How Mold and Mycotoxins Impact Hormones Transcript

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Introduction to Mold and Midlife Hormones

So if we add mold or a mycotoxin exposure, a mold exposure in your house, maybe basement leaks and the flashing of a window just isn't working. So the drywall is becoming filled with mold.

Maybe that bathroom pipe is still leaking and there's mold growing. So if we add this to the picture, I'm pairing menopause. So if you're doing all the right things for your hormones, eating clean, taking supplements, balancing blood sugar, maybe you're even on bioidentical hormone replacement and you still feel inflamed, anxious, estrogen dominant or exhausted.

Well, this episode is for you. Hi, it's Dr. Jen. Welcome back to the podcast. So today, this is a solo episode that I'm going to dive into. mycotoxins and mold and what they're doing for your hormones and especially why it becomes problematic in midlife.

Mold does not just affect your lungs, it affects your liver, your mitochondria, your nervous system, your kidneys, and your hormone metabolism. Yeah, it really does.

And this is why I have so many guests on my podcast that talk about mold, how to find it, what to do when you have it. And it hit close to home too, because my kids have been affected by mold.

I was affected by mold as a kid. And it is really a bad issue. So what exactly are mycotoxins and why do they matter? So mold produces mycotoxins and these are fat soluble biotoxins that accumulate in our body, especially with long-term exposure.

What Mycotoxins Are and How They Affect the Body

So, common offenders include aflatoxin A, gliotoxin is one that I see in patients, and these toxins, they're known to not only impair mitochondrial function, but they increase oxidative stress and stress on the body, and they also disrupt endocrine signaling.

So studies have shown that the mycotoxins, they interfere with our cytochrome P450 liver enzymes. What this means is that it affects detoxification at the liver.

And this is why a lot of the times I see patients that have a lot of toxins and overall toxin burden in the body is high. The root cause a lot of the times is mold and mycotoxins, and a lot of them have colonization of mold in their nasal passages and even in the gut.

This is a huge problem. And what happens when these liver enzymes are affected, estrogen is more likely to be recycled, shifted towards toxic inflammatory metabolites like the 4-hydroxyestrone pathway, and they're less likely to be cleared efficiently and then they're recycled and then it gives this estrogen dominant picture.

So, mold exposure can kind of like sneakily push women towards this estrogen dominance picture, low progesterone symptoms, and these inflammatory hormone patterns where insulin becomes high, cortisol is high, and they just feel miserable and not like themselves.

So perimenopause is the perfect storm. I've talked a lot about it in my book, The Perimenopause Reset, that perimenopause is not just about declining all these hormones.

It's also about declining resilience. And this is why just patching someone in perimenopause with hormones or medications doesn't work. So during perimenopause, we have this progesterone dropping first, we have our estrogen becoming erratic, and then our liver is actually under more metabolic demand.

Why Perimenopause Makes Mold Exposure Worse

Our mitochondria, which is the powerhouse of our cells, they're more stressed. So your energy is going down and you feel more fatigued. So if we add mold or a mycotoxin exposure, a mold exposure in your house, maybe basement leaks and the flashing of a window just isn't working.

So the drywall is becoming filled with mold. Maybe that bathroom pipe is still leaking and there's mold growing. So if we add this to the picture on perimenopause, we see worsening PMS symptoms, which we should not have PMS because that's a sign that something is off.

We have heavy or regular cycles. We have mast cell activation because your body is freaking out. You have histamine intolerance, which is big with women in perimenopause.

And whenever I see someone talking about histamine, they have to have their hormones looked at. And part of that needs to be looking at making sure they don't have mold or mycotoxins.

Sleep disruption could get worse. And then anxiety, anxiety out of nowhere. And then let's not forget weight gain. Not good. Progesterone in general is a naturally mast cell stabilizing.

So when it drops, mold is actually driving more inflammation and histamine, and then estrogen is creating this feedback loop. So this is why so many women, they can't tolerate supplements or leftovers.

They feel inflamed all the time. And this is when we really have to pay attention to those symptoms. Another thing that is overlooked so much, even in functional and integrative doctors, is the impact of mold on our nervous system.

I talk a lot about autonomic nervous system, our sympathetic, which is fight or flight, and our parasympathetic, which is rest and digest. For healing to take place and optimal health, we need to be hanging on in that parasympathetic space.

for most of the time. And that is actually flipped. Most women that I see, and even men, are stuck in that fight or flight. It is not good. It is not healthy.

Now, mycotoxins in particular can feed to this and tip you over the edge also. And remember, in perimenopause, you're not as resilient. So mycotoxins can activate microglia, mast cells, and the HPA access.

This keeps our body stuck in sympathetic dominance, which is not where you want to be.

Nervous System Stress and Detox Disruption

Studies show that mold exposure is associated with reduced heart rate variability, which is HRV. A lot of the trackers track that now. Mold is associated with neuroinflammation and vagal tone suppression.

Our vagus nerve is kind of the superintendent of our parasympathetic system. And when that's not being activated properly or it's being suppressed by chronic illness, then we run into sympathetic dominance and that balance that I talked about, which is so crucial, piss off.

Your body thinks it's under constant attack, running from the bear all the time, not good. So if the nervous system doesn't feel safe, the body will not detox.

It doesn't really prioritize fertility and ovulation. It's not safe to start a family if you're running from a lion or a bear. You need to feel safe. You need to feel that you can provide, that your body can provide in really home.

this pregnancy and your body will not heal. So many times I mentioned here on my podcast and in my book, the perimenopause reset connection before correction.

So we definitely, we want to connect and fix that parasympathetic system. That should be one of the foundations when we're starting to correct a mold illness or injury from a mold exposure.

This would be breathwork, breathwork used with prayer, with scripture. This would be making sure we're focusing on our circadian rhythm, you know, making sure when we rise, we see natural light, that we are not under LED lights all the time, red light at night, no screens at bedtime, sleep timing.

So make sure you're waking up and going to sleep around the same time. Yes, there will be outliers. Yes, kids will be sick. Yes, there will be travel.

But day in and day out, they should be about the same. We want to make sure we have prayer and stillness, that you wake up in the morning and grab your coffee and sit with the Lord, you know, listen to scripture.

That stuff is so overlooked and important. And these are actually like biological switches for detoxification when it comes to dealing with mold. And then let's talk about liver health and liver detox.

So when we think about liver detox, we think about like a juice cleanse or something like that, which a lot of those are high sugar and I wouldn't recommend for perimenopausal women.

So true estrogen and mold detox requires Phase one, liver support. Phase two, conjugation. We also need to make sure bio flow is optimal and that we're having good gut clearance.

Supporting Detox, Liver Health, and Drainage

Are we having fiber? Is our beta-glucuronase a proper level? We have to look at all these things. The other big concern is mold inhibits and impairs glutathione production.

So when we have mold toxicity, we actually need more glutathione to help conjugate those toxins and get them out. And then if we're not having that, we're even more toxic and the liver is struggling to clear that.

Like we know that glutathione is critical for estrogen and toxic clearance. So if that's being impaired, the production, we run into more problems. And I see low glutathione in so many women.

This is why I try to teach women when they feel worse. They may feel worse when they try to detox because their drainage pathways aren't open. They haven't focused on liver support, bile support, gut health.

They just try to push it. And I see this a lot and I hear stories of women that are maybe going to a med spa or online to get GLP-1s and they're losing all this weight.

but their body, you know, we hold toxins in our fat cells. This is why when there's a mold exposure, I've had a patient gain 60 pounds from a mold exposure because your body is shuttling those toxins into fat to protect you because there's no way to get rid of it all.

So they're inflamed and these fat cells are filled to the brim with toxins. So then you have someone that is overweight, they have an open drainage pathways, they get on a GLP-1 and then they are just All these toxins hurt their body, can't handle it, and then they have to get their gallbladder out.

Just start asking or just start paying attention and you will notice this because they're not going to someone that actually understands peptides, detox, mold toxins, why we're overweight in the first place.

back to mold. What I teach in my book and my course, the perimenopause detox, the perimenopause reset, I talk about detox. I talk about how to support the liver, how to support the gut and the nervous system before you're having aggressive detox.

So what can you do right now if you suspect mold may be a part of your hormone story, which is pretty common?

Number one, make sure you evaluate your environment.

On my podcast on previous episodes, I have so many experts to talk about the mold environment in a healthy home environment. Make sure you're going to the correct people and getting the correct help so then your health of your home is intact and your wallet, you're not spending more and more money because you saw the wrong expert.

Water damage matters. If there is water damage in your home, you need to make sure that there isn't growth of mold there. And this could be in a brand new house.

I had a patient that had a beautiful brand new house had a mold problem. We're actually seeing this a lot in the new builds. Corners are cut or whatever, and that's a problem.

But it can also be in old homes too, you know, musty old farm homes if they're not ventilated properly. Number two, please stop blaming your hormones and start asking like, what is blocking them from being used correctly?

The Lord gave us this beautiful body and hormones that are supposed to be in homeostasis and work synchrously. You know, they're, they're amazing. But the problem is, is that we have so many things blocking them.

And sometimes it's us. Sometimes we are blocking our own hormone health because we're not slowing down because we're doom scrolling. because we're not just sitting down reading a book, because we're not putting our phones down to sit with our kids and enjoy them.

Practical Steps and Closing Advice

So just be more present and aware. Number two, prioritize safety signals. This is sleep. This is circadian rhythm. This is breath work. This is all about nervous system regulation.

So we really need to double down and make sure that's important. in a priority for us. Number four, support gentle detox and do it intelligently. We never want to force detox.

It's about restoring that beautiful flow, the bio flow, the liver that goes into the enterohepatic circulation and our gut health and flushes it out. And it's such a beautiful flow, but sometimes we can be too aggressive or do it the wrong way.

Your hormones usually aren't broken. So sometimes it's your body just responding very intelligently to stress to protect us. And then when we go through midlife, we are just not as resilient.

So you need to make sure that you look at your environment, look at if you have had a mold exposure that maybe mold is the problem. Maybe you should reach out to a doctor, someone that has the proper training and make sure that they can prescribe.

They have all the tools in their toolbox. Sometimes we can go to providers that say they're experts, but because they can't prescribe or they don't have all the correct tools in their toolbox, how to use peptides properly, how to make sure you talk about airway nervous system, you know, it's not that they're bad.

They just don't have all the tools in their toolbox yet. So sometimes you just want to go to someone that has the right tools and get it taken care of.

So if this episode really resonated to you and you're like, that makes a lot of sense. Maybe you had a mold exposure and then you started gaining weight and couldn't lose it, or your hormones just feel confusing and out of whack and you need help getting them back in.

or if you want a structured faith-based approach to hormone healing in midlife and perimenopause, I would love for you to subscribe to share this episode and join me on my community, on my YouTube, on Instagram.

I'd really like to have you there and I know women can just feel so much better than they are. And we can be honest about healing our healing journey together.

Thank you so much for listening. If you have been not creeping, but like listening for a while, please leave a review. Leave a review on any of the platforms.

I'd really appreciate it. And maybe I'll read your review because that would be just amazing and means so much to me. So I hope this mini episode was informative and made sense, piecing it all together.

I see it all the time where mold and hormones are something that is not actually looked at. And it can be the missing piece when a woman is struggling.

Signing out, Dr. Jen, have a great day, everyone.