

39 - Alternatives to BioBalance Bio-identical Hormone Pellet Treatment

BioBalance Podcast — Dr. Kathy Maupin and [Brett Newcomb](#)

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Dr. Kathy Maupin: This is episode 39 of the BioBalance Healthcast. I'm Dr. Kathy Maupin.

Brett Newcomb: And I'm Brett Newcomb. Today we're talking about competitive products that are marketed on television and on the internet to compare with hormone replacement therapies. There is a lot of stuff you see or you get ads about and they don't ever say what they are, they don't ever say what they do. But they have these smiling glowing people that say "oh I took this pill, and my god am I better, is my life just more enhanced, and it's wonderful, and you can have it too. And, we'll send you a 30 day free trial."

KM: And they don't.

BN: And they don't.

KM: Eventually, you somehow have to pay for that and for the shipping which is almost more than the product. But what we're talking about is the quality of these types of supplements. First of all, I like natural products. I use DIM which is a natural food type product. I use herbal products like saw palmetto for decreasing DHT. I use a lot of products, but I only use products made in the United States that are controlled by the FDA. But everything you see on the internet in general is not really controlled by the FDA, and a lot of it is not made in the United States, which is huge. Because a lot of it is made in China, where the cleanliness standards and the content standards are very low. If you saw where they were made you would be horrified and you would never take that kind of product.

BN: I'm really glad to hear you say that because over the years of doing therapy I have had a lot of clients come in that have been hesitant in taking medicines like anti-depressant. And they say "I don't want a prescription, I don't want to take a medicine, I don't want start down that road because you can never come off of it. So instead I take herbal remedies, I take things like St. Johns Wart." Which there's a lot of documentation that that is sometimes helpful.

KM: Often times it works.

BN: But the issue with those kinds of ingredients is standardization, consistency, regulation, accessibility of someone to talk to at the company to say what's in this? Or this didn't work this time but it worked last time. What's going on? You get batch inconsistencies, you get content inconsistencies.

KM: Right, which you really should. If they're made here the FDA oversees them a little bit. But in general there's a lot more leeway on that. But when you get to Rx's, when you get to a prescription, then there's a lot of regulation like my bio-identical hormone pellets are regulated. Everyone thinks it's just you go to the store and you get an herbal product. But it's pure testosterone, pure estrogen, estrodial, made from soy and yams. It's natural because it's made from a plant. And it's compounded, it's not made in a factory, it is made by a pharmacist. Those are the differences with normal pharmaceuticals. In general it's very well regulated by the FDA. And they come in and check out the pharmacies all of the time.

BN: The pharmacy's regulated, the pharmacist is licensed, they're educated to American standards.

KM: It's very clean, very clean. Just like if you got a pharmaceutical from your pharmacist at the grocery store or the drug store. So in that way it's regulated. Where we have trouble is where we get nutritional supplements. Those are really not regulated so much by the FDA. They don't have time to do everything. So you look at something and say "Oh I want to take that". Like Ageless Male. I had somebody ask me about that so we actually investigated that. I've never really looked at what was in it because I didn't have that many patients come in and ask me about. So when I did I found that the biggest issue was that it was made in China. And all it had in it was saw palmetto which is much cheaper than ageless male, as saw palmetto. So you can take that in an American saw palmetto. And a clean, a clean type of [production].

BN: A clean production system with quantified ingredients that are consistently measured and are made to a standard in the United States.

KM: Right and I don't mean to be picking on Ageless Male. It's just the one that my patient asked me about. I'm not taking them on, but when I looked them up on the internet there really was no one to call about it to ask about it and it did say that it was made in China and that it did have saw palmetto, and that was the major active ingredient.

BN: But it also identified another ingredient that was proprietary, it's a made up name, they register the name and say this is what we're going to call this product. And you have difficulty finding out what this product is.

KM: Right it was a Chinese herb that I couldn't find. I don't know if you have to live in China to find information about it, or if you have to have a book that I don't have or the internet that I don't have. I mean I have the internet, but this wasn't in it. So I think you really have to look at these different things, what's in it? If you can find what's in it. And be careful with proprietary formulas. But then also where it's made and if you can find somebody to talk to about it. Now in contrast, Amberen, is actually over the counter, it's not a prescription. And Amberen is a product that is controlled and actually does do one of the 5 things or 6 things that it promises to do. Amberen is

used for hot flashes, and it is not a supplement or used to be substituted for estrogen. But they show, all the advertising they say is instead of estrogen. You don't have to take estrogen you can take this product and all of your ills will be gone.

BN: You get down into the weeds of the claim that they're making, what they're saying is you don't have to do all of that in order to get rid of hot flashes, but not necessary to address the other issues that exist.

KM: Right, it doesn't strengthen your bones, it doesn't make you feel younger, look younger, it doesn't cause you to have a moist vagina so you don't have painful intercourse. It doesn't do any of those things. So when you look at these you have to look at their claims. But I have some patients that have used it and they've gotten nothing but relief from their hot flashes. And they were very unhappy and in fact those were the people who used it ahead of time before they've come to see me.

BN: Well and the critical ingredient in Amberen is MSG.

KM: And MSG is what's in Chinese food, Japanese food.

BN: Just got to a Chinese restaurant and you won't have hot flashes.

KM: Yea you won't have hot flashes. That's not really true. But it does give people migraines. And if you don't read that and you have migraines, you're going to get a whopper migraine from Amberen. And that's on their testimonials. There's a lot of complaints about that. And in general, estrodiol and testosterone actually tend to protect you from that if they have a steady dose. So this will make that worse. And that's a big fact in terms of making a decision.

BN: So we're talking about supplements and medicines some of which are prescription, some of which are not prescription. And we're talking about, at least Kathy is making the important distinction about medicines or supplements that are regulated in their manufactured distribution and made to American health standards, as opposed to imported from overseas, and you never really know what you're getting when you import things from overseas. Because they don't regulate it in the same way and you don't always know the information. Like the proprietary formula has some fancy name that sounds good but you don't know what it is and you can't find what's in it. You were telling me off camera a story about one of the patients that came into your office and talked to your nurse. That had bought a product from China in order to lose weight.

KM: From China and it was billed as a weight loss medication. And it did in fact make her lose weight. But here's the caveat. She had gone directly to this corporation in China to send it to her, it didn't go through any American corporation. So she had no recourse. But she took these pills as directed. She didn't really look at what was in them. But it wasn't really written in English, it was written in Chinese.

BN: Like the assembly directions you get.

KM: Right but it said take one day or something like that, with a lot of water, so she took it and then all of a sudden, here's how I found out about it. She came in with a jar and in the jar was stool, (this isn't very pretty), but was stool and in it were all these worms swimming around. She had gotten these worms from eggs that were in the diet pill and that's how you lose weight. You get an infestation of worms that take away your nutrition.

BN: That eat the nutrients so you lose weight.

KM: Right, her hair was falling out and she lost weight. She looked terrible.

BN: And then you don't know what they worms are so you don't know how to get rid of them.

KM: That's right and they're not American tape worms or hook worms. You go to your GI doctor to get rid of them and they're like, what is this? I've never seen this before. That's not a good thing. But it took her a lot of time, effort, drugs and everything else to get rid of this. And that's about the worse story I've got.

BN: And what we want to say is you're seeing the shock reaction about the circumstances that created this. It's not about this poor woman. This poor woman lost weight but had the issues that she had and the fear that she had about "what do I have now?"

KM: Well, we're trusting, Americans are very trusting. And since we do have an agency like the FDA watching over us, we assume every country does.

BN: We assume everybody does.

KM: And so that we're going get clean, safe, not worm infested things that we can take that make us better. So in that way, we don't even read things anymore we just buy them because we rarely get anything that's going to hurt us in our food or in our supplements in this country.

BN: Well and we get marketed for so many things in so many ways, that the marketing is not regulated. You see marketing strategies for alternatives to things like Viagra or Cialis. You don't have to pay 18, 20 dollars a pill, you can get it for two dollars if you buy it from overseas. Where ever overseas may be and they'll ship you lots of those things for a very inexpensive cost. So you consider "well gosh that's cheaper. If it's the same, why wouldn't I use it?" Well one of reasons you won't use it is it might have worms, or something worse.

KM: Oor it may just not work. What are you going to do if there's no phone number on it and if you can't there's no contact ability. How can you even complain to them? If they have somebody behind it in the U.S. then generally you can complain. You know

you have to have a phone number on every website from which you order things for this type of things. I don't want to make anyone think that I'm against vitamins or supplements. My mom basically we never had drugs in the house. Maybe I became a doctor because of that, just in spite of her. But we had all herbs and honey, natural honey, you know not pasteurized but real honey and we used that to cure all kinds of problems, we didn't use medications. So I'm very on board with that. I'm very on board with medicine, when it's necessary. But I just don't want patients or any of you out there to get something that you didn't count on and have more a problem, besides it not being effective. But to have more of a problem or side effect than you ever anticipated by buying it through the internet.

BN: And we also don't have an investment in one product over another. You have an investment in the care for your patients and the regulation of the ingredients that you use, that you buy from standard stores. I mean you're very careful about doing the work to make sure you're buying quality products from quality people and that you know what they do. But there are other places to get a lot of these things. And so the points we want to make as you consider if you look at ads on t.v. or ads on the internet or you get a blast e-mail that goes to everybody in the world that says oh we have this product, why don't you try it. There are certain points to consider. One is where is this product made, and is it made in a country where sanitation rules and regulations rules for production and ingredient control are standardized and monitored. What else do you want them to know?

KM: Well, the last one is my favorite commercial. Enzyte. The Enzyte commercial has everybody with a big smile. You know, this is supposed to make your wife happy because it's better than Viagra. Well in reality that's saw palmetto as well, and you know saw palmetto is pretty cheap.

BN: You make a point. A lot of times these things are established known ingredients that they buy I bulk and rename put a proprietary name on it and sell it as something else.

KM: And they market it with great success. Really saw palmetto does work a little bit because it decreases your DHT. So it does release more men's testosterone so it can be more effective. If you have real problems, it's not going to work. It'll make you feel a little different. But it doesn't do what it says it's going to do unless you have a minor problem if you have any big problems you need your testosterone replaced.

BN: You need to be a little aware of the way that marketers use language. When they say something's almost as good as knew. That means somebody somewhere had one beneficial result or more. It doesn't mean everybody that takes it.

KM: And when we're speaking we don't speak like that about what we do. We're very careful not to.

BN: We're very careful not to.

KM: And most physicians know that they can't claim something that's not true. We're basically based on a truthful, we take an oath, that's what we do.

BN: So it's truthful, it's measured, it's regulated, it's sanitary, it's consistent. Those are things you want to ask as you look at other options that you might be considering. If you have questions about that, or comments about this podcast or any others you can email us at podcast@biobalancehealth.com. You can read my blog at bretnewcomb.com and contact me through that.

KM: And if you'd like to know more about BioBalance Health or bio-identical hormones visit our website at BioBalanceHealth.com or call 314.993.0963.