

Happy Hormones  
FOR LIFE

# GUIDE TO TESTING



# WHY TEST YOUR HORMONES?

Hormones work to the 'Goldilocks principle' – not too much, not too little, but just right.

This is why the 'one size fits all' standard medical approach doesn't work for everyone, and why personalised testing can really help to find the root cause and resolve your symptoms.

When we work with clients, we take a full medical history and go through all your symptoms. That usually gives us a good idea about what your hormones are up to. But symptoms are just an indication, and sometimes there are underlying factors that may not be so obvious. That's when testing is so useful for us in clinic.

Testing takes out the guesswork. Even though we can get a good idea of what's going on from your symptoms, we like to have the backup of a physical test - so we know for sure that if something isn't where it should be, we can put the best protocol in place that laser targets that specific imbalance, and that helps in 3 ways;

- You get much quicker and more effective results – after all, that's what we're aiming for!
- It helps you stick to the programme – it's all well and good us telling you there's a problem, but seeing it on paper makes it REAL
- It gives us a baseline so we can measure your progress

So here's a low down on how to get your Feisty 4 hormones tested!

## ① CORTISOL – STRESS TESTING

Measuring cortisol levels in saliva is a good indication of your adrenal health. Chronic stress is at an epidemic levels in our modern day lives, and this can take a toll on your adrenal output. A cortisol imbalance over the long term can have serious implications on your health, including cardiovascular, hormones, digestion, neurological and immune function.

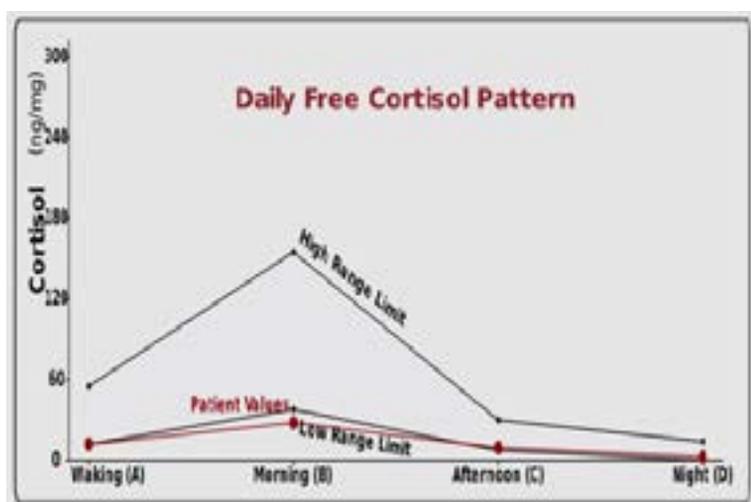
Your doctor may test your cortisol levels but it is not a standard test. If your doctor suspects very low or very high levels, he may order a blood test that measures your cortisol levels in the morning.

Your GP may be looking for abnormally low levels, which could indicate a serious condition called Addisons Disease. They are not looking to measure how well your adrenals are coping over the course of your day. 'Adrenal fatigue' or cortisol imbalance is not a recognized condition in conventional medicine.

First morning cortisol is also not a great way of measuring adrenal health. Firstly your cortisol may be raised if you are rushing to a blood test facility before the school run or work. Secondly, cortisol in blood is not the most accurate measure. Thirdly, only taking a snapshot of one moment is not telling you the pattern of cortisol during the day.

**The alternative?** We use a urine test to measure cortisol levels over 4 points of a 24 hour day to check how much cortisol you're producing and what the pattern is. This tells us a huge amount about how your adrenals are coping with any stress you are under – whether that's external stress in your daily life, or internal stress like an underlying infection, hormone imbalance or nutrient deficiency.

Here's an example of the results you can get from this test:



This lady for example shown in red, had low morning and midday readings, recovering slightly during the day, but these levels reflect her stressful busy life and symptoms of exhaustion and low mood. From this we can help her to get her levels up by supporting her adrenals with some diet and lifestyle changes, and some targeted supplements.

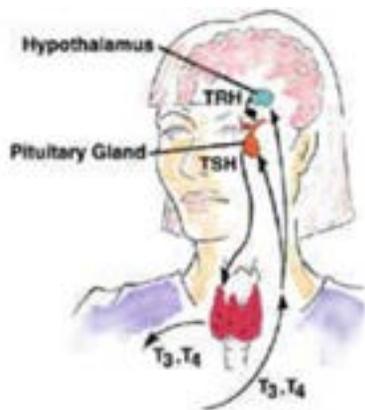
### Who might benefit from an adrenal stress test?

Anyone who has the following symptoms; anxiety, overwhelm, irritability, feeling wired, poor sleep, brain fog, memory loss, digestive issues, frequent colds/infections, PMS, depression, low libido, high blood pressure, palpitations, infertility and belly fat.

## ② THYROID TESTING

Your thyroid hormone is vital for every cell in the body to make the energy required for it to do its job – whether that's making your heart beat, your muscles work or your brain function properly!

Doctors in general are quite happy to test your thyroid, especially if you have symptoms of fatigue, weight gain, hair loss or constipation. You will often only get 3 test results – your TSH, T4 and sometimes your TPO antibodies. These are all important, but they don't always show the whole picture.



Let me explain:

TSH is your Thyroid Stimulating Hormone – this is released from the pituitary gland in the brain to tell the thyroid gland how much T4 hormone to make.

T4 is the inactive hormone that gets converted to T3, your active hormone.

T3 is the active hormone and the one that does most of the work, and this is often not measured.

Many of us (this was me too) don't even know we have thyroid issues. You may have been tested and told you were 'normal'. There are two problems with standard testing:

### 1. A very wide reference range

The reference ranges for thyroid hormones are very wide. That means that you could be 'normal' even though you are at the lowest end of the scale. Unless you dip under the threshold you won't get any treatment. This is known as 'sub-clinical' hypothyroidism and there is much debate about how or even whether it should be treated. Similar to adrenal function, thyroid disease is often only recognized as overt hyperthyroidism and overt hypothyroidism.

### 2. It's not the whole picture

The standard initial test for thyroid will sometimes only measure TSH levels. Often T4 is measured though not always in its free form (fT4). It's really important to know your free T4 and free T3 levels but these won't necessarily be measured if your TSH is 'normal'. This testing process only looks at a small part of the H-P-T axis and doesn't take into account what may be happening further down the chain (eg if your T4 is not converting to T3, you have low active hormone).

### 3. No interest in the cause?

If you have low thyroid function, it is vital to know if it is auto-immune related. Around 80% of thyroid disease cases are auto-immune Hashimotos or Graves disease. Auto-immune thyroid conditions have a different etiology than other thyroid issues, and so requires a different protocol of treatment. Many people are just put on Thyroxine, not knowing they have an immune disorder and how to treat it.

If you suspect you may have a thyroid issue, make sure you ask your GP for all 4 thyroid measures; TSH, fT4, fT3, and TPO antibodies.

### The alternative?

A full thyroid hormone blood panel is the standard test for our clients. It includes TSH, fT4, fT3 and TPO antibodies. That way, if there is a problem we can see where in the chain it's likely to be occurring and put in place the right protocol to address it.

#### Blood Spot Thyroids

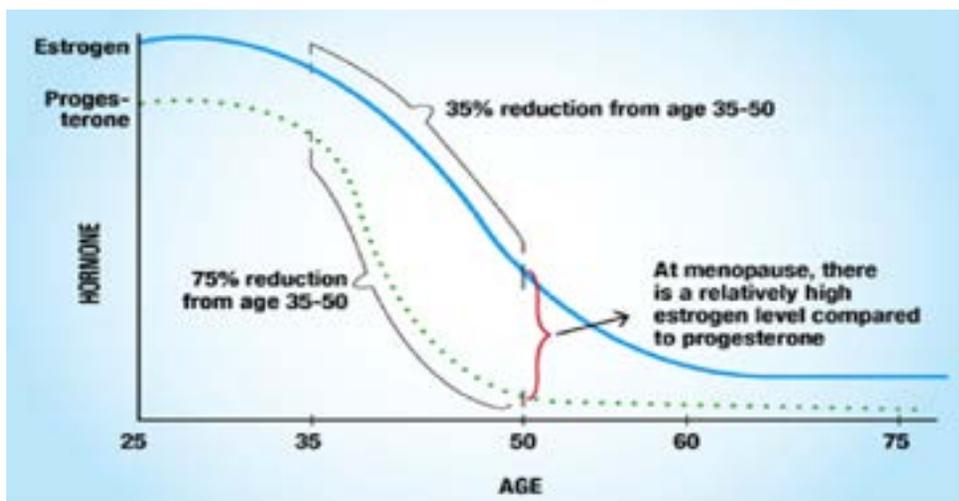
Free T4*	1.4	0.7-2.5 ng/dL
Free T3	3.0	2.4-4.2 pg/mL
TSH	0.9	0.5-3.0 $\mu$ U/mL
TPOab*	178 H	0-150 IU/mL (70-150 borderline)

### Who might benefit from a full thyroid panel?

Anyone who has the following symptoms: fatigue, weight gain, anxiety, depression, cold hands/feet, brain fog, memory loss, constipation, PMS, infertility, low libido, hair loss, poor nails, dry skin, joint pain, high cholesterol.

Women over 40 and anyone with a family history of thyroid disease are at a higher risk.

## ③ SEX HORMONES



From the age of 35 a woman's sex hormones start to decline (and fluctuate). These are the peri-menopausal years and they can last up to post-menopause (average age 51). Some women sail through this time, but for many it can be a roller coaster.

If you have symptoms in your 40's, your Doctor may get your FSH (Follicle Stimulating Hormone) and LH (luteinizing hormone) levels tested. If these are raised it can indicate that you are in the peri menopause. Not that useful as you probably know that already!

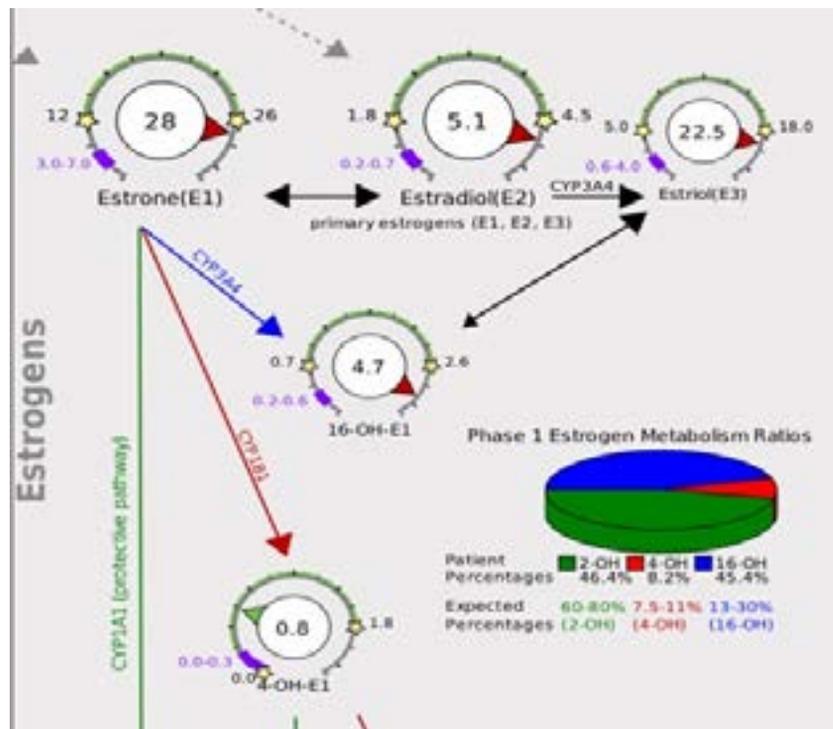
## The alternative?

We use in my opinion the best hormone test in the world! It's a dried urine test that not only measures your sex hormone levels but also the metabolites, which gives us a picture of how hormones are actually performing, and crucially how they are being detoxified and eliminated. This is very useful to understand the behaviour of oestrogen in the body and potential risks of further conditions, including breast and ovarian cancer.

## Who might benefit from a sex hormone panel?

Anyone who has the following symptoms: Fatigue, weight gain, anxiety, depression, hot flushes, night sweats, brain fog, memory loss, over-emotional, PMS, dry skin, vaginal dryness.

In addition, this test can be useful for anyone with a hormone driven condition, such as PMS, PCOS, endometriosis, fibroids and hormone associated cancers.



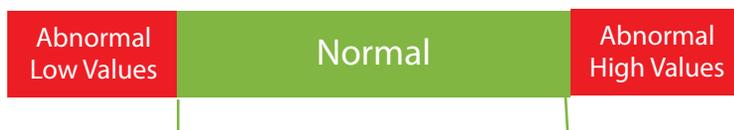
## OTHER Useful Tests

Apart from hormones, we use several other functional tests with clients depending on symptoms and circumstances. These include;

- **Vitamin D** – actually a hormone not a vitamin, it's crucial for hormone health and immune function (as well as your bone health!). It's so important to know your levels, especially if you live in a country without year round sunshine.
- **Vitamin B12 & folate** – often forgotten but common symptoms are fatigue, mood issues, brain fog, memory loss, confusion, dizziness, numbness, tingling. B12 is found in animal products, so if you are vegetarian, you need regular testing. Even in meat eaters, you may have difficulty absorbing B12, so it's important to know your levels.
- **Iron** – iron deficiency and/or anemia is very common in menstruating women, causing fatigue and listlessness. Ask for a ferritin test, as this is the most accurate measure of your iron stores.
- **Fasting glucose and/or HbA1C** – these are measures for blood sugar and diabetes.
- **Fatty acids profile** – this test measures your essential omega fats, indicating if you have an imbalanced ratio.
- **Gut function tests** – many chronic diseases have their roots in gut health. Over 80% of your immune system is located there, and your gut flora play a huge role in your health. Stool and urine tests can show the different strains of bacteria, yeast, parasites and fungi living in your gut so that we can correct any imbalance.
- **Nutrient profiles** – more general profiles to show up any vitamin or mineral deficiencies.
- **DNA Genetic Testing** – measuring genetic variations can give us a gene-based healthy profile with dietary goals for relevant vitamins, minerals, phytochemicals, and foods; and nutritional supplement recommendations

# 'Normal' or Optimal?

This is why your lab tests are "normal"  
but you still feel sick



In this area you will find  
lab results that a doctor  
will say are "normal" but  
they are not optimal!

Many clients report that they have had tests done by their doctors and have been told they are 'normal'.

What we often find when we look at the results is that they have fallen into the 'normal' range, however at the very low end.

But there's a huge difference between someone with optimal TSH (thyroid stimulating hormone) and someone with a level that is just within range. Or someone with ferritin (iron) at the low end of the range and someone with optimal levels. It will most often show up in their symptoms.

We want you at OPTIMAL levels not 'normal' levels! It can make a huge difference to your wellbeing.

[Contact me](#) if you'd like more information on the tests that we run.

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