

The Pantry Doctor | Produce Before Pills™

Guide to Hormones and Fat Loss

by Wendie Schneider RDN, LD, MBA

Are you unable to lose weight?

Do you have an excess of abdominal fat?

Are you feeling unusually fatigued?

Are you bloated?

How about craving sugar?

Insulin | This is a fat-storing hormone, and the more it circulates in the body, the more our body wants to store fat. Period. If you ask yourself any of the questions above, chances are insulin resistance is the culprit.

Warning signs of insulin resistance:

- Belly fat
- Tendency to crave carbs
- Feeling of fatigue
- Foggy thinking
- High blood glucose levels
- High blood pressure
- High triglyceride levels (150 mg/Dl or above)
- Low HDL levels (under 40 mg/Dl for men/ under 50 mg/DL for women)

Do you have trouble sticking with a diet?

Do you crave junk foods?

Do you want to snack a lot, especially at night?

Leptin | This is the hormone in the body that controls hunger and feelings of fullness. This hormone is also tied directly to insulin levels. Release of leptin sends a signal to the brain telling us that we are full. When people are overweight, they have a lot of leptin floating around in the bloodstream, but it does not send a signal to the brain telling it that the body is full.

Warning signs of leptin resistance

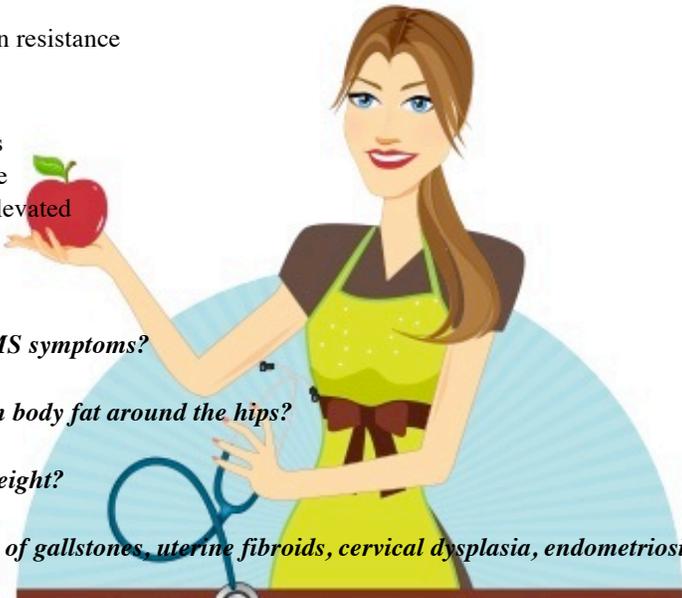
- Obese
- Craving carbs
- Large appetite
- Reverse T3 elevated

Do you have crazy PMS symptoms?

Do you have too much body fat around the hips?

Is it difficult to lose weight?

Do you have a history of gallstones, uterine fibroids, cervical dysplasia, endometriosis, or ovarian cysts?



Estrogen | Too much estrogen relative to progesterone is known as “Estrogen Dominance”. This causes fat gain, water retention and bloating. There are only two ways accumulate estrogen dominance, and that is 1) our body makes too much of it 2) we get too much through our diet or the environment. Accumulating estrogen is not hard. We are exposed to it through pesticides, herbicides, and growth hormones. This causes us to gain weight which fuels production of more estrogen from our own fat cells. Hormone replacement therapy, birth control pills, soy and soy products all increase estrogen levels.

Warning signs of Estrogen Dominance:

- Decreased sex drive
- Irregular or otherwise abnormal menstrual periods
- Bloating
- Breast swelling and tenderness
- Headaches
- Mood swings (most often irritability and depression)
- Weight and/or fat gain (particularly around the abdomen and hips)
- Cold hands and feet (a symptom of thyroid dysfunction)
- Hair loss
- Thyroid dysfunction
- Sluggish metabolism
- Foggy thinking, memory loss
- Fatigue
- Trouble sleeping/insomnia
- Heavy PMS symptoms

Do you feel like you are prone to putting more weight on when you are stressed, even when you have been eating the same amount of food you always do?

Are you reaching for a nice summer salad, or homemade ice cream and cobbler?

Cortisol | This is known as our stress hormone. There are several ways in which stress can contribute to weight gain. Too much cortisol can slow down your metabolism, making weight gain inevitable. People

that experience chronic stress tend to crave more sugary, fatty foods. These are less healthy and lead to weight gain. Excess stress has been linked to higher levels of fat, in particular abdominal fat.

Warning signs:

- Mood swings
- Digestive problems
- Heart disease and high blood pressure
- Sleep problems
- Weight gain, especially in abdomen
- Skin aging and wrinkling

How do I teach my body to burn fuel like it should?

- Eat less processed foods, simple starches, sugars and fructose- The highly processed nature of the high carb foods that we eat on a daily basis such as breakfast cereals, breads, snack bars, etc. require much higher amounts of insulin to process them in the body. The body tries to release large amounts of insulin in an attempt to keep the body functioning properly by taking the sugars (glucose) into the cells. Over time, with tons highly processed foods, our bodies become resistant to the insulin.
- Eat a balanced diet- Diet should consist of healthy carbohydrates, and should be mostly "label-less". Think fruits and veggies for carbohydrates, plenty of protein and healthy fats. Take a look at Wendie's 10 to see some staples that you should incorporate into your diet every week.
- Get plenty of sleep-when you don't get enough sleep, your leptin levels drop. This tells your body it is hungry, and causes cravings.
- Exercise- do something healthy for your body every single day. Get outside and get some sunshine because vitamin D and regular exercise helps regulate hormones.
- Remove toxins from your life- toxins aren't just found in food, but in the products we put on our skin. These toxins overwork our liver, and keep it from doing what it is supposed to do.
- Eat more omega 3's and less omega 6's- this helps balance inflammation and support healthy hormone levels
- Take care of your liver-The liver breaks down estrogen, alcohol, drugs, and toxins. With all this work, estrogen starts to build up. If you consume alcohol, take 1 mg of folic acid and a b-complex vitamin to reduce the negative effects.
- Eat probiotics-bacterial imbalances in the gut compromise digestion which could interfere with proper elimination of estrogen.
- Boost your fiber intake- fiber binds to estrogen and takes it along the digestive tract, eliminating it from the body.
- Choose organic when possible- this limits your exposure to toxins and hormones
- Be careful of soy- unfermented soy product act as estrogens in the body

For more information on nutrition see Wendie's [blog](#).