

## **BHRT Information Sheet**

### **Q: My doctor drew labs at my last appointment. What are my next steps?**

A: If not already done, please request that your doctor's office forward the pharmacy your lab results. If we've already received them or while you are waiting for them to send the results to us, read through this info sheet and fill out our female (or male) "Health Summary" found online at: <https://leessummit.medicineshoppe.com/services/helpful-links>. You can drop off, fax, mail, or email the form to us.

### **Q: What is bioidentical hormone replacement therapy (BHRT)?**

A: BHRT uses identical hormones to the ones your body has always produced itself. These include estrogens (estriol and estradiol), progesterone, testosterone, and DHEA. They are unlike other synthetic medications developed and sold by drug companies. Your body recognizes them as a naturally produced hormone and, therefore, they do not come with side effects of commercially-made drugs. BHRT is often described as a more "natural" and "holistic" treatment. There are also many studies that suggest that it is safer than using synthetic hormones (you may want to reference "*From the Heart - Estrogen Matters*" by a local St. Luke's cardiologist or the *Holtorf Study* for a more in depth look).

### **Q: What is the goal of my treatment with BHRT?**

A: The goal of BHRT is to restore your hormone levels back to a level that you had before you had symptoms and, therefore, alleviate your current symptoms. Symptoms can vary from patient to patient, even if their lab reports show similar levels. That is why an initial and follow-up symptom updates are important for us and your physician to help you the best that we can. Our goal is to treat your specific symptoms by balancing and restoring your hormone levels.

### **Q: Is my doctor or my pharmacist prescribing my medication(s)?**

A: Only physicians, whether they are your primary care or OB-GYN, can prescribe medications. Many doctors treat a wide variety of conditions, and therefore, may not know as much about prescribing and monitoring BHRT. That's where we come in. As pharmacists at The Medicine Shoppe, we are able to specialize in treating mostly menopausal or peri-menopausal patients with BHRT. We have a great deal of experience treating hormone imbalance. Many doctors will send us their patient's lab report, have us evaluate the patient's symptoms, and request that we send them our recommendation for BHRT for them to sign and make a prescription. Even if your physician is not dosing your medication, they are extremely important for ongoing monitoring of your labs and annual preventative screenings.

### **Q: What are my options?**

A: We offer a few different dosage forms for BHRT. Unlike many medications, most hormones are safest when used in a transdermal route. This can include topical creams, troches (slow-dissolving lozenges), or vaginal creams or suppositories. Most of our patients and doctors' first choice is to use a topical cream because of ease of use and the best results. However, we have many patients who use other dosage forms as well. If you have a specific concern about dosage forms, please let the pharmacist know.

### **Q: How much will my prescription(s) cost?**

A: Because each patient may require different hormones in different types of medications, each patient's cost will be individualized for their specific treatment needs. You may benefit from anywhere between 1 and 3 different types of hormone replacement. We are contracted with most insurances, so we will always attempt to bill the insurance you provide us with. It is, however, common for insurances to exclude BHRT and compounded prescriptions in general from their covered services. If your prescription is not covered, a typical range for cost is \$55-60 per month, per prescription needed. Though our goal is relieve as many symptoms as possible for you, please let us know if cost is a concern and we will do our best to consolidate your hormone treatment into one prescription.

### **Still have more questions?**

If you have an additional question or two, please call the pharmacy @ 816-524-8444 and ask for Jamie or Bailey. If you have additional questions that will take more than 5 -10 minutes to answer, we ask that you set up an individual consultation with one of our pharmacists (the charge is \$40 for a 30 minute phone call) so that we can best serve you.