

Creatively Exploring Health Options



Bobbie Barbrey and his daughter, Dr. Kaylan Barbrey, find matters of health to be a passionate common interest.

Bobbie Barbrey has a gentle, quiet manner that masks consuming passions. He is a long-time registered pharmacist, owner of Medicap Pharmacy in North Raleigh, who typically spends part of his working day providing prescription medications for a legion of loyal customers. And as a compounding pharmacist, he's frequently called upon to create medications that meet the special needs of his patients.

In the midst of this activity, he always finds time to answer important questions about health and wellness that are based on his knowledge as a certified clinical nutritionist.

"Not long ago, I was having a typical busy but pleasant day, when a woman I'll call Mary, a long-time friend and customer, came by to have some prescriptions filled. As we talked, she fixed her gaze on me and said with considerable intensity, 'If you don't fix my hormones, I think I'm simply going to lose it!'"

"Working with patients to help them restore and maintain very high levels of health is indeed a passion of mine, so I asked Mary,

who is now 53, to tell me more. She was having sleep problems, was gaining weight, and she often felt fatigued. As she talked, I was thinking, *it may be diet and lifestyle, adrenal fatigue, thyroid issues, or possibly a hormonal imbalance as she suspects.*

"We talked about bio-identical hormonal replacement therapy, and I knew that her doctor was open to this approach. We did saliva testing and the results were revealing. Mary's estrogen level was dropping a bit, as were her progesterone and testosterone levels.

"The simple truth," Mr. Barbrey explains, "is that you have to have all hormones systems in balance for them to work properly—just as the entire body works its best when all systems are in homeostasis. So Mary was correct: she would indeed benefit from hormone therapy, and her doctor agreed with this conclusion and my recommendations.

"We've been doing bio-identical hormone compounding here for many years, which gives me the ability to stay in touch with the patient on many different levels. I serve as their hormonal compounding pharmacist, as their pharmacist for other prescription meds, and when they are open to it, I'm always happy to share suggestions which can lead to positive changes in their overall health and wellness."

EXPLORING FUNCTIONS

"Beyond the hormonal issue," he continues, "Mary and I met for a health consultation where we broadened our search to

include all areas of her health. With the standard Biomeridian test that I always do, we looked at 58 points in her body, and found that her adrenal glands were stressed—a fact that can move her hormones out of balance and keep them out of balance. Her weight gain did not appear to be connected to thyroid issues and her lab results supported this.

"In this process, we also focused on her lifestyle and diet to reduce stress on her body and support her adrenal glands. She was not eating properly and that invariably creates blood sugar fluctuations which stress the adrenals, making them work harder.

"We also put a renewed emphasis on the meditative part of her life. This can take many forms including deep breathing, meditation, some form of yoga, or simply a quiet ten-minute walk. Then we tested her for some targeted nutritional supplements and found the ones that balanced her energetically.

"Together," he says, "we came up with a program that is working more deeply and more broadly for her overall health—simply creating a stronger foundation of well-being.

"With Mary, I suspected that the secret to losing the weight she wanted to shed was not a hormonal issue alone. Working with her on her diet and lifestyle paid much greater dividends in that area, as well as addressing the fatigue issue she mentioned. There are so many factors related to fatigue that we can ascertain in a consultation."

PATH TO HEALTH

Today Mary is on a comfortable path that is working well for her, Mr. Barbrey reports. "By compounding her bio-identi-

cal hormones here, she knows her body is getting exactly what it needs. In follow-up visits, we tweaked the formula very slightly. We always test six to eight weeks after beginning a new hormonal therapy to make sure it is achieving our goals, and if it is not, we can work with her physician to adjust the formula very easily.


"Mary is still using the bio-identical hormones. Her hormones are in balance and she has lost weight. Changes in her diet, what she was eating more than how much, were key to losing weight," says Mr. Barbrey. "The old thinking of simply controlling calories and exercising for weight loss is a bit outdated. The real secret is to control insulin through the foods we eat. There is so much misinformation about which foods are healthy foods. Finding the right ones will change your life!

"Weight gained as people move into their forties or fifties deserves special attention. We can test to make sure that a person is not becoming insulin resistant, which is often a precursor to becoming diabetic. We know that diabetes is on a dramatic rise in this country so anything we can do to prevent it is important.

"I also want to stress that I am very respectful of a woman's wishes in addressing hormonal issues," he says. "Some women simply don't want to do hormonal therapy. They prefer natural therapy using supplements, and as a clinical nutritionist I feel very comfortable and very confident in being able to recommend the right products that can help them achieve hormonal balance.

"At the same time, if you are going to take hormones, the goal is always the lowest dose possible for the shortest period of time possible. That's a good rule of thumb when women are considering taking hormones. It's not a decision that they have to live with for many years. It can be changed and tweaked as we go forward.

"And the beauty of the hormonal approach is that we customize them for the individual. It's not a case of one size fits all. I think that model is broken. We need to address the fact that women are individuals, and have their own set points and balance points and we can find those by individualizing their particular therapy.

"Let me summarize as a clinical nutritionist: I work with many individuals in implementing comprehensive health restorative plans. And without exception, we cannot get the positive life-changing results we're looking for—for hormones, or energy – without a commitment to good quality sleep, exercise, good quality water intake, effective stress management, proper detoxification, and good quality diet. Nourish your amazing physical body, your beautiful mind, and always be mindful of the power of your energetic center, your soul." 

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