



Workshop Session #4 Action Step Guide:  
The Hidden Connection Between Gut  
Issues & Hormone Imbalances

with Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo



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## **Workshop Session #4 Action Step Guide: The Hidden Link Between Gut Issues & Hormone Imbalances with Dr. Ritamarie**

The following are suggested action steps from Dr. Ritamarie's Heal Your Gut Workshop Session. I suggest that you print this guide and have it handy while you listen to her workshop session so you can learn more about the details of the suggested steps. To track your progress, check off each step as you complete it.

### **Pay Attention to the Signs that Your Gut Hormones Are Not Working Properly**

Here are some signs to look for:

1. Feeling of fullness and discomfort like your stomach isn't emptying after eating. (The emptying of the stomach is a hormonal control.)
2. When *gastrin* isn't working well, you're not going to break down protein. One sign away from the gut that you might experience is being unable to build muscle when you work out. This happens because you don't have enough protein and amino acids being put into the blood stream to create muscle tone.
3. You might get sick easily because the immune system is off—you don't have enough of the amino acids to be able to create the enzymes and anti-inflammatory constituents you need for the immune system to work.
4. You may have hormonal imbalances—hormones like estrogen, progesterone, thyroid may be affected because there's not enough building blocks for the body to make them. Fats are especially important for making hormones.

Impairment in any of these pieces can show up as symptoms, not just in the gut but anywhere in the body. Most people don't realize it because they're hard to measure. Unfortunately, there aren't diagnostic tests to see what your gut hormones are doing.

### **Pay Attention to Your B12 Levels**

The lining of the stomach secretes the *parietal cells*, which secrete intrinsic factor, which helps B12 absorption. If you have damage to the gut lining it will affect B12 absorption.

### **Be Cautious of Antacids**

Antacid/acid-blocker medications stop stomach acid. When you halt the flow of acid you interrupt the digestion of protein and minerals. This can create other symptoms elsewhere in the body with the immune system, hormones, skin joints, hair, and nails—pretty much everything—because your key building blocks (protein) are missing.



## **Know Your Estrogens & Why They Must Be Balanced**

Estrogen is metabolized by the liver. There's three main kinds of estrogen (E1 *estrone*, E2 *estradiol*, E3 *estriol*). The first two are dangerous if too high and out of balance and can cause breast cancer, uterine cancer and other hormone-related cancers. Estriol isn't talked about as much and how beneficial it is to the body and it can counter effect the imbalances in the other two hormones.

The conventional approach to hormones is to give one hormone instead of a balance of them, usually estrone or estradiol. Estriol is often left out. If you want to do it right, 80% should be the estriol.

Metabolite tests show the estrogen quotient. To have a safe metabolism of estrogen where you decrease your risk of breast cancer, you want to have a ratio where if you add up E1 (estrone) and E2 (estradiol), they should be less than or equal to estriol. But this is not the case most of the time.

When taking hormones you put yourself at high risk if it's unopposed with progesterone and there's a wrong balance of the three estrogens.

Taking hormones can be done safely. But you have to work on the whole body. Just taking hormones without balancing the gut, getting stress levels down, and making sure you're getting all the nutrients you need leads to imbalance.

## **Understand the Benefits of Bioidentical Hormones Over Synthetic Hormones**

If hormones are necessary, the bioidentical hormones are the better option. The safety of bioidentical hormones depends on how you're taking them, why you're taking them, in what form you're taking them, and what quantity you're taking. If you're 62 and taking enough estrogen and progesterone to make you look like you're 22 that's *not* normal. Work with a skilled health practitioner who can help you find the right protocol.

## **Identify Your Key Stressors**

Too much stress equals too much cortisol, and too much cortisol equals poor digestion. What are your stressors? Eating stressful foods, chemicals in the environment, hidden infections like Candida etc.

## **Know Your Thyroid Health**

The thyroid has an intimate relationship with the sex hormones. It's important to ask, *why is the thyroid not functioning?* 80-90% of all thyroid conditions are autoimmune condition, which come from leaky gut. Another reason the thyroid could be out of balance is stress—the adrenals are out of balance. (Too much or too little cortisol in various pathways in thyroid metabolism impacts the flow of active thyroid hormone and the ability of the cells to pick it up.



### **Eat Whole Foods to Maintain Balanced Hormones**

If you're eating a lot of sugar and processed foods this disrupts the microbiome and messes up the ratios of the estrogens and the way a person feels. It's really important that we have the diet (eating whole, fresh organic foods), the lifestyle to support balanced hormones.

NOTE: At Better Beyond 50, we walk you through how to determine the best foods to eat for your unique needs by doing an elimination diet. You'll discover how to identify foods that are triggering inflammation, as part of the BB50 30-Day Reset. As a BB50 member you get free access to this program. You can learn more about this by clicking on the "30-Day Reset" tab in your Member Area, then selecting "Week 2 - Gut Health, Nutrition & Your Metabolic Type."

Here's the direct link:

<https://betterbeyond50.com/member/bb50-members-30-day-reset-week-2/>

### **Don't Buy Into Ageist Stereotypes About Menopause**

Some women believe their hormones are out of balance simply because they're over 50. But this isn't the reason. The hormones are supposed to *decrease* with age, but they're also supposed to stay *balanced* so you stay feeling good.

The normal, healthy way to go through menopause is when your periods keep getting further apart and eventually they stop. But this is not the common way. If your body has all the right nutrients and you're healthy you won't have a miserable time going through menopause.

It's important to look at the root cause and ask, *why are my hormones out of balance?*

### **To Get to the Root of Your Health Challenges By "Layering Backwards"**

Think of the body like a pyramid. You start at the top with the symptom. For example, hot flashes might be caused by a thyroid imbalance, the thyroid imbalance might be caused by the adrenal gland imbalance, the adrenal gland imbalance might be caused by a gut imbalance related to diet.

You can take something to temporarily "band aid" the hot flashes, as long as you're looking for the root. But if you're just taking hormones, herbs or vitamins without looking at your diet and lifestyle and how it's impacting your gut you're not going to get better long-term.

It is possible to balance your hormones without hormone replacement by balancing your gut microbiome. A big part of your success is your willingness to make the changes necessary.



### **How to Determine If Your Hormonal Issues Are Rooted in Your Gut**

Signs to look for: Belching, burping, and gas after meals, joint, skin break outs, acne etc. These symptoms are not normal—something is out of balance. We should be asymptomatic. If you have hot flashes pay attention to what else is going on in your body like indigestion.

### **Understand the Role of Genetics on Your Health**

A lot of people want to give too much credence to genetics, but it's important to give a balance to genetics. Genetics will create a weakness in an area; diet and lifestyle stressors will cause it to express.

You could go through whole life and make it to 110 with a gene that predisposes you to cardiovascular disease, but if you're happy, you eat well, you exercise and you're doing fulfilling work, you may never get it. Where your sibling, who has different lifestyle habits, could have a heart attack.

Focusing on being happy, optimistic, exercising, keeping environment clean, eating organic foods, doing work that you love, take vacations—it does pay off. 95% is epigenetics and 5% is genetics.

### **Follow These 4 Simple Steps to Rebalance Your Gut & Hormones**

1. Remember, your digestion doesn't begin in your digestive tract. Your digestion begins with your mind and soul. Your mood and stress levels play a huge role. Start every meal by taking a few deep breaths and expressing appreciation for the food in front of you. Saving grace before a meal is not just a religious thing—it's a health practice.
2. Chew your food to smoothie consistency before you swallow. If you see bits of nuts, seeds, vegetables etc. in your bowel movements, you're not chewing your food enough.
3. Breath in between bites to help you slow down. You'll naturally feel full when you take your time eating.
4. Eat only REAL, whole foods.

### **Learn from the “Pain Threshold”**

Remember that in order to make the lifestyle changes necessary to feel better, the level of pain for staying where you're at has to be greater than the level of pain for making a change. *How good do you want to feel?*



**Know Your Why & Write It Down**

What's your big why? What do you enjoy doing that not feeling good keeps you from doing? Do you have grandchildren you can't play with because you have too pain or not enough energy? Get clear about your motivation for change.