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# PLANET HEALTH NEWSLETTER

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## ESTROGEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE UGLY

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Estrogen is magic. It turns little girls into grown-up women. Hips widen, breasts develop, ovaries kick into gear, and the cycle of reproductive life begins. Without estrogen, there would be no babies and humanity would grind to a halt. Estrogen colors the way we think, the way we perceive pain, our memories, how our heart beats, and even the quality of our hair and fingernails. You cannot talk about women's health without talking about estrogen.

However, many people are surprised that estrogen is crucial for men's health too. It interacts with testosterone on everything from erectile function to the ability to make sperm. It also plays a role in mood and thinking. The difference is that men have a lot of testosterone, and a little estrogen, and women are the reverse: more estrogen and less testosterone.

Lack of estrogen can cause heart disease, weight changes, osteoporosis, depression, uncomfortable vaginal changes and increased urinary tract infections. This is a very partial list.

## THE ESTROGEN FAMILY

Estrogen has three major types, called estrone (E1), estradiol (E2), and estriol (E3). These subtypes occur in different forms, too, so it's a big, diverse family. And like many families, some of the members are helpful and productive, while a few can be problematic or even dangerous.

Estrogens change form throughout their life cycles and follow a variety of metabolic paths. When most estrogen is metabolized down the best path (2-hydroxyl), estrogen stays in its safer and more beneficial form. However, if the balance shifts and more estrogen is metabolized via the problem path (16-hydroxyl), they can cause problems and increase the risk for hormonally related cancers.

Also, environmental estrogen mimics, known as xenoestrogens, are commonly found in endocrine-disrupting herbicides, pesticides, plasticizers and even the bi-sphenol-A (BPS) in plastic bottles trick the body into acting as if they are estrogen and are subsequently metabolized via problematic pathways. That may be why we see a link between BPS exposure and breast cancer. Dysfunctional estrogen metabolism is also linked to endometriosis, uterine fibroids, menstrual migraines and serous PMS (premenstrual syndrome) or perimenopause symptoms.

## BROCCOLI AND CAULIFLOWER TO THE RESCUE?

Diindolylmethane or DIM is an estrogen pathway powerhouse. The precursor to DIM is found in cruciferous vegetables, such as Brussels sprouts, cabbage, bok choy and broccoli, but you would have to eat two pounds of raw broccoli to get a medicinal dose of DIM.

DIM is the most potent natural compound for keeping estrogen in its safest form and guiding it to the best metabolic pathways. DIM does not increase or decrease overall estrogen, it merely assures that it is directed to the 2-hydroxy metabolic pathway.



## CURCUMIN

Curcumin is a strong anti-inflammatory and fights free radical damage. Both inflammation and oxidative damage set up a spiral of circumstances that can lead to tumor formation, because they cause normal cells to become cancerous. Curcumin stops the body from over expressing various inflammatory marker that fuel cancer growth. In the case of breast cancer, there is research that shows that Curcumin stops the growth of MCF-7 breast cancer cells.

## GRAPE SEED EXTRACT

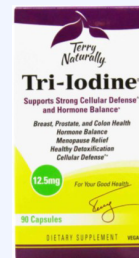
Grape seed extract has been shown to partially inhibit an enzyme (aromatase) that converts androgens into estrogen. Breast tissue usually has higher levels of aromatase. A study published in the journal Cancer Research discussed the valuable potential of grape seed extract as their research showed that it inhibited aromatase activity and reduced growth in MCF-7 breast cancer cells—the same cell growth inhibited by Curcumin.

Scientific research has shown that grape seed extract's ability to inhibit aromatase may also be particularly useful in preventing and treating endometriosis. Endometriosis does not always respond well to conventional therapy, and some of the estrogen-blocking drugs used in its treatment can have very serious side effects.

## IODINE

It may surprise you to learn that iodine can be useful in situations where dysfunctional estrogens are causing problems. The ovaries and uterus have rapid uptake of iodine. The ovaries have the second largest amount of iodine in the body, after the thyroid gland. They require iodine to make estrogen. Inadequate iodine can cause higher levels of estrone and estradiol and low estriol levels, and this imbalance is implicated in an increased cancer risk for hormonally active tissue like uterine, ovary and breast.

Low thyroid function can also cause issues with menstrual irregularities, heavy periods and even infertility. Therefore, using supplemental iodine to support healthy thyroid hormone production can be a way to improve all these health issues.



# WHAT'S NEW?



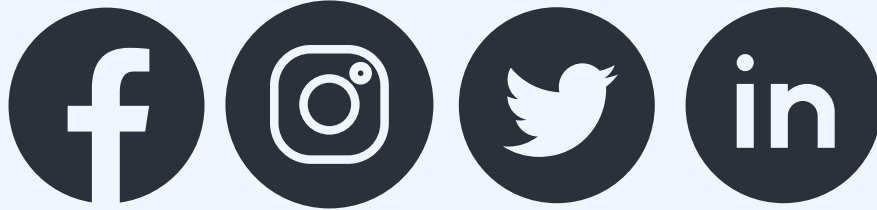
## Dr. Formulated Quercetin

- Supports Immune
- Supports Respiratory Function
- Promotes Healthy Inflammatory Response



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