

## Hormones and their effect on our skin

Some of you ladies may notice that in the time before your period, you get an outbreak of acne. Guys, you may have noticed that puberty brought along pimples and oily skin. These are clear examples of some of the effects that hormones can have on our skin.

Oestrogen is the main female hormone, and some of its responsibilities include stimulation of puberty and the maturation of our reproductive organs. It also increases the production of hyaluronic acid – this chemical helps skin retain its ability to stretch and to stay moist and plump. When oestrogen declines in menopause, skin can lose its elasticity leading to an increase in wrinkles and dryness. The changes in women's hormones pre-menstrually can trigger a breakout. A women's skin becomes more sensitive at this time, so waxing can also become more painful.

Testosterone and progesterone enhance collagen production and are responsible for making our skin strong and thick. Testosterone is found in higher levels in men,

which is why they seem to age slower. However, acne can occur when the skin is over stimulated by male hormones. Too much testosterone can also cause unwanted hair on the female body which occurs in conditions like polycystic ovarian syndrome.

Thyroxin is a hormone produced by the thyroid gland. Too much thyroxin can cause sweaty, oily and flushed skin. Under-activity can produce dry, coarse skin.

So you can see that healthy hormones equal healthy skin. If you have issues with your skin, it may be worthwhile consulting your health practitioner to assess for and treat any possible hormonal imbalances.

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