

Bringing Harmony to Hormonal Skin

Take Control of Your Complexion

While most of us think of hormonal fluctuations as internal changes tied to the reproductive system, such physiological shifts can have a profound effect on other parts of the body as well. Whether the result of age, lifestyle or environmental factors, hormonal imbalance can not only set the body and mind spinning; it also takes its toll on the skin. Fortunately, modern skin care has recognized the key role hormones play in skin health and developed solutions specifically designed to address this concern. By introducing ingredients that encourage hormonal equilibrium, we can take a holistic approach to imbalanced skin.

How Hormones Affect the Skin

Hormones can affect the skin in a number of ways. For most, the introduction to imbalanced skin begins in adolescence with blemishing and excessive oiliness often accompanying the body's first hormonal peak. While for many, the temperamental skin of our teen years fades with age, for others it is a concern that continues well into adulthood. Even for those with relatively well-balanced skin, intermittent fluctuations—such as during menstruation, starting or stopping birth control or the onset of menopause—can wreak havoc on one's complexion, particularly in terms of moisture balance.

Hormones affect moisture balance by stimulating the skin's sebaceous glands—natural, oil-producing glands—to produce more or less sebum, or natural oil, than normal. Elevated levels of the male hormone testosterone, for instance, tend to encourage sebum overproduction, often leading to an oily, blemish-prone complexion. Decreased levels of the female hormone estrogen, on the other hand, often result in drier skin as sebum production is scaled back.

Sebum production, however, is not the only factor influenced by the body's internal chemistry. Recent scientific evidence suggests a strong link between estrogen and collagen production, with elevated levels of the hormone playing a key role in stimulating production of the structural tissue. According to a University of Michigan Health System study published in September 2008, topical estrogen treatments increased the level of collagen significantly in areas unaffected by chronic sun damage.

Addressing Hormones in Skin Care

Acknowledging the critical role of hormones in skin health, CosMedix incorporates natural, hormone-balancing ingredients into several of its skin care formulas. Ingredients like soy isoflavones, dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) and pregnenolone (both from yams) keep hormonal fluctuations in check, encouraging a healthy moisture balance even during periods of flux.

A phytohormone (literally, “plant hormone”), soy isoflavones act as a weak form of estrogen, binding to the body's estrogen receptors to either block overproduction of the hormone or act as a supplement when production is low. In addition to their role as hormonal regulators, soy isoflavones also help induce collagen production and protect against damaging free radicals.

Pregnenolone and DHEA are prohormones—precursors used to make hormones—found naturally in the body and believed to play a role in skin immunity and hydration. As the body ages, its natural reserves diminish, leaving the skin at greater risk for disease and irregular sebum production. By reintroducing these and other key hormonal elements to the skin, CosMedix encourages a return to healthy sebaceous and immune activity.

Because hormonal fluctuations affect women in different ways, CosMedix offers custom solutions based on condition. Whether plagued by hormonal dryness and dehydration or hormone-stimulated oily skin, CosMedix's advanced correctives target the source of the imbalance to restore epidermal equilibrium and reveal beautiful, well-balanced skin.

Balancing Act

Commonsense Ways to Combat Hormonal Skin

Watch What You Eat

When the body is poorly nourished, acidic or overwhelmed by toxins, the skin visibly suffers. A healthy diet, rich in fiber, iron, calcium and essential vitamins (think grains, fruits and leafy vegetables), can help restore balance, remove toxins and minimize the hormonal response.

Cut out the Caffeine

Stimulating adrenaline production, caffeine alters the brain's chemistry, inviting a flood of stress hormones which can adversely affect the skin. By limiting your caffeine intake, you can help control artificial fluctuations and help encourage hormonal stability.

Get More Sleep

Our sleep cycle is essential to maintaining proper hormonal regulation. Interrupting or abbreviating the body's circadian rhythm can result in imbalance and increased stress—both of which can trigger skin conditions.