



# Hormones

# Hormones and Weight Loss

Every year when the New Year rolls around, everyone starts to talk about losing those few extra pounds and fitting into a size smaller.

Even with all the eating right, exercising, and sucking in your gut, losing those last few pounds can be difficult.

Weight loss and hormones go hand in hand, and when your hormones aren't as in line as they should be, it's impossible to get rid of the little bit of extra. Once you get your hormones back in line, the weight can start to shed off your frame!

Balancing your hormones impacts every area of your life, from weight loss to your skin health! Making sure that hormones are balanced and in line is one of the best things you can do for your life.

## How Do Hormones Impact Your Health

Hormones are the chemical messengers that move every part of your body, from the way your skin breaks out when you have too much grease to how much you gain weight when you hit your period.

There are several key hormones that impact your everyday health!

### Estrogen

Both men and women have estrogen, and it plays an important part in your daily life!

When estrogen becomes overpopulated in your body, you suddenly start to experience more symptoms like depression, weight gain, difficulty sleeping, low sex drive, anxiety, and menstrual problems, just to name a few.

Excess estrogen wreaks havoc on every area of your body and can leave you feeling bloated and gaining weight without even realizing it.

### Insulin

We often don't hear about insulin as a hormone in the body until it becomes a massive problem in the form of diabetes. But there are tons of ways that insulin can start to impact your ability to lose weight and go about your day-to-day activities.

Insulin is created by the pancreas and typically transforms glucose into energy!

As your body adapts and changes, you might start to have a hard time processing and producing insulin. This can turn into pre-diabetes, insulin resistance, and eventually diabetes.

When insulin isn't working correctly, your body isn't able to convert all the sugar into energy and stores it as fat within your system. That stubborn belly fat? Often it's caused by insulin resistance!

## Cortisol

If you've ever started to feel tired and exhausted at the end of the day, it's often because you're lacking cortisol in your system!

Cortisol is the hormone that's responsible for helping you stay healthy overall and energetic in the day-to-day. By regulating your metabolism, cortisol helps you keep weight off or, in the case that it's not working right, puts weight on in a hurry.

With too much cortisol in your system, it can be hard to sleep at night, you might feel anxious and start to have hypertension. Not getting enough sleep and too much anxiety leaves you reaching for all your comfort snacks and might cause weight gain.

## Thyroid

When you hear about hormone issues, one of the biggest you hear about is your thyroid.

The functions of the thyroid primarily revolve around regulating your metabolism! Metabolism is a key factor in weight gain and weight loss. The slower it works, the harder it is to lose weight, even when you try really hard.

Issues with your thyroid can lead to major issues and diseases like Graves and Hashimoto's that make it hard to manage your weight and your energy levels.

# Balancing Hormones For Weight Loss

The time has come to get things in order so you can drop those last few pounds, get your hormones in line, and start to hit your health and wellness goals!

Nothing great can be done overnight, so the key is to keep things consistent in every area, from hormones to weight loss. Small, consistent changes are going to help you reach those goals! Even when you feel like things aren't going as well as you'd like, you're still making progress.

## Start With Plenty of Protein

Protein is one of the best things you can do for your body, from your hormones to weight loss!

Your body needs a lot of amino acids to function properly and help your body produce the right type and amount of hormones. Protein provides the catalyst your body needs to get things going the way it needs.

Everything your body does, from growing to burning energy and boosting your metabolism to controlling your appetite and stress, comes from how your body processes proteins and amino acids.

Eating more protein cuts back on how much your body produces of the hormone ghrelin and actually produces hormones that help you feel full! You're better able to control how much you eat and whether your body feels full or not when you start your whole meal plan with plenty of protein.

### Action Steps

- **Plan your meals** ahead of time! It's all too easy to reach for things that won't have enough protein when you don't have a plan in mind. Planning out your meals for the week lets you get in all your protein without having to scramble.
- **Think outside the box** when you're planning out your protein. Protein can be found in a wide variety of sources so don't feel like you'll be stuck doing steaks and chicken with rice for the entire time! Move outside of what you typically eat and try something new.
- **Find creative ways during your day to get** protein into your system. Beyond the types of meals you eat, when you eat can help you fit in more protein than you might think! Having some jerky as a snack or grabbing a handful of nuts and fruits for breakfast or with your cup of coffee can give you an added serving of protein without completely throwing off your plan.

## Get Out and Get Active

Movement is one of the best things you can do for your body and not just for weight loss!

Getting active and staying active is a great way to balance your hormones and start to get those pounds off. Simple movements are just as good as big actions and it allows you to get your hormones back in line in a hurry.

Exercise plays an important role in balancing your insulin levels! There's still debate within the scientific community whether the exercise itself helps to increase your insulin

sensitivity or that the more you exercise, the more weight you lose, which does the same thing.

Either way, movement plays an important role in your hormones and your weight loss. Getting active boosts levels like testosterone and human growth hormones that have a tendency to decline as you get older!

### Action Steps

- **Find an accountability partner** who can help you keep your plan on track! When you're on your own, it's all too easy to skip over your workout for the day or convince yourself that you can do it "later." A friend or family member who can encourage you and help you stick to the plan is a great benefit when you're trying to get more exercise.
- **Choose an exercise that you enjoy** whether that's walking, running, weight training, or anything in between! When you like the exercise you'll be doing, you'll feel more relaxed and be more inclined to actually do it each time you set out.
- **Don't try to do everything all at once!** Teaching your body to exercise and work out takes time so trying to hit the trails for an ultra-marathon the day after you decide to work out more is just not feasible. Little, incremental changes help you make the most of your new focus.

## Engage with Good Gut Health

Gut health has a massive impact on the way your hormones interact and how your body drops weight!

Gut health is all about balancing the good and bad bacteria within your gut. Everything from the food you eat to how often you go outside impacts your gut health which then impacts your hormones and weight loss or weight gain.

The gut microbiome is essential in helping increase insulin sensitivity and keeping you feeling full. As your body burns certain types of fiber within that same gut microbiome, it helps your body increase its calorie burning which can help you lose weight faster!

### Action Steps

- **Eat plenty of fiber** within your diet which can help balance out the good and bad bacteria within your gut. The more soluble fiber you eat, the more your gut needs to work. The more your gut needs to work, the better balanced your gut health will be!
- **Choose fermented foods** like yogurt, kefir, and sauerkraut. These types of foods introduce new strains of good bacteria and feed the good bacteria that are

already in your gut! There are tons of different options that are packed with good bacteria that you can incorporate into your diet!

- **Consider a probiotic supplement** and introduce that into your diet. Supplements can be a great way to keep up with the good strains of bacteria in your gut and feed them as you continue on with your meal plan.

## Cut Back On Sugar

We all love a sweet treat at the end of a long day or a slice of something delectable for a special occasion or a random Tuesday!

But too much sugar can leave your body struggling to keep up and keep your hormones balanced. All that added sugar causes your hormones, specifically insulin, to be working overtime. Since it's working overtime, there's nowhere for that sugar to go, and it quickly converts to fat within the body.

Balancing your hormones and gaining ground in your weight loss journey often start with cutting back on sugar. Sugar sneaks its way into almost every type of food, from savory snacks to your standard sweet treats. Even drinks can give you more added sugar than you want in a day.

Too much sugar can also upset your gut health which then leads to more disruptions in your hormones! Learning how to cut back on sugar can get your hormones in line and help you start to shed those extra pounds.

### Action Steps

- **Switch out drinks** for low-sugar or no-sugar options. Even though a coffee loaded with creamer and sugar sounds like the perfect way to start the day, your body can get by without it all. Choose options that are going to be low in added sugar and that still lets you have your favorites but without disrupting your body like it used to.
- **Try fruit** as a sweet treat when you're craving something! Fruit contains tons of natural sweeteners and sugars that can help you deal with those cravings, but it won't disrupt your body the way it used to. Even adding a little bit of fruit to your water as an infusion can give you that little boost of flavor and sweetness, but you aren't stuck with all the added sugar!
- **Stay hydrated** throughout the day! Often, cravings pop up when your body is feeling dehydrated. Staying hydrated throughout the day keeps the cravings at bay which makes it easier to avoid added sugars and sweets. If you're feeling a craving for a sugary treat, drink a big glass of water before you reach for anything in the cupboard!

## Lower Stress Levels

Cortisol is one of those hormones that seems hard to control.

Stress is a big trigger when it comes to changes in your cortisol level. When your body encounters a situation that's a fight or flight response, it releases a big wave of cortisol.

After the situation has ended, the body's levels of cortisol are designed to decrease and eventually leave the body. But when you're under long-term stress, the levels of cortisol don't go down.

Constant stress, which leaves your cortisol levels high, means your appetite is stimulated, and you reach for those sugary, fatty foods more quickly. Practicing stress-release techniques lowers your cortisol levels, and you're able to push away from those sugary and fatty treats!

### Action Steps

- **Practice meditation** each day! Meditation goes beyond just sitting for an hour and thinking about "things." This is a time that's designed to ground you and help you release stress as you go throughout the day. Simply breathing in and out and grounding yourself in the moment is a great way to relieve stress.
- **Journal at the end of the day** to get your thoughts out so they don't keep causing you stress. When your thoughts are stuck in the loop within your mind, they keep reigniting the stress and anxiety from the day. Putting it all out on paper breaks up the hamster wheel of your thoughts and lets you get things out of your mind so you can move on and move past!
- **Share your thoughts** with other people you trust. Stress and anxiety and those racing thoughts are trapped in your mind. By sharing with someone you trust, you break up the stress and strain and allow a new voice to be heard. Sharing and then hearing something new from a totally new source is a great way to relieve stress and move past the anxiety from your day.

## Takeaway

Your hormones have a massive impact on your body!

When those same hormones aren't balanced the way they should be, it's difficult to lose weight like you want. Even when you hit the gym every single day, multiple times a day, cut back on every type of meal and count your calories, those stubborn pounds can still stay on your frame.

Balancing your hormones takes some dedication, but it's completely doable in your daily life!

Insulin and cortisol have a big impact on whether your body holds onto weight, and learning how to balance those through diet and exercise lets you drop the pounds and feel better on the daily.

Gut health, exercise, meals, and your stress relief techniques all play a role in balancing your hormones which then help you lose weight! Everything goes hand in hand with your hormones and weight loss and you can't have one without the other.

Once you have a grasp on your hormones and balancing them out, it's much easier to drop off the last few pounds from your frame! You'll start to see changes in everything not just with weight loss but with skin health, mental health, and everything else in between!

There's no time like the present to start!