

BHRT or Herbs?

Many Choices



Dr. Kaylan Barbrey and her father, Bobbie Barbrey, RPh, CCN, discuss a hormone testing plan for a client. Dr. Kaylan Barbrey is a recent graduate of the UNC School of Pharmacy.

testing, and we soon had Eleanor working with a very reputable doctor for bio-identical hormone replacement therapy.

“We do bio-identical hormone compounding here—we have for years—which gives me the ability to stay in touch with the patient on many different levels. I’m not just their hormonal compounding pharmacist, but also serve as their pharmacist for other prescription medications. I simply love playing the role of mentor as they modify their lifestyle and diet on the path to optimum health.

“Eleanor and I also did some BioMeridian Stress Assessment scans, checking the energy of organ systems. It’s an invaluable tool for me when a client says, ‘I think my hormones are out of balance.’ With the BioMeridian, I can look at the communication system in the body and see where the imbalances are. When I know that, I can target my support and my approach more precisely.

“With Eleanor, the BioMeridian assessment revealed a bit of sluggishness in the liver and also in the large intestine—two systems in the body directly related to proper hormonal balance.

“So, rather than simply saying, ‘Let’s give you some hormones,’ we

backed up and looked at the systems that are responsible for handling these hormones, and this made a wonderful difference. Eleanor, in fact, did not need high doses of hormones to resolve her problems. That’s important to know. I have concern when I see a patient taking higher dose estrogen therapy, especially estrogen therapy alone. In too many such cases, patients fail to solve basic issues that would support a proper therapeutic low dose of hormones to restore balance to the system.

“This has been a three-month process with Eleanor, testing, modifying, shaping new dietary and exercise habits. And she is doing well. I’m excited for her.”

HERBAL THERAPY

As a certified clinical nutritionist, Mr. Barbrey has studied the power and the potential of using quality herbs.

“There are instances,” he says, “when a client will tell me she simply doesn’t want to do hormone testing or hormone replacement therapy—usually from a fear of increasing the risk of cancer.

“In such cases, there are good strategies for us that do not involve replacing or supplementing hormones. Initially I would want to build on a foundation of good lifestyle choices including adherence to a sound diet—important basics for all of us. And I also appreciate the value of high quality herbs, for example, as a starting point. There are many products that produce wonderful

results, such as black cohosh, used extensively in Europe for symptoms of hot flashes, headaches, and weight gain, and chaste tree berry to lessen menstrual cycle abnormalities.

“I caution people to use a reputable herb company any time they are dealing with herbs. Gaia Herbs right here in Brevard, NC is an extremely high level company growing a portion of their own herbs, with really remarkable quality control practices in their labs for all of their products. In my experience, herbs can be very powerful when they are processed properly. The key is: be sure you are getting a quality product. Quality matters.

“So indeed, I feel very comfortable and very confident in being able to recommend the right products to help a woman achieve hormonal balance as an option to BHRT. At the same time, if you choose to do hormones, the goal is always the lowest possible dose for the shortest period of time possible. That’s a good rule of thumb when women are trying to make this decision about whether to put hormones into their body.

“It’s not a decision they have to stay with for many years. It can and should be changed and tweaked as we go forward. The beauty of doing hormone replacement is that we customize hormones for the individual. It’s not a one-size-fits-all. I think that model is broken. We need to always 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.”

YOU NEED A PLAN

For a puzzle master like Bobbie Barbrey, all the pieces, all the elements for achieving high levels of good health are knowable and attainable—and sorting it all out can be a complicated task.

“There’s simply so much information available, some excellent, but a great deal is simply wrong. I sympathize with the person who comes in trying to make sense of it all. Often they’ve done extensive research, but they haven’t a clue what to do with it all. Ultimately, you have to have a plan, and helping people develop good health plans is a joy in my life. Sometimes we hit the nail on the head first time out, and sometimes we have to tweak it a bit as we move forward. But we have a plan and goals – a roadmap for success.

“As a clinical nutritionist, I emphasize that we can’t get the excellent results we’re looking for if we don’t make a commitment to quality of sleep, water intake, stress management, and of course, the quality of food we use to nourish ourselves.

“No single factor is more important than stress management. The world is now Go! Go! 24/7. We’re processing more information, in less time, than ever before as we juggle multiple things at once. There’s not enough down time. If you want to age fast, keep going 24/7.

“It’s important to build nurturing time into your day, even if it’s something as simple as sitting back and deep breathing at your desk for five minutes, twice a day—or taking a 15 minute meditative walk outside—who can’t do that? All of us can, and all of us need to.” **h&h**

“With the BioMeridian, I can look at the communication system in the body and see where the imbalances are.”

Bobbie Barbrey is a puzzle master who never rests until all riddles are solved and all pieces fit together perfectly, no matter the challenge.

A registered pharmacist and a Certified Clinical Nutritionist (CCN), he is the owner and overseer of Medicap Pharmacy in North Raleigh. His greatest pleasure comes in helping clients unravel and more deeply understand the choices in their lives which affect their health. For many, he serves as an on-going guide as they develop new and healthier ways of eating, thinking and living.

HRT: BEST CHOICE?

Eleanor, 48, a real client with an assumed name, came to Mr. Barbrey suspecting that she had pre-menopausal hormone issues that were responsible for her hot flashes and unusual fatigue.

“As we talked,” says Mr. Barbrey, “it became clear there were other important issues that Eleanor had simply not addressed, such as healthy diet, restorative sleep, moderate exercise, and intentional and effective stress reduction practices.

“And there were, indeed, hormonal issues of some concern, revealed by saliva

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