
HOW YOUR GALLBLADDER AFFECTS YOUR HORMONE BALANCE

The liver produces bile and the gallbladder stores and releases it when you eat food containing fats. Think of bile like a soap. When you need to wash fat off of a dinner plate, soap emulsifies the fat and breaks it down, cleaning the dish. Bile does the same thing to the fat in your body, breaking it so is usable. When food from the stomach reaches the first part of the small intestine, a hormone called Cholecystokinin (short name: CCK) is released. CCK stimulates the release of bile from the gallbladder.

Western medicine takes a liberal approach to removing gallbladder and assures patients they can easily live without them. Even though that is true, a body without a gallbladder can compromise the quality of your health. According to UC San Diego, more than 25 million Americans have gallstone diseases (mostly due to gallstones) and 500,000 to 700,000 gallbladder operations are performed each year in the US. Most patients are women who do not realize that most gallbladder conditions are reversible with the right diet and supplements. Western medicine doctors fail to inform them that the bile stored in the gallbladder helps to excrete the hormones our body no longer needs.

That does not mean that without the gallbladder, women won't excrete the hormones, but it just means that the body won't be as effective. It is one of the reasons why many women develop hormonal imbalances within months of the procedure. If you are at a risk of having your gallbladder removed due to gallstones (the most common reason), work with a naturopathic or functional doctor to get the stones dissolved with herbs, supplements, or even a gallbladder flush. See Dr Debbie Greaser's website, gallbladderattack.com, for more information on gallbladder problems and after-surgery care.

Hypothyroidism, low stomach acid, food sensitivities (especially to gluten and dairy) and estrogen dominance are the most common causes of gallbladder inflammation and gallstone formation. As reported in the Women's Health Initiative (a long-term study conducted on over 160,000 menopausal women aged 50-79), estrogen supplements have increased the risk of gallbladder disease.

According to the New England Journal of Medicine, birth control pills can also cause gallbladder problems, as "(they) induce important alterations in the composition of human gallbladder bile, and suggest a biochemical basis for the increase in gallbladder disease observed among women using oral contraceptives."