



Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy

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# Competent Compounding

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Carrie Nemerovski, PharmD (cand) March 2007

## Progesterone – The Hormone for the Heart

Bioidentical hormones are hormones that are identical to the hormones that your body normally produces. When talking about hormone replacement, bioidentical hormones refer to progesterone, DHEA, pregnenolone, natural thyroid hormone and the three estrogens that your body produces naturally. These natural estrogens include estrone (E1), estradiol (E2), and estriol (E3). Although bioidentical hormones have been widely used in other countries, the United States has typically used synthetic non-bioidentical hormones. Compounds like ethinyl estradiol, conjugated equine estrogens (from horses), and dienestrol are often used instead of natural estrogens. Synthetic progestins like norethindrone, norgestrel, and desogestrel are often used instead of progesterone.

Bioidentical hormones have several advantages over their synthetic counterparts. Progesterone in particular has several cardiovascular advantages over synthetic progestins. Normally, estrogen causes an increase in HDL, or good cholesterol. Many synthetic progestins are known to blunt the rise in HDL caused by estrogen whereas natural progesterone does not suppress the increase of HDL. Therefore, the use of natural or bioidentical progesterone avoids the negative effect on cholesterol seen with synthetic progestins. Synthetic progestins have also been shown to increase insulin resistance causing a decrease in glucose tolerance. Progesterone, however, has not been linked to insulin resistance, and it has been shown that glucose metabolism is unaffected by natural progesterone. Natural progesterone has also been shown to decrease atherosclerosis (clogged arteries) in the coronary arteries while synthetic progestins have been linked to increases in atherosclerosis as well as coronary artery vasospasm, a common cause of chest pain known as angina.

Natural progesterone in either oral, vaginal, or topical formulations has demonstrated superior safety to synthetic progestins. While more research is needed to define the exact role of progesterone in cardiovascular health, it appears that natural progesterone is an equally effective and probably safer alternative to synthetic progestins.

## Veterinary Corner

### Bad Breath May Be More Serious Than You Think

Bad breath in your pet may be the first sign of a more serious problem. Oral disease or periodontal disease is the most frequently diagnosed health



problem for pets. A whopping 80% of dogs and 70% of cats have signs and symptoms of oral disease by the age of 3. Oral disease starts with the build-up of bacteria and food debris between the teeth and gums causing a plaque to form. This bacterial plaque is the leading cause of periodontal disease. As the bacteria grow, their by-products can damage the gum tissue and cause inflammation of the gums. Periodontal disease causes red, swollen and tender gums, receding gums, bleeding, pain, bad breath and ultimately tooth loss. In addition, if left untreated, periodontitis can lead to other health problems. The inflammation and infection can cause problems with your pet's heart, kidneys, or liver.

Fortunately, catching oral disease early can prevent many of the complications associated with this disease. Common signs of oral disease include bad breath, a change in eating or chewing habits, broken teeth, or pawing at the face or mouth. If any of these signs are present, you should take your pet to their



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veterinarian for a dental exam.

The best way to prevent oral disease is by routine physical examination including a dental exam. Pet owners may also brush their pet's teeth at home with specially formulated toothpaste made specifically for pets. Do not use toothpaste for humans because it may upset your pet's stomach. Ask your veterinarian about the best way to keep your pet's mouth as healthy as the rest of them!

## Q and A with Kenny Walkup, RPh.

**Q:** What service does Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy provide that people know the least about, or don't take advantage of?



**A:** An exciting new service that we can provide came as a result of a recent computer system upgrade. We now have the ability to do what we call "automatic refills". The automatic refill feature allows our prescription filling system to compute when you are close to being out of your medication. The system prompts us to refill your prescription without you ever calling the pharmacy. When the prescription or prescriptions are completed the patient is sent an e-mail alerting them that their prescription is ready to be picked up.

**Do you have a question for Kenny? Email us at [contact@specialty-medicine.com](mailto:contact@specialty-medicine.com) and we may include your question in our next newsletter.**

## **Carbon Monoxide – A Silent Danger**

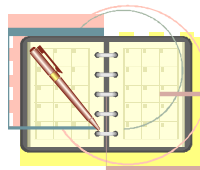
In the winter months when our houses are closed up and fresh air is scarce, it is important to be aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, and poisonous gas. It can be produced by car exhausts, burning charcoal, or from fuel burning appliances like furnaces, ranges, water heaters and room heaters. CO can accumulate and rise to unsafe levels without warning.

Unfortunately, in the United States 200 people die from accidental CO poisoning and several thousand are hospitalized each year.

The best way to protect yourself and your family from accidental poisoning is to install a CO detector in your home. CO detectors are not smoke detectors and must be purchased separately. They are designed to alarm if the amount of CO in the air reaches unsafe levels. The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that a CO alarm be installed in the hallway outside of the bedrooms in your home. If you already own a CO alarm, remember to test it once a month, just like you test your smoke detectors.

In order to protect your home from accumulating CO, it is important to install all appliances according to manufacturer instructions and to follow all building codes. Never burn charcoal inside a home or garage and never leave a car running in an attached garage, even if the garage door is open.

For more information on how to protect yourself and your family please visit <http://www.carbonmonoxidekills.com>



**Remember to check your smoke detector and carbon monoxide alarms on a monthly basis.**

The demands of modern compounding have led to the creation of pharmacies devoted solely to this art. Specialty Medicine Compounding Pharmacy has been serving your community for over seven years. Here we spe-

cialize in bio-identical hormone replacement therapies and veterinary medicine, to name a few. We have all the facilities and equipment needed to make anything from topicals to capsules and sterile injectables. We do not ac-

cept insurance, but do provide claim forms with prescriptions we fill. So, next time a patient wants a compound you're unsure of - we'd be happy to serve them!

