



2026 HORMONE THERAPY GUIDE

Understanding Hormone Care Across Life Stages

Hormonal balance changes throughout a woman's life. Treatment options vary depending on whether you are premenopausal, perimenopausal, menopausal, or postmenopausal.

PREMENOPAUSAL (REPRODUCTIVE YEARS)

(REGULAR MENSTRUAL CYCLES)

COMMON SYMPTOMS (IMBALANCE)

- PMS (MOOD SWINGS, BLOATING)
- ACNE
- HEAVY OR IRREGULAR PERIODS
- FATIGUE
- LOW LIBIDO

THERAPY OPTIONS

- COMBINED ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES (ESTROGEN + PROGESTERONE)
- PROGESTERONE-ONLY THERAPY
- LIFESTYLE + NUTRITIONAL SUPPORT
- THYROID/ADRENAL OPTIMIZATION IF NEEDED

Benefits

- Cycle regulation
- Reduced PMS symptoms
- Improved skin and mood
- Contraception (if desired)

Risks & Side Effects

- Nausea
- Breast tenderness
- Blood clot risk (estrogen-containing therapies)
- Mood changes

Estimated Monthly Costs (2026)

- Birth control pills: \$10–\$60
- Progesterone therapy: \$30–\$80
- Functional hormone panels: \$150–\$400

PERIMENOPAUSAL (TRANSITION PHASE)

(TYPICALLY LATE 30S-40S, CYCLES BECOME IRREGULAR)

COMMON SYMPTOMS

- IRREGULAR PERIODS
- HOT FLASHES
- NIGHT SWEATS
- ANXIETY OR DEPRESSION
- WEIGHT GAIN

(ESPECIALLY ABDOMINAL)

- BRAIN FOG
- SLEEP DISTURBANCES

THERAPY OPTIONS

- LOW-DOSE ESTROGEN + PROGESTERONE
- BIOIDENTICAL HORMONE THERAPY (BHRT)
- PROGESTERONE FOR CYCLE SUPPORT
- TESTOSTERONE (LOW-DOSE, SELECTED CASES)
- PEPTIDE THERAPY (EMERGING OPTION IN 2026)

Benefits

- Symptom stabilization
- Improved sleep and mood
- Reduced hot flashes
- Hormonal balance during transition

Risks & Side Effects

- Breakthrough bleeding
- Breast tenderness
- Fluid retention
- Rare clot risk (with estrogen)

Estimated Monthly Costs

- BHRT (cream/oral): \$80-\$250
- Pellet therapy:
\$250-\$600 every 3-4 months
- Labs: \$200-\$500

POSTMENOPAUSAL (LONG-TERM PHASE)

(YEARS AFTER MENOPAUSE)

COMMON SYMPTOMS

- PERSISTENT VAGINAL DRYNESS
- OSTEOPOROSIS
- SKIN THINNING
- LOW ENERGY
- COGNITIVE CHANGES

THERAPY OPTIONS

- LOW-DOSE MAINTENANCE HRT
- VAGINAL ESTROGEN (LOCAL THERAPY)
- TESTOSTERONE (SELECT CASES)
- BONE-SUPPORT THERAPIES (VITAMIN D, CALCIUM, BISPHOSPHONATES)

Benefits

- Bone preservation
- Improved urogenital health
- Skin and collagen support
- Quality of life maintenance

Risks & Side Effects

- Similar to menopausal HRT but risk increases with age
- Cardiovascular considerations if started late

Estimated Monthly Costs

- Maintenance HRT: \$30–\$120
- Vaginal therapy: \$20–\$80
- Bone health treatments: \$20–\$200+

TYPES OF HORMONE THERAPY (2026 OVERVIEW)

BIOIDENTICAL HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY (BHRT)

- STRUCTURALLY IDENTICAL TO HUMAN HORMONES
- AVAILABLE AS CREAMS, PILLS, INJECTIONS, OR PELLETS

PELLET THERAPY

- INSERTED UNDER THE SKIN EVERY 3-4 MONTHS
- PROVIDES STEADY HORMONE RELEASE

TRANSDERMAL THERAPY

- PATCHES, GELS, CREAMS
- LOWER CLOT RISK VS ORAL ESTROGEN

EMERGING THERAPIES (2026)

- PEPTIDES FOR HORMONE SIGNALING SUPPORT
- PERSONALIZED GENOMIC-GUIDED HRT
- COMBINATION METABOLIC + HORMONE OPTIMIZATION PROGRAMS

WHO SHOULD AVOID OR USE CAUTION

- HISTORY OF BREAST CANCER
- BLOOD CLOTTING DISORDERS
- STROKE OR CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE
- LIVER DISEASE