n ancient adage from Chinese medicine states, "A doctor would rather treat 10 men than one woman." In a way, this validates what women have always known—that they are indeed intricate creatures. At the heart of a woman's complexity are her hormones, their ebb and flow influencing all aspects of physical, emotional and mental wellness. Sexy hormones are sex hormones including, but not limited too, estrogen, testosterone, DHEA and progesterone. When a woman's hormones are in balance, she feels fabulous, her skin glows, she has energy and vitality.

Sexual desire and satisfaction are affected by hormone havoc. A woman's feelings of being "sexy" are hormone driven. Sex is a central part of who we are. It is the basis for our relationships. Men are being prescribed the "little blue pill" in record number and you can't turn on your computer without being bombarded by spam to make "it" bigger, longer and stronger. Yet according the University of Chicago study, 43 percent of women have no sex drive; and over 51 percent of women are suffering with pain during intercourse. Not much is being done in the research community to help women with sexual health concerns. Most people believe a drop in a woman's libido is age-related affecting only older women but over 21 percent of women 70 or older still have regular sex and younger women in their 3os tend to be the ones with the biggest declines in libido due to stress, working, young families and lack of time.

Factors Affecting Sexual Health
So many factors contribute to a decline in a woman's libido:

- Low thyroid (hypothyroidism)
- The birth control pill
- Excess levels of the hormone prolactin
- Low testosterone
- Prescription and over-the-counter medications especially anti-depressant medication
- Stress
- Hormone disrupting estrogens in the environment
- Relationship problems
- Hysterectomy where the nerves for pleasure are accidentally damaged.

If you are struggling with low libido, pain upon intercourse, no or blunted orgasms or vaginal dryness certain, diagnostic tests should be performed:

- A blood test for Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) should be performed. The result should be below 2.0. Above 2.0 is an indicator of subclinical low thyroid. Doctors do not prescribe medication until your TSH is above 5.5 but by then you may have a multitude of low thyroid symptoms (including weight gain, depression, constipation, feeling cold, hair loss, low to no libido, infertility, recurring miscarriage, terrible hot flashes and night sweats and more).

- A blood test for free testosterone, which measures testosterone that is not bound to sex hormone binding globulin. Testosterone is the hormone of desire and when it is low, sex drive and the ability to reach climax is affected.

- A saliva hormone panel for estrogens including estradiol, estrogen and estriol. Blood testing is not accurate in measuring estrogen levels—saliva is more accurate.

Get Your Libido Back Naturally
Once the physical, emotional and physiological factors are ruled out getting your sex drive back is simple with a healthy diet, regular exercise and a few key nutritional supplements. A scant amount of research has been performed in the area of libido enhancing drugs or nutrients for women but a couple of nutrients shine when it comes to improving a woman's love life.

Arginine is an essential amino acid. (Essential means your body can't make it, and you have to obtain it from foods.) In supplement form it is known as "L-arginine." L-arginine is the main source of the primary molecule nitric oxide (NO), which is responsible for sexual arousal in women. Without arginine, there is no nitric oxide and no sexual arousal. In research on women, L-arginine in supplement form has been reported to increase the intensity of sensation during sex. That is because NO stimulates blood flow to the genitals to lead up to orgasm.

Tribulus terrestris has been used as a prosexual herb for thousands of years. Tribulus terrestris works in a special way in women. One of luteinizing hormone's (LH) many functions is to command the production of testosterone. As a woman ages, follicle stimulating hormone (FSH) increases dramatically, peaking a few years after menopause and staying high for several decades thereafter. The ratio of FSH to luteinizing hormone increases, and LH does not have the same ability to increase testosterone. Tribulus terrestris helps to naturally boost the levels of luteinizing hormone to FSH, which then helps produce more testosterone. Tribulus terrestris is both a libido enhancer (and has been proven in multiple clinical trials in this regard) and has an ability to increase testosterone to normal levels.

Clinical trials using Tribulus terrestris were performed at the First Obstetrical and Gynecological Hospital in Sofia, Bulgaria on 150 women with abnormal ovulation associated with

To subscribe call toll-free 1.888.316.6051.
hormone imbalances. One group of women were given *tribulus terrestris* with a high percentage of the active ingredient protodioscin. They also had a group of women that received estrogens and testosterone only, with no *Tribulus terrestris*. The study resulted in a normalization of ovulation, improved fertility, a reduction in peri- and postmenopausal symptoms. Most importantly *Tribulus terrestris* was found to provide better results in women in regards to increasing libido than the hormone therapy alone.

*Ginkgo biloba* has been used in several clinical trials in women with low libido. One trial found that women on anti-depressant medications, which can cause sexual dysfunction including low libido, had their libido improve and orgasms return. Another study, published in *Advances in Therapy* in 2000, found that study participants using *Ginkgo biloba* reported having significant increases in sexual desires, had intercourse more often, had more sexual fantasies, and were able to reach orgasm.

Other research studies have shown *Ginkgo biloba* to be a major aid in improving blood flow to small blood vessels. Enhancing blood flow to the genitals heightens sexual sensations. Research has also shown that *Ginkgo biloba* significantly increases mental acuity and memory—and sexual desire starts in the brain. Look for *Ginkgo biloba* extract that is standardized to 24 percent *Ginkgo* flavonglycosides and 6 percent terpene lactones.

For women, the neurotransmitter that sends sexual messages to the nerves, called acetylcholine (Ach), is also a very important part of sexual function. Too little Ach and sexual activity goes down; increase Ach levels and sexual activity goes up. Ach is involved in the build-up toward orgasm and the urethral and vaginal contractions that occur during orgasm, as well as the subjective perception of orgasm intensity and duration. Female rat studies have shown that when Ach is increased, female rats seek out male rats and are receptive to them. Choline bitartrate, along with vitamin B5, helps to enhance acetylcholine, thereby enhancing orgasm.

*Eurycoma longifolia*, also known as Malaysian Ginseng, is the missing ingredient in helping women's libido. This potent herb brings the zest back in your sex life and aids vaginal dryness. Published research has been performed in male mice and men. To date no published research has been completed in women or in female mice.

Testimonials from women using *Eurycoma longifolia* have reported that they are finally having orgasms again, and that the orgasms they are having are longer and more intense. Women have reported to us that they are waking up in the middle of the night with strong orgasms. The combination of *Eurycoma longifolia*, L-arginine, vitamin B5, choline, and *Ginkgo biloba* has been on the market in Canada for over two years. This combination is reported to have them thinking about sex again. The added benefit of increased vaginal lubrication has them more comfortable while they're doing it as well.

**Lovely Lubricants**

Lubrication occurs during arousal in most women. But for some, due to hormones out of balance, stress, performance anxiety, and/or prescription medications, lubrication just does not happen. If you are moaning from pain due to inadequate lubrication during sex
or you can't get excited because of lack of lubrication—there are signals sent to the brain when you start to notice lubrication that further promotes arousal—then lubricants are a great solution.

Drugstores, health food stores, and Web sites sell vaginal lubricants. Some have stimulants in them like peppermint or menthol and are called warming lubricants. These are used to enhance sexual pleasure and orgasm. Other lubricants contain herbal extracts to aid dryness and soothe the vagina. Oil based lubricants are not safe to use with condoms. Oil-based lubricants can cause the vagina to harbor bacteria. Never use petroleum jelly. Look for water-based formulas. Always test the lubricant on your skin before applying it to your sensitive genitals. If any rash, redness, or irritation occurs do not apply to the genitalia.

Vaginal bioidentical estriol cream (not Estradiol) for hormonally related symptoms of vaginal dryness, vaginal atrophy, urinary incontinence, burning, and urinary frequency is often recommended. Even with the use of vaginal estriol cream for these symptoms, you will also want to add a lubricant for sexual intercourse. Vaginal dryness can also occur at different stages of the menstrual cycle (right after the period or just before), during pregnancy, when breast-feeding, or when using a condom.

**Your Lubricant Should Be:**
- water-based
- latex friendly
- non-staining and non-toxic
- designed to be soothing and not disrupt normal vaginal pH balance
- pleasant tasting or have no taste
- providing lots of lubrication that does not get sticky over time
- free of parabens, toxic preservatives, mineral oil, animal products or petroleum ingredients

Most women think a lube is for use only during intercourse, but a lubricant should be used throughout the day if you have vaginal dryness, in order to prevent infections, itching, burning, heat, and pain from the dryness. That is why it is important to select a lubricant that has no odor and does not stain your panties.

### Exercise for More Testosterone

The best way to enhance testosterone is to exercise. This hormone of desire is essential for maintaining muscle tone, stamina, and strength. Testosterone starts to naturally decline in women over the age of 40 who do not exercise regularly. This is about the time you notice that slow slide in muscle tone, with your breasts racing to meet your waist. Testosterone increases your metabolism—how quickly your body burns food as fuel—so you burn fat faster. Testosterone also makes women feel sexy and strong. Blood levels of testosterone increase with just 20 minutes of exercise and remain elevated for up to three hours after.

If you miss your libido and want it back, find out more in *Sexy Hormones* by Lorna R. Vanderhaeghe, M.S. and Alvin Pettle, M.D.

Lorna R. Vanderhaeghe is a women's health expert. She is the author of eight books. For more information visit her Web site at www.hormonehelp.com.

---

**Introducing Hyal-Joint™**

If it can support a thoroughbred’s joints, imagine what it can do for yours.

Surely, there’s no greater challenge for a joint-care supplement than to support the heavily stressed joints of high-performance, half-ton racehorses. Clinical tests involving these remarkable animals have demonstrated Hyal-Joint’s ability to increase amounts of hyaluronic acid concentration in synovial fluid and reduce joint discomfort. Without healthy joints, racehorses can’t run and humans may even have trouble walking, much less maintaining a lifestyle that promotes good health.

**A Superior Form of Hyaluronic Acid**

The high concentration (60%) of natural, avian extract hyaluronic acid (HA) delivered in Hyal-Joint is the superior form of HA and it supports healthy cartilage by helping to maintain a smooth, friction-free cartilageous surface. In fact, HA is the most friction-free substance in nature, and the primary component of synovial fluid, the thick, viscous fluid filling the gaps between your joints. This crucial fluid not only lubricates cartilage, but it also increases the joint’s ability to absorb shock. Because joints have no blood supply of their own, HA and synovial fluid perform another invaluable role in maintaining joint health by delivering important nutrients to cartilage as well as carrying away waste products. Finally, HA actually has the ability to stimulate production of even more hyaluronic acid in the joint capsule.

**Remember to Ask For the Best**

If you would like more details about Hyal-joint from Doctor's Best, call 800-333-6977, or visit our informative website at www.drvtamtn.com. It could help keep your healthful lifestyle on track.

© 2008 Doctor's Best, Inc.

(These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, care or prevent any disease.)