer when his turn at being General Secretary is over, because to his way of looking at it, each nation in Africa needs to learn how to feed itself. Is this what we really need to look to, feeding people locally, county-wise, statewide, instead of relying on this great agriculture or agribusiness complex that pretends to feed the world?

SELLMAN. It is if you want to stay healthy and well. I live in Oklahoma and am fortunate because in my community there are small farms that supply me with organic, grass-fed beef and lamb, raw milk and raw dairy products, organic eggs and organic vegetables. I have a little garden patch in my back yard. I don't grow a lot, but I get my peppers and cucumbers and tomatoes and herbs. This is the only way those people who want to remain healthy in the years to come are going to be able to do so, and I think we need to do everything possible to support the independent farms

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who are choosing to grow their foods in a more organic and harmonious way with nature. We have to do this, and I think that anybody and anyone who has a family and wants healthy kids and to insure the genetic well-being of future generations, this is the way we must go. There is almost nothing in the supermarket that supports the health and well-being of any human being or animal, except for the small little section where they have organic food.

ACRES U.S.A. You did say grass-fed?

SELLMAN. I said grass-fed. Yes.

ACRES U.S.A. Could you explain what happens compared to the feedlot version of meat protein?

SELLMAN. I've recently investigated this whole issue, and one thing that's becoming clear is that we have to make finer and finer distinctions. So we once said "organic." So we have organic beef, and then we realized that grain-fed organic beef has a lesser nutritional component than organic beef that is grass fed. Because these animals, cattle, were never designed to eat grains or God knows what else they are fed in their foods and grains. At one point, they even put bubble gum — still in their wrappers — into the feed. We give our animals horrible things, which makes no sense at all.

Another simple test is to paint an area 2 inches in diameter on your thigh or belly with a 2-percent tincture of iodine. If the yellowish stain disappears in less than 24 hours, it indicates your body has an iodine deficiency, a cause of hypothyroidism. Continuing to paint different areas of your body every 24 hours until the stain remains a full 24 hours will increase your iodine levels. Seaweeds and Celtic sea salt also provide rich sources of iodine.

ADRENAL GLANDS

The glands that work hand in glove with the thyroid are the adrenals, two small, prune-shaped glands that sit on top of the kidneys. Although small in size, they are very big in function.

They are involved in manufacturing 28 different hormones, the digestion of food (especially carbohydrates and sugar), the regulation of the body's minerals, producing and maintaining the body's energy levels in conjunction with the thyroid, and producing hormones that monitor stress. Progesterone is the primary raw material for producing adrenal gland hormones.

Prolonged stress, whether a result of emotional, environmental or physical causes, is disastrous for the adrenals. Initially it increases the output of the adrenal hormone, cortisol. Cortisol helps to regulate blood sugar and the movement of carbohydrates, proteins and fats in and out of the cells. Chronic stress causes chronically elevated levels of cortisol, resulting in weight gain (especially around the midsection), blood sugar imbalances, thinning skin, muscle wasting, memory loss, high blood pressure, dizziness, hot flashes, excessive facial hair, and other masculinizing tendencies.

Overworked adrenals will eventually crash, leading to adrenal exhaustion and inability to maintain adequate production of adrenal hormones. Symptoms of overtaxed adrenals include extreme fatigue such as in Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, irritability, inability to concentrate, frustration, insomnia, addictions to either sweet or salty foods, allergies, nervousness, depression, PMS sensitivity to cold, diabetes and headaches. Chronic low blood pressure is a key symptom of adrenal exhaustion.

Adrenal exhaustion creates havoc with the endocrine system. Many hormonal imbalances in women of all ages are caused by overworked adrenal glands. Nutrients that have special importance to the adrenal glands are the B vitamins (especially B₅), vitamin C, proteins, magnesium, manganese, zinc, potassium, plant enzymes, adrenal extracts, and the amino acids tyrosine and phenylalanine. Rest is the best when it comes to rebuilding the adrenals. So is stress reduction. Shedding one's life of those stressful events, people, demands and high-pressure jobs as well as addressing unresolved emotional wounds is vital for healing the adrenal glands.

As more and more women awaken from the spell that has been cast upon them, it becomes apparent that menopause is not the enemy of their quality of life. Popping a hormone pill is certainly not the solution. Regaining the knowledge of their female physiology, reducing their hectic lives, honoring the needs of their bodies, and returning to the healing power of natural foods and natural medicines are indeed the greatest challenges for women in this new millennium.

ACRES U.S.A. We certainly give them a great amount of bicarbonate of soda.

SELLMAN. We do horrible things. It's just insanity and worse. Cattle are designed to eat grass, and when you let them feed on pastureland, they actually have high levels of vitamin E and high levels of conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), which helps to metabolize fat. CLA is sold as a nutrient for increasing metabolism and losing weight. The meat of grass-fed beef, then, has much higher nutritional content that is improving our health, giving us vitamins and minerals that we don't get from any other form of grain-fed animals. There are studies coming out showing that grass-fed beef is actually a factor in preventing cancer, whereas other forms of beef compromise our nutritional status and put us at risk for cancer, but grass-fed beef is protective. It's a much higher source of nutrition, protein and good healthy fats, as well. It's the only form of beef in all honesty that I eat these days.

ACRES U.S.A. I hope we haven't wandered too far from the original subject we wanted to discuss, which is the hormone system.

SELLMAN. Can I just say that if we're talking about beef, we need to understand that *all* commercial beef is shot up with hormones. They're shot up with estrogen, which turns food into fat. It does that in animals. It does that in human beings. This is why we can take a cow and bring it to market in a fraction of the time of what it used to take, because we are putting all these hormones into these animals to accelerate their growth (much of which is water). It causes water retention and bloating. It is totally unregulated. We are finding these hormones in the meat of the animals we are eating. They don't disappear after they go to slaughter, so we are taking these hormones into our bodies through the commercial beef. This is a major health factor and it's happening in all forms of commercial meat. It's a major contributing factor to our really high levels of hormones and hormone stimulation in children as well as adults, and it increases risk for all the problems associated with an excess estrogen situation, including PMS, ovarian cysts, polycystic ovaries, fibroids, menopausal problems, weight problems and the hormone-dependent cancers. Commercial meat is a major factor in what's happening now. Again, part of the experiment. No trials were ever done on the safety of putting hormones into animals and how it gets transferred to humans.

ACRES U.S.A. So we're constantly receiving hormone supplements whether we like it or not. What else should we know about pharmaceutical hormone therapies?

SELLMAN. Let me add one statement to the subject of how women were experimental animals for HRT. The use of estrogen alone in this therapy stopped after 10 years because it was discovered that the 800 percent increase in incidents of uterine cancer — *800 percent* — was due to estrogen replacement therapy.

ACRES U.S.A. In other words, we've blundered pretty badly and continue to blunder because of a profit motive.

SELLMAN. Yes, because after menopause was perceived as a medical condition, which happened in the 1950s and '60s, we have been medicated ever since. Menopause is still seen as a disease process for which we need to use some form of medication, and women are continually told that their bodies fail, that they have to rely on drugs to get them back — whether it's young girls with PMS or infertility problems (probably due to poor diet and the Pill), or whether it's the menopausal woman going through her symptoms or post-menopausal woman dealing with osteoporosis. Every step of the way we are told that drugs are the solution, when in fact they're part of the problem. Unless women and men wake up, unless we understand our bodies, unless we take greater responsibility for our health and return to nature, we will never receive any benefits from those treatments. They all inevitably contribute to our failing health.

ACRES U.S.A. We understand you do a considerable amount of lecturing and short course work. Have you written down what you're telling us?

SELLMAN. Yes, I have much of this information in my book *Hormone Heresy, What Women Must Know about Their Hormones*, and my new book, which is called *What Women Must Know to Protect Their Daughters from Breast Cancer*, addresses the rest of these issues. *Hormone Heresy* is in a sense part one and *What Women Must Know to Protect Their Daughters From Breast Cancer* part 2 of my research, which aims not only to educate women, to empower women, but also to give the solution. I also offer a free monthly newsletter in which I share my research and interviews and information. All they need to do is go to my website

which is <www.ssellman.com>, and I have what I call my HormoneWise e-Digest, a free monthly e-newsletter.

ACRES U.S.A. The fact that you stress women does not suggest that men are home free.

SELLMAN. By no means! My focus has been helping to educate women because I see so many of them, because women have been such a target for the pharmaceutical industry for so long. But the problems are also very critical for men. Many of them are hormone-dependent issues. Prostate cancer is increasing at a very fast rate. So is testicular cancer. These are all hormone-dependent cancers. It's kind of a male version of breast cancer and ovarian cancer. And of course osteoporosis is a problem affecting men and women. These are issues that all of us are facing. We've come to a time that it is absolutely essential for people to become more educated, to become more responsible about their health, and to become more committed than ever before to implementing these changes in the diet that we chose to eat and the environment that we chose to live in, and to supporting the farmers who are committed to growing clean foods. This is a necessity, we don't even have a choice any longer if we want to remain healthy and insure the health of our children and grandchildren.

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