Midlife Skin, Hair & Nails: How Hormones Impact Your Appearance Transcript

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Introduction to Doctor Talks

Nutrition is essential. So what you eat is what you are, right? So what you eat goes into your skin and your nails and your hair as well. So welcome antioxidants again.

Oh my. Everything rich in vitamin C is more than welcome. All my berries are more than welcome. Welcome to Doctor Talks, the podcast where every episode leads to a healthier you.

Join us as we navigate the world of optimal health, uncovering groundbreaking strategies to conquer chronic disease. In each episode, we'll bring you the latest insights from leading health experts, medical innovators, and wellness warriors.

If you're seeking to transform your health journey, or if you're looking for answers to burning questions, you've come to the right place. Get ready to unlock the secrets of lifelong health and vitality.

This is Doctor Talks, real talk from real doctors on the issues that matter to you most. Hi everybody. Welcome back to Double Down with doctor D I'm Doctor D triple Board-Certified and I'm here to continue our conversations about redefining midlife because it's not the end is the beginning.

It's not a midlife crisis. It's a transformation. And today on our menopause series we're going to talk about three important components of our body that are part of the entire human three system.

Midlife Transformation and the Human Three System

It's a big word, but it really refers is to all the components that are outside our body. So the main three elements that we love, we live for them. We spend money on them time and sometimes even defines our self esteem.

It's skin, hair and our nails. So hormones play a very important role is the symphony of hormones that maintains the quality of these three elements. And like we know, the main characters of our hormones, especially now that we're talking about perimenopause and menopause, are the king.

Estrogen, progesterone and this dust alone. But there is some background, let's say supportive actors. They play a very important role that will determine as well what kind of quality of skin or how far we age.

Are the thyroid hormones cortisol, insulin, growth hormone? Some vitamins, like vitamin D will play a role as well. So let's start digging in a little bit better.

So the most important thing, the most important hormone estrogen, what I call the estrogen glow factor. So estrogen through different mechanisms create the perfect environment for the scheme to be fully profuse.

So a lot of blood goes into the skin and maintains that skin moist and thick enough, and gives the good structure of the college into the skin through all these years that we produce, good amounts of estrogen.

So through our fertile years, by the time we start declining again, I don't like that word that much, but let's just start. The estrogen starts just diminishing slowly through our late 30s and going into 40s.

Then we start noticing the difference between how our skin used to look on the early 20s plump, nice, you know, rosy type of skin all the way to what's happening, why my skin feels thinner.

Doesn't matter how much moisturize I put on, it feels like starting to just a little bit. The little lines start to show up. Estrogen plays an important role in the distribution of the fat, so we start losing our little nice bone cheeks.

Estrogen, Progesterone, and Skin Health

Everything looks more hollow in certain areas, and this is when we start noticing our selfies are not the same when ten years ago or five years ago, or sometimes even happens overnight.

Right. Your eyelids overnight. So if we understand that that's a connection with that, with the estrogen and progesterone is there as well. And remember that these two, these two hormones, they are like the yin and yang.

And they together create the perfect environment. So progesterone as well especially progesterone for being the calming counteracting hormone of cortisol, which is very inflammatory as well, maintains a very nice relaxed, smooth kind of structure for our skin.

Our hair is mainly related to the star stirring. So, you know, testosterone. We will talk about it in another podcast. Is that the good, the bad and the ugly of testosterone?

So too much testosterone will totally make horrible baldness and too little testosterone. It will be very thin, very few hairs. So it's in the middle.

It's all about the middle. And it comes back to the same concept for testosterone is all about finding the sweet spot in the middle. So going back into her physiology, testosterone will play the most important role in our scalp.

And that's why many medications are available for alopecia, which is the loss of hair or losing too much hair as well. Kind of problems are those medications that are available are focus on that conversion of DHT, which is dihydrotestosterone, into testosterone for the for the hair growth and physiology, and our progesterone as well.

It creates a very good environment for beautiful, fully hair. A good example is, those who we have been going through pregnancy and progesterone is the main hormone present during pregnancy.

We noticed that our hair looks all shiny and beautiful. We lose less hair because we just know that it's in charge of that. So all this is happening through all the years that our hormones are there.

This symphony is happening. Everybody is in balance. And then here we are going into a little bit of less accessibility to the three of them. Thyroid.

Actually, it's important to mention that thyroid and estrogen have a relationship as well. And that's why many women are going through perimenopause and menopause have the tendency to present with thyroid dysfunction either hypothyroidism famous Hashimoto's.

It is because estrogen gives support to the thyroid function and to the production of thyroid hormones. If with lack of estrogen, you are at risk of having a thyroid dysfunction, the thyroid hormone will make an impact in how your entire entire system reacts as well.

So all these adds on into the recipe. And cortisol, which is our big hormone. It's a it's a very it's a hormone that without will die. But with too much we die as well.

And we produce it as a, as a survival as well.

Hair Loss, Testosterone, and Thyroid Links

Like adrenaline, cortisol is there and we we expose to cortisol chronically that's high and inflammatory and that will puts us at risk of many chronic diseases and is one of the best way to counteract stress is talking about cortisol.

Right. We we talk about sleep is about let's, let's balance your cortisol peaks. Let's manage your stress reaction through how much cortisol you're producing.

You are an inflammatory state for A, B or C reason. You're producing cortisol, which is absolutely necessary because part of the cortisol is part of that inflammation.

It's for survival as well. So these the cortisol plays a role in breaks down collagen and mix helping it makes our hair to fall more right. When you are in high moments of stress you create a lot of cortisol.

Then you wake up in the morning and you can see your pillowcase full of those hairs is not a coincidence. That's the hormone that is making a big impact in hair healthy.

Your hair is looking. Cortisol plays an important role in defining the appearance of acne, eczema, and many other. Of all those any of those dermatological conditions that react to stress will flare up.

Cortisol is one of the main components of this reaction. Insulin. Right. So here we go. We kind of go with lifestyle medicine long conversation about a lifestyle choices and chronic diseases and how everything is about the the concept of insulin resistance.

So too much insulin that it creates a resistance to the body to absorb that insulin that is in our blood flow, that insulin, it's upswell and inflammatory hormone that it makes you prone to acne as well.

And other conditions, very easy reactions like allergic reactions to anything topical to the people who has a tendency to have insulin resistance for healing a wound, it will take forever just to go back into the normal state or scarring.

It's not as smooth and nice as it used to be when we were young, or in the people who has more violence of their inflammatory hormones and they don't have just a an explosion of those inflammatory hormones.

Growth hormone stimulates collagen. But because we don't need it anymore, we're not growing anymore. So we don't have a lot of sources to stimulate our collagen.

We can talk a little bit more about collagen supplements, which has a lot of controversy out there. It does work. It doesn't work. Is absorbed, is not absorbed.

Really how it works? You how come bovine collagen will get into your system and go and create collagen? What type of collagen? What source? Not only if it's animal or not, because there is only animal, it's that a lab that is producing pure enough collagen.

Should I put in my coffee or not? Should it? And there's a lot of things out there in social media. I'm not going to go into details, but collagen is kind of a supplement that might work.

There is not any damage in not trying it. My opinion is just get a good lab, good brand and give it over to your body. Because what is happening with that collagen is just breaks down.

Collagen is just a it's a protein, right? It's a bunch of little peptides, which is all the amino acids, which is all in the protein family.

Cortisol, Insulin, and Inflammation

And when they are, when it's taken orally in the gastrointestinal system, it's break down. You absorb those amino acids, and those amino acids work as a more as a stimulation, more as a ringing the bell on our own system to produce to our fibroblasts, which are the cells that are kind of producing that collagen.

So we're tapping on them, tell them, hey, can you just help me to produce more collagen as much as possible, since I don't have that much of my hormones that I used to have 20 years ago?

And that is important because the fibroblasts and other cells that they are there to help you to produce that

structure, they have to be healthy. So we almost need the extra.

The extra life is our choice, our nutrition, not smoking, a lot of hydration for those cells to be able to use that exogenous or the type of quality that you're taking, drinking, whatever sort that you want to access to work.

I mean, what about nails? Nails are becoming brittle. Nails break easier. I was almost sure it was mainly because all the chemicals that we put on it and the new type of nail polishes that they're all over, the gels in, or gels, the powders into powders.

I try to be as less chemical as possible, but still as well. I like my nails nice and dawn and and and and something that you want chip that easy. So I noticed the starting to break very easy.

And I just realized that estrogen plays a very important role in how thick my nail is, not only from the muscularity side. Like I explained before, the estrogen plays a very important role inside the vessels to create a nice flow to the peripheral side.

So as far as possible from your heart, which is very difficult to pump all the way to nail bed, to give enough nutrients for that nail to grow nice, thick and healthy not only from that side, but also there is the keratinocytes, which is our cells are going to help to produce the nail tissue, and they are highly stimulated by estrogens.

Vital hormone plays an important role as well there. And like we say, because there is a lot of intertwining between decline, decline again, low levels of estrogen and thyroid dysfunction, our low thyroid hormones will put us at risk of brittle nails or not growing fast and not growing long enough and breaking easy.

And the little line, the little ridges, right? Because ridges are important. And we can have a quick conversation about these because it's very medical.

We find a lot of diagnostic, the cues diagnostic kind of, tips on on the tip of our fingers on our nails and is on the ridge. It can give us a lot of idea on.

Is there a lack of something? Is there a lack of a vitamin, a mineral? Is there another chronic disease happening? The nails reacted a lot to low oxygen environments.

So a lot of of the cardiac diseases can show us different form of the nail. So different forms like like the upside down spoon type of nail, the, the pinch nail.

We have the parallel pink nail. All of them are related with different diseases.

Collagen, Nails, and Diagnostic Clues

And it's impressive because just out of that finding, we can start doing some work ups on more important diseases. So this is how important nails are beyond just going for a manicure and beyond just looking pretty.

When you put your rings on. And so we go back to estrogen. We go back to thyroid hormone, how much they play a role on it and and how all those changes are part of our aging process, which again, going back into like the Mary Clue however, said menopause is inevitable but is suffering.

It is an option and there is a lot of things that we could do either to maintain what we already have that is there as a quality and we don't wanna lose it or to improve it if is possible.

So there is a lot of lifestyle changes that we can do. I don't need to go is going to be obvious to everybody. I go hydration during the day. We say a two liters of water a day should be the amount that a person should be drinking through the day, a minimum.

And and you don't wait until you're thirsty. You drink through the day and you make your body saying, oh, thank

you. I wasn't thinking about it, but thanks for those two liters.

At the end of the day, yes, you have to go more to the bathroom, but this matter, your kidneys are going to say, they're going to say, oh, thank you. Working a little bit more than, than I used to.

So you have to stand up. Which it's a good thing to stand up because you're reminding your body that you're alive. So you see, with all the domino effect out of water, okay.

Hydration, sunscreen. So sunscreen, it is very important. Another thing that is it has raised certain different opinions. I'm not saying nobody's against sunscreen, but it's I heard a lot of dermatologists talking about are we using too much sunscreen?

Are we creating these vitamin D deficiency out of our our skin is not exposed to the sun. So up to now, for me, the best concept on sun, sunlight, sunscreen protection for cancer and for aging, I would say I think sunscreen is important.

And, exposure to sunlight is important, but is when when you're exposed to sun, the amount of time as well. So sunscreen all day long. But if you are going to go for a walk before 9 a.m.

10 a.m., you absolutely can have all the benefits of sun light. And maybe there's going to be an and dying the aging process underneath. But it's not the typical sun rays of the middle of the day that is going to exposure to all these carcinogenic type of radiation.

And and then we will meet the sunscreen and a little parenthesis here whenever the sunscreen wears off after two hours, 2 to 3 hours. So if you remember to reapply it every 2 to 3 hours, maybe when you go to the bathroom, maybe you get a little bottle of sunscreen there, especially in the phase, your neck, your chest.

I think it is important. And if you are indoors saying if you're outdoors, it has to be in a more broad area. And so always a hydration sunscreen. And now comes into all these creams that where our money goes.

Right. So we do we hear our friends said the dermatologist recommended.

Hydration, Sunscreen, and Skincare Basics

So at the end I heard something recently in internet. I really like it. And she said she's a menopause doctor from the UK. And she said, as simple as possible you can give to your skin so it doesn't.

It can't be $200, but it can be $30. Simple skincare that it has no no perfumes, that it has the minimum of a good moisturizing ingredients. Again, I'm not a dermatologist, but I love to listen to what's the latest?

Was the evidence behind certain products? There is Doctor Idriss, which I really like, and I follow her. But she gives very good tips. She's very good into going to the what's what the ingredients inside each of those products.

And so anything that is moisturizing is there. Hyaluronic acid is is the there is different types of components that it will keep hydrated. And there is a lot of evidence behind retinoids.

So in studying a retinoid cream earlier, before you start seeing some changes in your skin can be a very preventive way of maintaining the skin. Nice and flawless.

If you haven't and you are already in your 50s, it's fine. Never is too late to start it. It was actually my institution, the one who asked me once, how come you haven't started me retinoids?

And I said, I think I tried them once and I was allergic. I was just like, well, that is not that common of analogy. Maybe you didn't get the good instructions.

And it was it was true. I never got the good instructions that retinoids have to have a specific way to apply them. The area around the eyes is super sensitive, and that was the area that I thought I was allergic because that area was swollen look like after a boxing match.

And so I said, oh, I'm allergic to this. I'm never going to touch vitamin A. And then I understood that it was just a lack of education on how to use this.

Why are we using it? And indeed, you made a difference. And I'm talking about it was already made late 40s. So I'm trying to catch up and and I think that routine appearance of retinoids, remember it's not retinol under the sun is a no no.

It makes you it's it can give you like a sunburn type of. So just follow instructions of a dermatologist and those more into the East. Don't forget that it requires an education on how to apply, where to apply, which sides not around the mouth, on the around the eyes.

Yes, but it's it. It's a specific. And you start slow and go up slow. That's about the retinoids. And there's a lot there about peptides and vitamin C.

So there is some liquid peptides. They come like in serums. And vitamin C is another antioxidant. And it's absorbed by the skin. And it's it's portrayed there as a clarifying type of a product.

So having something simple like that, you find your preferred brand and you get your own routine. This is how you will be taking care of your skin. I forgot to mention nutrition.

Nutrition is essential. So what you eat is what you are, right? So what you eat goes into your skin and your nails and your hair as well. So welcome antioxidants again.

Oh my. Everything reaching vitamin C is more than welcome. All my berries are more than welcome. What about rich in vitamins? Estrogens?

Nutrition, Supplements, and Scalp Care

What a lot of evidence out there. Again that they are healthy food. Go for it. Anything that is rich in soy, edamame and chickpeas. Like you know, you can have a nice hummus and all these has antioxidants and all these is going to help you for collagen production.

Flaxseeds rich in omega as well, so why not. So let's dig into nutrition as well. I think another podcast that we could do, just like digging into nutrition, there is a lot about nutrition through perimenopause and menopause and again is nutrition is not dieting and is adding on is not restricting.

That's how we talk about nutrition supplements. I am not a functional doctor. I respect a lot of functional medicine because they act on the basis of strict the root cause.

And I love that there is a lot of supplements there that really is going to support your system. Still, I always suggest a lot of caution in when you are buying anything over the counter supplement wise, because you can interact not only with your own systems, but also with all the medications that you're taking.

But collagen we spoke about already, there is some scientific articles showing there is some benefits on elasticity and and thickness of the skin after collagen, exogenous them.

And then there is the vitamins, right. Biotin is a vitamin that he helps as well on to support a good health on your skin and your nails for the hair.

So again, simple products avoid anything that is full of perfumes. Try to be like sulfites free. If it's possible, get some oils, some essential oils.

Maintain good quality of hair, rosemary oil and castor oil. They again, there isn't a lot of evidence I don't have the Harvard research article in my hand, but there is on that.

On the other side is like was the negative? It's not a negative. You can give it a try. Some people respond, some people they don't. And it's absolutely fine dietary wise.

Again same thing you will. You eat anything that is anti-inflammatory is going to help you because down inflammation can mean counteracting cortisol. All these make the system to be in that symphony of creating the most beautiful collagen.

Fibroblasts are happy, keratinocytes are happy, and they're going to make you look happy. Sugar is going to be an inflammatory sugar is going to spike insulin.

Insulin it's going to be in your bloodstream. And too much insulin brings you to insulin resistance. And insulin resistance will not give you a pretty hair.

So it is important that you pay attention to those little details. And we go back into the functional doctors root cause. Right. So nutrition again is essential.

One tip that is out there for the scalp, it's the whole microneedling massaging as well. A lot of those special kind of massage brushes that are out there.

Yes absolutely. It stimulates right. Is like when when you stimulate your body after a massage, it just like supposed to go through a calming effect. Remember we're looking towards the calming non inflammatory speech that is going to produce more balance.

And the result of that is always a positive thing.

Hormone Replacement and Closing Remarks

And of course to finalize this chart we're going to talk about hormonal replacement. So again my Menopause Society certified provider and I'm all pro hormone replacement when there is an indication still what we're noticing obviously what is slowly doing the transition from the some of the some of the misinterpretations of the women's Health Initiative study.

So we're now getting to understand more and more the role of that replacement. That to say next is that when we start some hormone replacement therapy, estrogen, progesterone on those who has a uterus to protect it against endometrial cancer and testosterone in some women as well with specific needs, we notice a change as well in the skin, the hair and the nails so that estrogen replacement can have a benefit.

Now that the Menopause Society is saying that the only reason to replace hormones is going to be for having a beautiful face, but a beautiful skin. But it just is important to mention that we can see those changes to the point that now many dermatologists are using off label estrogen creams.

They're used for other places like estrogen cream or just a topical estrogen cream for replacement. They're using it on the face and some are showing some benefits, like there is a direct absorption to the skin of our face, which is the one that we pay more attention.

Again, we shouldn't we should. We pay attention as well to our neck and our chest. But I want to just to mention that it's its use of label. There is some studies, there is some evidence already starting to show up that it works not for you to go and grab the estrogen and vaginal cream or gynecologist prescribe and start using it at night on your face.

Unless you have this conversation with your and ecologist, menopause provider, dermatologist, name it. Just making sure that we're in the same side as well.

But I wanted to mention because it is it's a lot of talking out there on that possibility. And with this, I finish this conversation on the double down with doctor D on hormones in our entering the human system.

Thank you for listening. Please don't get me a secret. Share my content. And remember, I'm trying to create content out of biases that evidence basis possible.

And anything that makes you reflect and anything that makes you align with me and anything that inspires you. See you in the next episode. Thank you for tuning in to Doctor Talks.

We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health. Each day is a new opportunity to make choices that empower your well-being.

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