



The Complete Idiot's Guide to Hormone Weight Loss (Idiot's Guides)

By Alicia Stanton

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How to stay slim...even when your hormones are working against you.

For many people, trouble losing weight isn't about will power—it's about hormones. Stress, estrogen loss, thyroid imbalance, are just a few of the hormonal conditions that can lead to weight gain regardless of how much one diets or exercises. *The Complete Idiot's Guide(r) to Hormone Weight Loss* offers detailed yet accessible explanations of these conditions and provides readers with diet plans, eating strategies, exercise tips, and other useful information that will enable them to win the uphill battle against unwanted weight gain.

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Editorial Review

From the Author

We live in truly amazing times. Every day we see new technological advances in every aspect of our lives; medicine, communication, travel, entertainment and many others. However, in a time where we are moving forward in so many areas, why are we struggling so much with our health? Obesity has reached epidemic proportions. Heart disease, diabetes, cancer, autoimmune disease, Alzheimer's and many other chronic diseases continue to plague us. Many of these diseases have some relationship to obesity.

As a physician, it is very difficult for me to watch patients coming to me struggling with weight gain, fatigue, low sex drive, difficulty sleeping and mood changes who've been told by other physicians that "you are just getting older" or "your laboratory values are in the normal range so there is nothing wrong with you." The reality is that many of our technological advances have put us in a situation where our metabolism is being damaged. Damage to your metabolism sets you up to easily gain weight then have great difficulty taking it back off. The driving force behind your metabolism is your hormones.

I have been focusing on the nutrition and hormone balance of my patients for over 10 years. Originally, I underwent the "standard" medical school training which meant that I had very little appreciation for the role of nutrition in disease. Of course, I knew about things like scurvy, rickets and beriberi which are diseases of extreme vitamin deficiency; which I knew were rare. However, I didn't truly understand the all-encompassing effect that your diet had on your metabolism and on your health overall. Hippocrates, the father of medicine, said it best when he said, "Let your food be your medicine."

My journey started back in 1997. I was very happy practicing in my OB/GYN practice and being the mother to my 18-month-old son, Eric. My life was turned upside down one day in October when, after experiencing back pain and visiting my physician, I was diagnosed with a spinal cord tumor. The tumor was not aggressive and was completely surgically removed 4 days later. However, surgery left me temporarily paralyzed from the waist down and in chronic pain. With therapy, I regained the use of my legs and was able to return to my practice in a few months. But, my life was very different. I began to research ways, besides pain medication, to help me cope with the pain.

I began the study the effects of nutrition in medicine with the American Academy of Anti-Aging. As I learned more about nutrition, and begin understand its importance with relation to metabolism, hormone balance and disease. As I began implementing my knowledge, I began to feel much better. Then, I started using the things I learned to help me to start helping my patients. I talked to them about their diets, their sleep habits and their levels of stress. I began diagnosing hormone imbalance and treating with diet, lifestyle changes and, when necessary, bioidentical hormone therapy. I noticed drastic improvements in the health of my patients as we began focusing on true prevention of disease rather than just treating there symptoms. They lost weight, they slept better, they had better sex and they were happier in general.

One of the biggest problems with our current medical system is that we tend to focus on medications to treat symptoms of diseases rather than looking at the causes of those diseases. Many times, the thought process is, once you're on medication for something like high blood pressure or high cholesterol, you're on it for life. These medications are not without their own side effects. Often, you might get a side effect from one medication and be put on another medication to help with a side effect of the first one. The risk of drug interactions increases with every medication that is added to the list.

When you really start understanding the delicate balance of our hormones and their influence on our metabolism, it is easy to see how using medications only to treat symptoms can become a recipe for disaster. I definitely believe the medications have a place in patient treatment. However, I also believe that we have great power to manage our health and keep our hormones balanced by the way we eat, sleep, manage stress and eliminate toxins every day.

First of all, you have to understand how all of these relationships work. Why does it matter if you eat white bread and candy instead of apples and green beans? If you can get by on 5 hours of sleep a night, why shouldn't you? You're eating almost no fat and no cholesterol, yet you continue to gain weight and your cholesterol keeps going up, what's up with that? You try diet after diet and exercise plan after exercise plan, yet the scale never seems to move or worse yet, it moves up.

It's important to understand that our hormones are designed to work a delicate balance. They all have a job to do and there is no "good" hormone or "bad" hormone in our body. In my first book, *Hormone Harmony*, I compared the hormones in our body to instruments in an orchestra. You need just the right amount of all the instruments to create beautiful music and the flute is as important as the tuba.

Most of us think of our metabolisms only as our bodies' ability to burn calories. This is partially true. But, it is actually much more than that. Our metabolism is actually every biochemical reaction in our body and the messengers that keep our metabolisms running efficiently are our hormones. One of the most difficult problems we face right now is a number of forces working against our hormones. There are additives to the foods we eat such as antibiotics, pesticides and hormones. On top of that, in order to increase the shelf life and lower the cost of processed foods, they include ingredients such as trans-fats and high fructose corn syrup. Our bodies are not equipped to handle these types of ingredients and they cause huge problems with insulin and our appetite hormones. Our environment is loaded with hormone disrupting chemicals. Worst of all; we live in a fast paced, highly stressed world that doesn't allow us enough down time or sleep.

As our hormones become more out of balance, we start to get symptoms: weight gain, fatigue and many others. At this stage, it might not be enough to qualify for a disease diagnosis or create abnormal lab values. So, you are told that "nothing is wrong." But, you know that "something is definitely not right." This is the point where many of my patients seek me out. I can help them to determine where their hormone imbalances are and what they can do to fix their damaged metabolism.

This book is the culmination of years of experience with thousands of patients. As I work with these patients, I have found that 7 basic principles can be used to create hormone balance, a healthy metabolism and weight loss. As you utilize these principles and balance your metabolism, you will find that you lose weight, flatten your belly, sleep better, have more energy, build more muscle, have better sex and feel better in general.

In his book, I will teach you what to eat and what to eliminate from your diet. I have included meal suggestions, 56 days' worth of menus and a number of excellent recipes. You will learn what toxins you encounter in everyday life and how to avoid them. I show you the fastest and most efficient ways to burn fat and build muscle. You will see hidden sources of stress you may not know about and what to do to reduce them. You'll also learn which supplements might be important for you.

We have much more control over our health and well-being than we think we do. The first step is understanding how this has happened. The next step is implementing the things you learned into your life so you can fine tune your hormones, heal your metabolism, lose the weight you want to and live a much healthier life.

From the Inside Flap

Table of Contents at a glance:

Part I: From Unhealthy to Healthy Hormones

Chapter 1: What's the Problem?

This chapter discusses the obvious fact obesity is on the rise but also brings to light the not-so-obvious facts as to why. The low cholesterol, low fat diet and the preponderance of refined carbohydrates has created an epidemic of insulin resistance leading to obesity, heart disease and diabetes. In addition, the toxins in our environment and the additives in our foods have made this problem much worse.

Chapter 2: The Power of Hormones

Hormones are important messengers within our body and a correct hormone balance is necessary to maintain a healthy weight. Stress, including emotional stress, inadequate sleep, toxin exposure and poor eating habits, increases our demand for cortisol, our stress hormone. When we have stress, we create an imbalance in our sex hormones and increase belly fat, which leads to weight gain.

Chapter 3: How Hormones Can Make You Fat

There are more than 100 hormones in the human body. In this chapter I describe 10 of the hormones that are related to weight and what each one does. I also list symptoms of hormone imbalance and the causes and conditions related to imbalance.

Part II: Losing Weight with Healthy Hormones

Chapter 4: Principle #1: Eliminate Toxins!

Toxins are all around us; in our food, the air we breathe, in our homes and in many of the product we use every day. Toxins can create hormone imbalance and weight gain. Instead of being overwhelmed by these toxins, it's important to understand exactly where you find them and how you can avoid them.

Chapter 5: Principle #2: Eat Right!

Poor food choices send the wrong messages to your hormones and genes, which control your cells. This chapter outlines the different kinds of nutrients we have to take in every day and how to make the best use of them.

Chapter 6: Principle #3: Enhance Your Hormone Balance

Many of us don't appreciate the effect that our hormone balance has on our weight, and our ability to lose it. This chapter discusses how unbalanced hormones can make you fat. I also explain bioidentical hormones, they are safety and how they relate to men and women.

Chapter 7: Principle #4: Energize with Less Stress and More Sleep

One of the central issues regarding the obesity epidemic, aside from improper diet, is a number of different stressors we are faced with every day. Now, because of our diet, lack of sleep, toxin exposures and "push it to the limit" lifestyles, we are constantly engaging our stress response.

Chapter 8: Principle #5: Exercise!

We all know that exercise is important for weight loss and overall health. Muscle is one of the most metabolically active tissues in our body and "muscle dictates metabolism". Interval and strength training significantly increased lean muscle mass and improve hormone balance in a fraction of the time of steady state cardiovascular, or aerobic, training.

Chapter 9: Principle #6: Evaluate How You Eat

Our eating habits can make as fat. As toddlers, we started out knowing to eat exactly the right amount. Over time, we begin to override our ability to self-regulate our food intake. Food addiction and stress eating is related to our diets, emotional states, and our biochemistry.

Chapter 10: Principle #7: Enlist the Help of Others

We are social beings that rely on each other for support and feedback. Without that support, we are more likely to fall short of our goals or abandon them when the going gets tough. It is important to learn to ask

others for help when you need it.

Part III: Put the Plan into Action!

Chapter 11: How the Hormone Weight Loss Diet Works

We have looked at the 7 Principles of the Hormone Weight Loss Diet. We know why we have to eat lean proteins and healthy fats. But how do we make it work? Now, it's time to find practical ways to make eating healthy, whole foods an easy habit for you to develop and keep.

Chapter 12: Eliminate Toxins

We have learned about the dangers of living in a world that is full of toxic chemicals and how these chemicals can cause weight gain. Fortunately, our bodies are well equipped to remove these dangerous toxins and I'll show you how to support this. I cover how we can reduce our exposure to toxins so there will be less for our liver, kidneys and skin to handle.

Chapter 13: What to Eat, What to Avoid

This is the chapter where you find out exactly what foods you should be eating and what foods you should be avoiding. Your top goal should be to maintain a steady blood sugar level. I teach you how to eat carbohydrates in combination with fats and protein to reduce your glycemic load and the insulin response.

Chapter 14: Supplements to Aid Weight Loss

Fourteen essential minerals are required for our metabolisms to work well. They must be consumed in our diet or taken in as a supplement. Without these essential minerals, our bodies cannot work at full capacity. This chapter will tell you those things and provide you with a supplement shopping guide.

Chapter 15: Find Out if Your Hormones are In Balance

Hormones play very important roles in your body and they affect your metabolism, mood, weight, energy level, sleep and even your susceptibility to disease. Take the quiz in this chapter and find out if you have symptoms of hormone imbalance. I discuss many types of testing and give you the information you need to work with your physician.

Chapter 16: Energize!

Adrenal fatigue occurs when the adrenal glands can no longer produce enough of our stress hormone, cortisol, to adequately support many of our activities. In this chapter, I give tips for the best possible sleep and describe a wide variety of stress reduction techniques which will suit any personality or any schedule.

Chapter 17: Exercise!

When many of us think of exercise, we envision a gym with rows of treadmills, stairmasters and other equipment. This chapter provides extensive information with photographs demonstrating some of the best functional movements you can do. I also provide a series of interval exercises that can be done at home and some that can be done while traveling.

Chapter 18: Evaluate Your Eating Habits

In this chapter I discuss four important eating habits -- listening to your body's cues, emotional eating, stress eating, and adequate hydration. Evaluate the role these habits play in the way you eat and your daily food intake.

Chapter 19: Enlist the Help of Others

We've all heard the saying, "Two heads are better than one." From identifying the best weight loss buddy for you to learning how to break the ice and ask for help with a potential diet buddy, this chapter gives tips on how to enlist help in your quest for losing weight.

Part IV: Continuing Success

Chapter 20: Phase I: 28 Day Action Plan with Menus

This chapter explains phase I and gives you a food table with foods that are allowed in a format that allows you to mix and match the foods to your own tastes. There are also a number of suggested meal ideas for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks. The 28 day menu gives you a specific plan to follow for all 5 meals of each day and includes a number of recipes.

Chapter 21: Phase II: Eating for Optimal Health with 28 Suggested Menus

Once you complete phase I, phase II gives you the framework to continue eating for optimal health. In

addition to all the recipes for phase I you can continue to use, there are more recipes at the end of this chapter as well.

This is the part of the plan where you start to make it work especially for you. In the appendix, you will find action plan worksheets to help you track your eating, stress management and exercising efforts.

Chapter 22: My Personal Action Plan

About the Author

Alicia Stanton, M.D. practices anti-aging and integrative medicine at BodyLogicMD of Connecticut and is Board Certified in Obstetrics and Gynecology and is a Fellow of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology. She is also a Diplomate of the Board of Anti-Aging Medicine and an Advanced Fellow in Anti-Aging and Regenerative Medicine. Dr. Stanton graduated Magna Cum Laude from the State University of New York at Buffalo School of Medicine.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Gregory Throop:

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